

Report of the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods

Report to South Leeds (Inner) Area Committee

Date: Wednesday 21st September 2011

Subject: Delegation of Environmental Services – Service Level Agreement

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Beeston and Holbeck City and Hunslet Middleton Park
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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. A Service Level Agreement has been drawn up for the delivery of environmental services in Inner South.
2. This report provides final details of the agreement and seeks approval of the document which will steer the work of the South and Outer East Environmental Locality Team over the next 6 months.

Recommendations

The Area Committee is asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement for the delivery of delegated environmental services.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Area Committee, for approval, a final version of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) through which the work of the Environmental Locality team will be steered over the next six months.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Work has been ongoing with Members and Area Committees since late 2010 on achieving the successful delegation of certain environmental services in 2011/12.
- 2.2 At its meeting of 30th 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Services included in the delegation are:
- Street cleansing (mechanical and manual);
 - Leaf clearing;
 - Litter bin emptying;
 - 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.
- 2.5 The delegation of the specified environmental services to Area Committee will mean that service resources, mainly staffing, which are currently managed centrally, will be devolved. These resources have been organised into three wedge based teams for East North-East, South South-East and West North-West, aligned to the new Locality Teams. The Service Level Agreement sets out the detail of the resources which will be allocated to the Area Committees.
- 2.6 Area Committee workshops have been held, in January, March and July, to involve Members in the development of Service Level Agreements (SLA), through which the

delegated services will be delivered at a local level. The workshops also provided an opportunity for Members to consider current service schedules and activity, in terms of meeting the need of local areas.

- 2.7 In addition to the Area Committee workshops consultation has also been undertaken with the Environmental Sub-groups of the Area Committees, including the sub group representing Inner South Area Committee.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 A great deal of work has been undertaken over the past six months to review the street cleansing service, implement a restructure to create the three new locality teams and build trust with Members.
- 3.2 The completed review of street cleansing services, in particular mechanical sweeping, has looked in depth at a range of issues affecting productivity and overall effectiveness of the service.

Annual Leave & Sickness Capacity

Work has been undertaken to ensure a sound understanding of the capacity needed within the service to accommodate annual leave and sickness, something not previously factored into the delivery schedule. This has resulted in additional capacity being created within a revised service schedule, leading to a significant reduction in the number of sweeping routes not completed due to staff availability.

Downtime

A primary concern highlighted by both officers and Members has been the extent to which 'downtime', i.e. the time machines are not actively sweeping, affects service delivery. A robust analysis has been carried out of travel time to/from depot to routes, the time involved in vehicles tipping their load during each route, the time spent at the start and finish of each day on vehicle preparation, i.e. washing down and refuelling, and identification of other issues affecting productive working time e.g. moving of bins off the carriageway so that the sweeping machines can gain access to the pavements/roads.

This work is still ongoing, but has already resulted in a number of additional tip sites being identified which will reduce unproductive work time. Discussions are underway to further minimise travel time by having more localised bases from which the vehicles will operate (currently all vehicles operate out of just two depots, Henshaw in the Outer North West and Cross Green in the Outer East).

Route Completion Rates

A further element of the service that has been investigated is the completion rates of the individual sweeping blocks. Although specific data is not currently available to give a completely accurate figure, anecdotal evidence from frontline staff, service supervisors and Members strongly indicates to a high rate of routes not being completed within a working day. In most instances the part of a route that did not get swept would be left until the next scheduled cleanse, potentially up to six weeks later.

The inability to complete a route has been assessed as being largely down to the size of the current routes, which were designed to be approximately 10 linear kilometres each. However, when taken into consideration that both pavement and road sweepers have to go up and down each side of a street this coverage is doubled. The most effective speed of a pavement sweeper is 2km an hour, thus to complete 20km would take 10 hours of productive cleaning.

As has been highlighted earlier in section 3.2 there are a number of factors which mean that, out of a ten hour working day, the amount of productive cleaning time available falls short of this, meaning that historically the routes were not deliverable.

We have therefore sought to redesign the routes to make them deliverable within the current level of resources. Throughout the July workshops Elected Members have been consulted about a solution that effectively reduces the size of routes and makes them more achievable within the available productive time.

3.3 Comments made by Area Committee Members during the Environmental Services workshop held in July included:

- The profile of the service needs to be raised with the public by communicating the good the service does, especially around enforcement issues/action;
- Working hours of the enforcement team should be more flexible, 9am-5pm doesn't always make sense;
- Keeping the main roads into the city clean, as this often gives the first and sometimes only impression of Leeds to visitors;
- Officers from the locality team should regularly attend community group meetings; and
- Concerns over the idea of quality vs. quantity of service, don't want to lose resource from the area.

3.4 As a result of the workshops a number of key priorities have been identified by the Area Committee, these being:

- Local shopping parades/areas – litter clean up, enforcement and focus on shop's duty of care
- Ensure litter bins are not overflowing
- Work with partners to broaden the range of people who can enforce
- Address issues associated with dog fouling and dog control
- Joint approaches to clearing open space/land in the public realm
- Develop a maintenance programme for ginnels
- Target priority areas such as Cottingley, Manor Farms, and Beeston
- Tackle the bin yard problem in back to back areas
- Engage with local communities and volunteers to encourage local responsibility

- Coordination of environmental services, e.g. street cleaning, refuse collection, grounds maintenance

These priorities are written into the SLA as priority areas for the Locality Teams and available capacity within the schedule street cleansing and/or enforcement services will be directed, as appropriate, to tackling these priorities.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Various consultation and engagement exercises have been undertaken with Members on an individual basis, as well as at ward and Area Committee level.
- 4.1.2 Most significantly three rounds of Area Committee workshops have been held in January, March and July 2011, designed specifically to shape the delivery of environmental services within the Inner South wards.
- 4.1.3 A series of update reports have been provided to each Area Committee meeting since October/November 2010 (see background documents for full details).
- 4.1.4 Progress reports have been submitted to each Area Chairs' meeting since October, including seeking comments and confirmation of a template for the Service Level Agreement.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 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.
- 4.2.2 Moving forward through the first year of the Service Level Agreement it is intended to develop a community engagement strategy which will determine the extent and nature of involvement of local residents within the monitoring and delivery of environmental services. This strategy will be developed with due consideration given to all equality, diversity, cohesion and integration issues.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The proposed delegation of environmental services to Area Committees, via an approved Service Level Agreement, will significantly contribute 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 much more achievable.
- 4.3.2 In order to formalise delegation of the listed environmental services, the Area Committee Function Schedule within the Council's Constitution has been amended,

approved at Executive Board in March 2011 and ratified at the Annual Council meeting held on 26th May 2011.

- 4.3.3 Amendments have also been made to the Area Committee Procedure Rules to make allowance for the decision making powers being devolved to Committees, which will run concurrent to the same authority given to the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 There is no change to resources at this point. The resources allocated to the South South East Environmental Locality Team are the same as those that would have been put into the area under the old Streetscene structure.
- 4.4.2 The Service Level Agreements detail a revised mechanical street cleansing service, which will deliver increased efficiencies in terms of achieving a greater quality of street cleansing and therefore providing better value for money.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 Following revision to the Council's Constitution, as detailed at 4.3.2, 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.
- 4.5.2 There are no further legal implications.
- 4.5.3 The report contains no information that is deemed exempt or confidential.
- 4.5.4 The Area Committee's decision to approve, or not, the attached Service Level Agreement is eligible for call-in, within the standard five working day period from the date the decision is published.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 The Area Committee is being asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement, which will formalise the partnership arrangements between the South South East Environmental Locality Team and the Committee. Should the Service Level Agreement not be approved then the Locality Team will still be required to deliver environmental services within the area, however this will be without the significant input of the Area Committee.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 A significant amount of collaborative work has been undertaken and real progress made in making ready for the services to operate under the terms of the SLA with effect from September 2011. This first SLA will apply for a period of 6 months, during which time performance monitoring will be reported to the Area Committee and Environmental Sub group.
- 5.2 The SLA will be reviewed annually to inform the production and approval of subsequent areements for future years, in line with corporate budget cycle and review process, with the first review beginning in October 2011.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Area Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the contents of the report;
- b) Approve the attached Service Level Agreement.

7 Background documents

- Leeds City Council Constitution
- Area Committee report: Environmental Services Delegation – Update and Progress Report, 4th July 2011
- Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees – progress report, 15th April 2011
- Area Committee report: Delegation of Environmental Services, 14th March 2011
- Executive Board report: Delegation of Executive Functions in Relation to Streetscene Management to Area Committees, 30th March 2011
- Area Committee report: Delegation of Environmental Services, 31st January 2011
- Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees – Development of Service Level Agreements, 14th January 2011
- Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees, 3rd December 2011
- Area Committee report: Briefing note on proposed delegation of elements of Streetscene services, Oct/Nov 2010