

**Report of:** Helen Freeman, Chief Officer, Environmental Action Service

**Report to:** Inner North East Community Committee (Chapel Allerton, Moortown and Roundhay wards),

**Report author:** John Woolmer, Head of Service (ENE Locality)

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

## **Environmental Service Delegation – 2016/17 Priorities**

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### **Purpose of report**

1. This report seeks the views of the Community Committee on issues it would like to see the East North East (ENE) Locality Team focus in the 2016/17 municipal year. This will help the team update the existing Service Agreement and bring it back, via the Environmental Sub Group, to the first committee meeting of the new municipal year.

### **Main issues**

2. Since 2011, the Inner NE Community Committee has been required by the Council's Executive Delegation Scheme to negotiate and approve an annual Service Agreement.
3. The functions covered in the agreement include: basic street cleansing, delittering, litter bins, dealing with highway obstructions (including illegal advertising), neighbourhood cleanliness (including waste in gardens), regulation of commercial waste contracts, investigation and removal of flytipping and dealing with stray dogs/dogs off lead. All these roles should be both reactive and proactive/preventative in nature.
4. In addition, from mid-2015 the team has taken on the responsibility for the local delivery of the household bulky waste collection service, opening/closing and cleaning of public toilets and graffiti and needle removal. These will be in the 2016/17 Service Agreement.
5. Finally, also new to the service for 2015 was some environmental functions previously undertaken by housing colleagues. As well as the general environmental condition of neighbourhoods with significant numbers of council owned properties, the service now also helps prepare gardens of council properties being prepared for a new let, as well as assisting those tenants identified as "vulnerable" in the upkeep of their gardens. 2016/17

will be the first full year these services will be required to be delivered on top of the basic functions set out in para 3 and 4.

6. The Committee has the delegated responsibility to ensure that the needs and priorities of the Inner NE area are being met through the resources available to the ENE team and that the functions set out in paras 3-5 are being delivered effectively and efficiently. The Committee has given the responsibility of overseeing the delivery of the agreement during the year to its Environmental Sub Group.

## **Building on Zonal Working in 2016/17**

7. During the second half of 2015/16 the service introduced a zonal way of working. In the ENE locality this resulted in a dedicated zonal team being created for the Inner NE area. This meant for the first time the Inner NE area had its own Team Leader, operational Chargehands and dedicated path-sweeper. The existing enforcement officer was retained, with some additional enforcement capacity added for Alwoodley and through the Team Leader (previously a senior enforcement officer). In addition the area has its own, dedicated operational staff with a 7 day/week service retained.
8. Feedback so far from Members on new working arrangements has been largely positive. Relationships between local staff and key community contacts (such as Members and resident groups) are developing well. Staff are also saying they prefer to work this way; getting to know the area and its residents/customers better. There is a definite improvement in staff pride in serving the area.
9. Examples of the benefit of having more locally dedicated and knowledgeable team with a dedicated Team Leader and operational Chargehand include:
  - a. staff are working closer with local Members and alongside local groups, such local schools and in-bloom groups, to support local clean-up days/environmental activities and building local relationships/trust.
  - b. responsiveness/adaptability to meet needs of the Inner NE area – warning/cctv signs at known flytip spots, de-leaving of pavements, Leeds Carnival clean-up etc.
  - c. the complaints level for bulky item collections has reduced by 85% citywide since it moved to zonal teams – the ENE Locality Team received 2 formal complaints for the 3 months ending 31/12/15; out of 2,056 customers/service requests. Current number of households per month requesting a collection in each ward are averaging 95 for Chapel Allerton, 65 for Moortown and 75 for Roundhay;



10. In order to further cement and build on the zonal working – the Community Committee is asked to feedback which elements seem to be working better and what the opportunities to improve further are. For example, one area of work that remains a concern to Members is having an improved programme for the maintenance of ginnels for Inner NE.
11. The suggestion is conversations continue at ward member meetings to develop ward priorities/plans for the year ahead. The resultant draft plans/agreement will be brought together for the Sub Group to look at and make recommendations to the May/June Community Committee.
12. A couple of areas of work the Environment and Housing Directorate will be working on to include in the 2016/17 Environmental Service Agreements across Leeds are:
  - a. how in those zones/neighbourhoods where the Council is the predominant landlord it is working to support and ensure its tenants are contributing towards the effective management of household waste (for example presentation of waste for collection and waste left in gardens/communal areas). The focus will be where there are clearly behavioral and practical issues that are contributing negatively towards the environmental appearance of the neighbourhood. This may include Beckhills/Miles Hills, Brackenwoods and parts of Chapeltown for example.
  - b. how we work with Community Committees to identify practical opportunities to work with the community/residents to improve recycling and re-use rates to help reduce landfill costs, including how that can be meaningfully measured.

## **Recommendations**

13. The Community Committee is asked to:
  - a. reflect and comment on the introduction of new functions introduced to the local service for 2015/16, including the introduction of a zonal approach/team;
  - b. consider how Members and other stakeholders best contribute towards the development of the draft Service Agreement for 2016/17 – so that it is clear what the local focus is to be on in each ward and across the area;
  - c. comment on the suggestions made in para 12 regarding the inclusion of relevant aspects of housing management and waste recycling into the Service Agreement.