

**Report of the ENE Locality Manager, Environment & Neighbourhoods Directorate**

**Report to the Outer North East Area Committee**

**Date: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2013**

**Subject: Service Level Agreement – 2012/13 End of Year Performance Report and 2013/14 Approval**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Alwoodley, Harewood, Wetherby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Following the successful introduction of the first ever Service Level Agreement (SLA) part way through 2011/12 and the completion of a first full year's SLA in 2012/13, a refreshed SLA has been drawn up for the delivery of environmental services in Inner East during the 2013/14 municipal year.
2. This report provides details of the agreement, including new commitments to be delivered through the locality team in 2013/14, and seeks approval of the document which will steer the work of the East North East Locality Team over the year ahead.
3. This report also takes the opportunity to provide an end of year performance report for the 2012/13 SLA.

**Recommendations**

The Area Committee is asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement for the delivery of delegated environmental services during the 2013/14 municipal year. The Committee is also asked to analyse performance information relating to 2012/13 and, where appropriate, refer issues to the Environmental Sub Group to look at in more depth.

## **Purpose of this report**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present, for approval, the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for 2013/14. This agreement will provide the basis on which the work of the Environmental Locality Team will be directed and be publicly accountable through the Area Committee for over the year ahead. The SLA includes a proposal to trial a new post in Outer NE and asks for an one-off financial contribution of £10k from Wellbeing towards the cost.
- 2 The report also provides information relating to the performance of the service in delivering commitments made in the 2012/13 SLA and invites Members to examine any elements of the work through it's Environmental Sub Group.

## **Background information**

- 3 At it's meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011, the Executive Board approved revisions to the Area Committee Function Schedules to include a new delegated responsibility for Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services.
- 4 The delegation makes clear the responsibility of Area Committees to negotiate, develop and approve a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the service that achieves as a minimum, the service standards set by Executive Board. The SLA should determine the principles of deployment of the available resources by:
  - the identification of priorities for service delivery annually (both geographical and in terms of types of services delivered)
  - the agreement of the most appropriate approaches to be taken to achieve local environmental cleanliness and quality.
- 5 Services originally included in the delegation were:
  - Street cleansing (mechanical and manual);
  - Leaf clearing;
  - Litter bin emptying;
  - Gully cleaning
  - Graffiti removal
  - Needle removal
  - Ginnel clearance
  - Dog warden services;
  - Littering & flytipping regulation;
  - Domestic & commercial waste (storage & transportation issues);
  - Highways enforcement (abandoned & nuisance vehicles, A-boards on pavements, mud on roads and placards on street furniture);
  - Graffiti enforcement; and
  - Overgrown vegetation controls.
- 6 To enable this to happen, a restructuring of the previous Streetscene service was undertaken and completed by September 2011. Importantly this separated out the local street cleansing functions from the city's refuse and recycling functions and created for the first time local supervisory/support roles for a key front line service.

- 7 At the same time, Environmental Action Teams that had previously just focused on enforcement and regulatory practices were brought together with the street cleansing function to create new Locality Teams.
- 8 It is important to stress that both these sets of staff came across on existing job descriptions, grades and therefore historic work practices.
- 9 The delegation of the specified environmental services to Area Committee means that the majority of service resources, mainly staffing, are devolved to a locality level to a Locality Manager.
- 10 These resources are organised into three wedge based teams for East North-East, South South-East and West North-West, aligned to Locality Teams. The Service Level Agreement sets out the how those resources will be used to meet the requirements of each Area Committees in order to achieve the outcome of clean streets.
- 11 The first Outer NE SLA went live in October 2011. Reports to the December and March Area Committees cycles outlined progress over the period of the first SLA.
- 12 New for the 2012/13 SLA were more specific, locality commitments around such issues as:
  - Priority ginnels for programmed cleansing/maintenance,
  - Cleaning of arterial routes
  - Gully cleansing,
  - Use of locality managed dog warden resource,
  - De-leafing,
  - Litter bin replacements/new sites,
  - Targeting of zero tolerance enforcement (geographical and issue based),
  - Cleaning around recycling (e.g. bottle banks) facilities on public highway/land
- 13 The SLA makes a commitment to local performance reporting and management which was strengthened during 2012/13 through the Environmental Sub Group and attendance at all ward members meetings by the most senior officer available (usually the Locality Manager).

## **Main Issues**

- 14 The SLA sets out for each Area Committee how the locality resources will be used in their particular area to meet local needs and help achieve the outcome of clean streets.
- 15 An end of year report on how the service has used its resources to deliver the 2012/13 SLA is provided in Appendix A. This includes:
  - a. A break-down of the numbers and type of customer service requests dealt with by the Locality Team during 2012/13 for each ward (split by street cleansing and enforcement activity)
  - b. Examples for each ward of how successful actions have made a difference

- c. The final financial/spend position of the locality budget for 2012/13
- 16 The proposed SLA for the 2013/14 municipal year is attached at Appendix B. Included for the first time this year is a supplementary menu of additional localised activity that can be commissioned by the Area Committee.
  - 17 The Locality Manager is accountable to the Area Committee for the use of that resource and the performance of the service in relation to the approved SLAs. The Area Committees themselves are accountable to the Executive Board.
  - 18 A breakdown of the ENE Locality Team budget for 2013/14 is shown at Appendix C.
  - 19 The current operational structure of the ENE Locality Team is provided at Appendix D.

## **2012/13 SLA – End of Year Performance Review**

- 20 Appendix A (part 1) provides a breakdown of the different service requests that come through to the team and have been responded to. The referrals come mainly through the council's Customer Contact centre but also direct to the team (for example through Elected Members and through pro-active work of staff). Each referral is treated as a separate case and properly managed through the council's case management systems. Work has continued during 2012/13 to ensure this system is being used as effectively as possible – so that meaningful analysis can be done, there is the correct prioritisation of referrals as they come in to match the resources available and customers are provided with the best response possible. The service requests show that in 2012/13:

### **(a) Enforcement - customer responsive activity:**

- ✓ There were 951 cases investigated in Outer North East for enforcement investigation - an average of nearly 4 new cases per working day (for information, the total enforcement cases across ENE amounted to 6,037 which is an average of just over 23 cases per day).
- ✓ The ward split of enforcement referrals worked out as 26% Alwoodley, 44% Harewood, 30% Wetherby.
- ✓ 317 (33%) of cases related to dog enforcement requests (e.g. reports of dogs off lead)  
160 (17%) related to reports of overgrown vegetation (e.g. hedges) that were obstructing public paths etc.
- ✓ 93 (10%) related to investigation of flytipping (i.e. waste illegally left on public land)
- ✓ 68 (11%) of all cases resulted in legal notices being served in Outer NE (figure excludes dog related cases as legal notice analysis not available yet)
- ✓ 15 litter/waste related fixed penalty notices were issued across Outer NE amounting to £1,650 in fines.
- ✓ 4 prosecutions were made

### **(b) Street cleansing - customer responsive activity:**

- ✓ there were 966 referrals for street cleansing action in Outer NE - an average of just under 3 jobs per working day which is of course on top of the existing, programmed work (for information, the total street cleansing requests across ENE amounted to 5,857 which is an average of 16 cases per day).
- ✓ The ward split of street cleansing referrals worked out as 25% Alwoodley, 45% Harewood, 30% Wetherby.
- ✓ 196 (20%) of the total referrals related to reports of flytipping. Of these 44 were proactive referrals (i.e. flytips spotted and dealt with by our staff whilst out and about).
- ✓ 284 (29%) of requests related to reports of blocked gullies that needed clearing
- ✓ 187 (19%) of requests related to reports of litter or requests for paths/roads to be swept (excluding for leaves)
- ✓ There were 39 requests over the year for full litter bins to be emptied.
- ✓ We responded to 26 requests for ginnel cleaning and 35 requests to clean up dog mess.
- ✓ Of additional interest may be the 51 dead animals removed by our staff from the roads (38 in Harewood ward alone).

**(c) Street cleansing - programmed activity:**

- 21 In addition to the responsive service provided by the Locality Team, the majority of the street cleansing operations are delivered on a programmed/scheduled basis. For mechanical sweeping that is organised through “blocks” of streets. For manual litter picking/sweeping it is delivered through lists of priority streets. Both can be amended by the relevant set of ward members within the existing staffing/resource they have for their ward.
- 22 In terms of performance for 2012/13, the mechanical sweeping resource was programmed to clean 450 blocks in the Outer NE area and actually delivered 410 (i.e. 91% of programmed sweeps were delivered, which compares to 91% in 2011/12). The main reason for “missed” blocks is the unavoidable consequences of bad weather (the machines cannot operate in freezing conditions or on laying snow or in very heavy rain – all of which there was an exceptional amount of during 2012/13). Other factors that affected 2012/13 included some long term sickness within the mechanical staff and to a lesser extent one-off, large events in 2012 such as the Queens Jubilee and Olympic Torch, for which we used capacity days that we would otherwise have used to recover missed routes around that time.
- 23 New to the Locality Team in 2012/13 was the management of the gully cleansing resource for the area. This has enabled Members to have a quicker route through to the resource and resulted in an improvement in response times to reports of blocked gullies. The service is delivered through one gully tanker for the ENE locality operating 7 days per week. The resource is programmed to work a ward at a time around the ENE locality, inspecting and cleaning every gully. The crew completed Alwoodley ward (4,473 gullies visited and cleaned) in 2012/13. However, the crew also responded to 284 individual requests for clearance of blocked gullies in the Outer NE area during the year. It is currently estimated that it will take between 18-24 months to complete a full cycle of gully cleansing across ENE. However, it should be noted that 2012/13 was the second wettest year on record and we lost a significant amount of days due to ice/snow. Where we have had the greatest difficulty is on main roads that require

traffic management to allow safe access to gullies – particularly those in the central reservations. Work is on-going with colleagues in Highways to develop a citywide programme of traffic management to assist this and other street cleansing operations in all three localities. It is however very costly and there is not a specific budget set aside for it in either service.

- 24 An issue that particularly affects the ENE locality is leaf-fall. The service provides a dedicated resource for removing leaf-fall during the autumn/early winter months. The resource is a mixture of mainly programmed work on sets of streets agreed with ward members, and reactive work as reports of excessive leaf-fall in streets are reported through. In 2012/13 we reached an agreement with council's grounds maintenance contactor, Continental Landscapes, to provide the main part of the labour force rather than employ agency staff. This helped keep a number of staff in full time employment that would otherwise have been laid off and meant we got experienced staff with good local knowledge.
- 25 In 2012/13 it is estimated that 30 tonnes of leaves were removed from the Outer NE area through this dedicated resource. In addition, we also used mechanical sweepers on capacity days to respond to ad-hoc referrals from Members and residents.

#### **(d) Outcomes of the activities**

- 26 Sections 20 to 25 provide a statistical summary of how the delegated service has performed over the year in terms of workload in response to customer referrals and programmed work. They also give Members an idea of the proportions for each type of issue that has to be dealt with in the Outer North East area and within their particular wards.
- 27 However, it is also the outcomes achieved and overall effectiveness in making a difference within neighbourhoods that the success of the SLA will be judged on.
- 28 The overall measure of cleanliness across the city has improved from 85.9% of sites which were acceptably clean in 2011/12 to 92.0% of sites in 2012/13.
- 29 At an area level, to a large degree the outcomes are judged/monitored through accountability of the Locality Team at monthly ward member meetings, quarterly Environmental Sub Group meetings, quarterly Wetherby and Harewood Town and Parish Council Forum, Alwoodley Parish Council AGM and at the Area Committee itself.
- 30 Feedback regarding performance of the service and the achievement of the desired outcome of clean streets at these various meetings has been very positive.
- 31 Feedback and suggestions from the Area Committee would be welcomed on whether any further information, indicators or performance measures are needed to help judge the effectiveness of the service in terms of outcomes in Outer NE.

#### **(e) Resource management for 2012/13**

- 32 In terms of financial management, the final ENE Locality Team budget position for 2012/13 is provided in Appendix A (part 2). The bottom line shows that the amount spent for the year was within the budget originally allocated.

- 33 The main variations to note are the “overspend” on operational cover costs which were offset by an “underspend” on enforcement staff. This was a planned, one-off variation necessitated by a need to manage an inherited budgetary difficulty caused by an historic overspend of overtime from when street cleaning staff were part of the Streetscene Service. By building in capacity days and improving the use of cover and efficiency of services, it is hoped that from 2013/14 onwards the operation cover costs will be managed within budget for the first time. This is a risk though, and will need careful monitoring, as it will require reducing annual spend on cover from about £150k to about £100k. The risk is that more missed blocks and litter picking schedules are not recovered and that has an affect on service standards.
- 34 Sickness levels across the team/service are a continued focus. During 2012/13 ENE Locality Team staff were on average absent for 13 days per FTE. We do not have a comparative figure for the team during 2011/12. The Locality Teams have a significantly greater proportion of front line, manual staff, which are a group of staff that historically have consistently experienced sickness levels well above the council average. The ENE Locality team absence rate for 2012/13 is the lowest of the three localities. It is worth noting that when street cleansing was part of the old Streetscene service the absence rate was somewhere in the mid-20s per FTE.
- 35 During 2012/13 the service restructured the enforcement part of the locality teams. This process enable several inherited job descriptions and grades to be streamlined into two new, fit for purpose roles/grades. For the ENE Locality Team this has resulted in 2 x Senior Environmental Officers posts (SO1 grade) and 10 x Environmental Action Officer posts (C3 grade). There are currently two vacancies in the team, which are in the process of being recruited to.
- 36 A new post was also created for each locality team – a Resource and Caseworker (SO1 grade). In part, this post was created to fill the service challenge/development gap created by the cancellation of the planned secondment of two senior posts from the Area Management (now Area Leadership) team. This post will also provide support for the existing streets supervisor by overseeing how customer/member referrals are best responded to, ensuring the operational cover budget is more effectively/ efficiently used and providing a greater focus on attendance management – allowing the streets supervisor to spend more time out with front line staff; supporting, supervising and quality assuring.

#### **(f) Working with Ward Members**

- 37 Throughout the year the Locality team responded to requests made through ward members through emails, phone calls and meetings. On-going actions were tracked at the regular ward member meetings facilitated by Area Management. A senior member (where possible the Locality Manager) of the locality team attended all ward member meetings as required by Members.
- 38 Requests from ward members included amendments to mechanical and manual sweeping routes and/or schedules, new or resitting of litter bins, one-off clean ups and enforcement action.

### **Refreshed SLA and Service Developments for 2013/14**

39 The proposed SLA for 2013/14 can be found at appendix B. Changes and additions for the year ahead include:

- A commitment to regularly inspect and respond to a priority list of “sites of concern” in each ward (e.g. ginnels, bottle banks, gullies, laybys, pockets of land) to be agreed, mapped and monitored at ward member level.
- A programme to be developed to tackle priority sites in each ward that are prone to litter accumulating between the end of the cutting season and beginning of the next (and therefore do not get litter picked by the grounds maintenance contractor in this period).
- Scheduling of Harewood (4,218 gullies) and Wetherby (4,632 gullies) wards for full gully cleaning during 2013/14.
- The trialling of a new “mobile/peripatetic cleaner” resource for Outer NE, match funded by the Area Committee (details appended to the SLA)
- A menu of additional chargeable services for Members to consider commissioning extra local, targeted provision

40 In addition to the service delivery commitments made in the SLA, it is proposed that we also introduce a commitment to support, advise and bring forward local solutions with colleagues in Waste Management Services; using the Area Committee to involve Members and provide greater local accountability and understanding. This will be focused on:

- a) where local issues impact on the delivery of a safe, efficient and reliable waste collection service – for example access problems causing “missed” collections
- b) Developing domestic waste solutions for areas which will not receive increased recycling services through Alternate Week Collections (AWC).
- c) Providing performance information relating to recycling rates across the Area Committee to help identify where there are opportunities to further support and improve recycling by residents and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

41 Aside from these additional commitments, the basis of the SLA and how the service delivers its core functions remains as it was for 2012/13. However, there will be a number of service improvement/developments that will be progressed during the year that the Area Committee will influence and be involved in. These include:

- The creation of one environmental service for the city, based around the successful Locality Teams. This will involve work to agree which elements of environmental cleanliness work currently undertaken in the ALMOs will transfer to Locality Teams. It will provide opportunity to review existing streets cleansing practices and make operational improvements.
- A review of environmental services that are still delivered citywide with a view to transferring responsibilities and resource to Locality Teams where that makes sense. This review will include the Household Bulky Item collection service.

## **Corporate Considerations**

### **42 Consultation and Engagement**

In addition to scheduled environmental sub-group meetings, discussions and agreements on priorities and emerging issues will continue at the monthly ward level meetings with Members. The Area Committee will also continue to receive six monthly updates on performance and be consulted, as it was for this SLA at the March 2013 meeting, on future SLAs/service developments. The locality team will also continue to engage with local groups as agreed with local ward members and support Community Leadership Team or Neighbourhood Board meetings as appropriate/relevant.

#### **43 Equality and Diversity/Cohesion and Integration**

A key principle of locality working and the Service Level Agreement is a focus on delivering the best outcome for residents across the area, so that the streets and neighbourhoods in which they live are of an acceptably clean standard. This principle underpins equality and community cohesion, seeking to bring neighbourhoods with poor environmental quality up to an acceptable standard, whilst improving all areas of Leeds.

#### **44 Council Policies and City Priorities**

The delegation of environmental services to Area Committees, via an approved Service Level Agreement, contributes significantly towards the Stronger Leeds section of the new Safer & Stronger Communities Plan 2011-15. By delivering services at an Area Committee level, the priority to *'ensure that local neighbourhoods are clean'* will be more achievable.

The SLA makes a significant contribution towards the Council being able to demonstrate its values of fairness, teamwork, openness, working with citizens and achieving value for taxpayers' money.

The SLA also helps deliver key "budget plus" strands of the Council Business Plan around priorities such as *improving the approach to locality working*, and, *improving the way the Council is organised including consideration of alternative delivery models*.

#### **45 Resources and Value for Money**

The SLA is transparent about the level of resources available to deliver services within the ENE Locality area over the period. The level of revenue resources within ENE Locality remains as per the levels during the 2012/13 municipal year. It should be noted however that there is a financial expectation that £33k of savings will be achieved in 2013/14 through the creation of one environmental service as part of the ALMO review; together with an ELI/line by line saving of £16k to contribute towards corporate targets.

At the time of writing, there are no new capital funds available to repair/replace litter bins (ENE was allocated £22k in 2011/12 and £17k in 2012/13). However, it is likely that a new allocation of £100k for 2013/14 will be shared between the three localities and city centre. An update will be provided to Members. What is clear though is that any new allocation will need to be spent on replacing existing, dilapidated litter bins. Any litter bins required for new sites will need to be funded through Wellbeing or Member's local budget allocations.

A number of additional services such as the bush crew, needle removal, car parks and graffiti removal were added to the delegation during 2011/12. Whilst these services were delegated with a full service budget the management and supervision of these additional services is being met from existing resources and responsibility is currently shared across the three teams. Proposals will be developed, with involvement of Area Committees, to look at these resources together with the resources to be transferred from the ALMOs and the Household Bulky Collection service, with the aim of providing one locality based service that covers as many of these responsibilities as possible and delivered in the most efficient and effective way.

#### **46 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

Following revision to the Council's Constitution, the Area Committee has the legal powers to approve the attached Service Level Agreement and therefore formally undertake the delegation of services set out within it.

There are no further legal implications. The report contains no information that is deemed exempt or confidential.

The Area Committee's decision to approve, or not, the attached Service Level Agreement is no longer eligible for call-in.

#### **47 Risk Management**

The Area Committee is being asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement, which will formalise the partnership arrangements between the ENE Environmental Locality Team and the Committee. The Service Level Agreement ensures the significant input of the Area Committee and influence over the locality teams budget deployment at a local level.

### **Conclusions**

- 48 A significant amount of collaborative work has been undertaken and real progress since the first, part-year, SLA which took effect from September 2011. Performance monitoring has been established through the Area Committee's Environmental Sub group and highlight reports provided to the Area Committee at half year and full year. The 2013/14 SLA will also be underpinned by continued engagement and responsiveness at ward member level and tracking of progress/actions at ward meetings with an increased emphasis on the monitoring of known problem spots/sites of concern.
- 49 The 2013/14 SLA seeks to build on progress made in last year's first full-year SLA and to continually improve and better align delegated services to local need. The SLA demonstrates that the delegated service continues to progress, through the addition of new responsibilities and improved capacity to deliver more through more effective working. The locality team will strive to continue this progression through to 2014/15.

### **Recommendations**

- 50 The Outer NE Area Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the contents of the report;
- b) Note the end of year performance report for the 2012/13 SLA;
- c) Approve the attached Service Level Agreement for 2013/14 as summarised in sections 39-41 of this report and provided in Appendix B.
- d) Approve the contribution of a maximum of £10k towards the establishment of a trial mobile cleansing resource to service Alwoodley ward and the outer villages not covered by existing street attendants or “lengthsmen”. The contribution and resource to be split: 40% Alwoodley, 40% Harewood, 20% Wetherby. The contribution is to be made on the basis that should the trial be successful the service will look to mainstream the activity

### **Background Papers**

*Leeds City Council Constitution*

*Report: Delegation of Environmental Services. To Area Committees, Jan/Feb cycle 2011.*

*Report: Delegation Of Executive Functions In Relation To Street Scene Management To Area Committees. To Executive Board. 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011*

*Report: Delegation of Environmental Services. To Area Committees, March cycle 2011.*

*Report: Environmental Services Delegation – Update and Progress, to Area Committee 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

*Report: Delegation of Environmental Services – Service Level Agreement, to Area Committee 5<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

*Report: Environmental Services - Performance Update on the Service Level Agreement, to Area Committee 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011*

*Report: Towards More Integrated Locality Working 2: An early review of the Environmental Services delegation. To Executive Board, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2012*

*Report: Delegation of Environmental Services – Service Level Agreement, to Area Committee June 2012*

*Report: Environmental SLA – 6 month update, to Area Committee December 2012*

*Report: Environmental Services – Consultation on the 2013/14 Service Level Agreement – to Area Committee March 2013*