

Report of Locality Manager (West North West)

Report to Area Committee (Inner West)

Date: 12th December 2012

Subject: Environmental Services - Six Month Performance Update on the Service Level Agreement

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Armley Bramley & Stanningley		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

Summary of the main issues:

This report provides a half-year update on performance against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Inner West Area Committee and the West North-West (WNW) Environmental Locality Team. It covers the period from May to November 2012. Whilst good progress has been made in terms of general service delivery in the first six months of the current SLA, more focussed and targeted work is required with partners in the agreed priority areas of New Wortley and the Broadlea.

Recommendations:

That the Inner West Committee note the report, comment where progress in delivering the SLA is good/not so good and identify any service developments/priorities it would like to see included in service planning for 2013/14.

Purpose of this report

- 1 This report provides an update on performance against the Service Level Agreement between Inner West Area Committee and the WNW Environmental Locality Team.
- 2 This report covers the six month period from June to November 2012 (i.e. a half-year report).
- 3 The report sets out to give the Area Committee information of the range of functions being delivered across the area during this period against the priorities and commitments set out in the SLA, and how they are helping make a difference on the ground/at the front line.
- 4 The report also provides an opportunity for the Area Committee to influence the service and budget planning process for 2013/14. Views on service developments and continued top priorities for Inner West are sought, particularly in light of the expected on-going financial pressures.

Background information

- 5 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.
- 6 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:
 - 7 the identification of priorities for service delivery annually (both geographical and in terms of types of services delivered)
 - 8 the agreement of the most appropriate approaches to be taken to achieve local environmental cleanliness and quality.
- 9 Services included in the delegation are:
 - Street cleansing (mechanical and manual);
 - Leaf clearing;
 - Litter bin emptying;
 - Gully cleaning
 - Graffiti removal
 - Needle removal
 - Ginnel clearance
 - Dog warden services (excluding responsibilities for dangerous dogs);
 - Littering & fly-tipping 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.
- 10 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. 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.

- 11 This “enforcement” element of the Locality Team is currently undergoing a restructure to rationalise the various grades/posts and modernise/strengthen the job descriptions to better reflect the needs of Area Committees identified through the locality based/focused work so far. This is planned to be completed by Christmas 2012.
- 12 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. 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.

Main issues – performance against the SLA commitments

- 13 The SLA sets out how the service will be developed, organised and delivered in four key sections. Progress over the first six months of the current SLA against each section is summarised below and referred to in the appendices:

Delivering Service Principles and Priorities

- 14 Appendix A provides an update on progress in implementing the SLA. This includes a summary on what we have been doing to change the way the service delivers, to increase efficiency and become more responsive to local needs and update on progress actually delivering the different strands of service activity.
- 15 Appendix B provides an analysis of the service requests, legal notices and fixed penalty notices dealt with by the enforcement and regulatory staff in the three Inner West wards during this reporting period.
- 16 A key performance measurement is how many mechanical sweeping blocks have been scheduled and how many we have actually managed to complete in the reporting period. This is a summary for Inner West which includes road sweeping and path-sweeping:

Ward/Area	June 2012 - November 2012	
	No of blocks scheduled	No of blocks completed
Armley	250	208
Bramley & Stanningley	184	143
Inner West Area	434	351

- 17 The main reasons for the number of missed blocks has been a lack of cover for leave, sickness and carry-over of in lieu days awarded as part of the return to work agreement – this is due to an on-going pressure on over-time budgets.

Outcomes and partnership working

- 18 The locality team continue to develop strong working relationships with key environmental services delivery partners including West North West Homes, Parks & Countryside, LCC Highways and Continental Landscapes. The service has now firmly embedded the principle of cleansing waste/ rubbish from all council land regardless of departmental ownership wherever possible. A pilot programme of joint working is being launched in the New Wortley area with WNW Homes and key partners in the New Year to test out and extend principles of how staff/ resources can be effectively shared and tasked to focus on common local priorities SLA priorities. The service is continuing to work with Parks & Countryside and is currently identifying how their staff and ours can support each other better in terms of litter-bin emptying and litter-picking (Parks staff on streets and vice-versa at weekends) where this is mutually viable. Joint work with Continental Landscapes has gone very well this year despite the 'teething' problems with the grass-cutting contract earlier in the year due to high levels of rainfall. Our staff are using lane and road closures provided by Continental to clean and service problematic arterial routes, in return our staff are removing litter gathered by Continental staff and sweeping roads once their cuts are complete.
- 19 We have recently being working closely with the Bramley Forum member on the area committee to identify key problem environmental sites across Bramley ward - whilst this work has initially focussed on cleansing and vegetation control responses we will be escalating the focus to enforcement activity once priorities have been established.
- 20 Revised versions of neighbourhood surveys measuring levels of litter and detritus have been taking place across the city since late November/early December 2011. These were initially planned as quarterly but have been revised to half-yearly as they were considered too resource intensive/costly for the value of the data. Following consultation with Elected Members about the measure of street cleanliness (National Indicator (NI) 195) and it's usefulness at a local level, this is now carried out on a citywide basis only. The latest figure for citywide cleanliness indicates that 91% of sites surveyed were at a satisfactory level of cleanliness.
- 21 The city's citizen panel is currently being asked a variety of questions relating to council performance – one of which is around satisfaction about the environmental condition of neighbourhoods. At the time of producing this report the results were not available and will therefore be reported through the Environmental sub group at a later date.
- 22 The Locality Manager continues to use the judgement of the ward members/Area Committee and feedback from residents groups, key partners such as the ALMO and ward forums to assess whether satisfaction levels are acceptable and where outcomes need improvement.

Accountability and Member Influence

- 23 The Locality Team ensures senior manager representation at ward member meetings. The meetings provide opportunity for members to be consulted on priorities/issues in their wards and for these concerns to be tracked. Discussions on how sweeping routes could be altered and where new litter bins could be best placed have also taken place. Locality Team staff and the Locality Manager attend also attend a number of community forums and residents meeting to further enhance local influence on service delivery.
- 24 The area committees General Purposes Sub-group meets regularly and considers/raises services issues with the Locality Manager. It also receives updates and challenges other

services that have an influence on the environmental condition of the area, such as WNW Homes, LCC Highways, Park & Countryside and Continental Landscapes. The group ensures there is appropriate coordination in place between the Locality Team and these services.

- 25 Individual ward members are referring issues direct to the Locality Team where they are deemed a significant issue that need a quick response. Feedback from Members continues to be positive - most cleansing issues are being responded to and resolved quickly. There are some issues though that Members feel are not always being responded to quick enough, for example requests for new litter bins, ginnel clearance that required cutting back of vegetation and programmed enforcement work.
- 26 The Locality Manager has also been working directly with local residents groups particularly in New Wortley, the Whythers, Fairfields, Broadlees and across Bramley to tackle very local environmental problems. Feedback from these groups continues to be positive, with particular improvements reported in responses to reports of gully blockages and cleansing issues.

Resources and Staffing Issues

- 27 Work continues on staff engagement and improving industrial relations with the 77 strong cleansing staff and 13 enforcement staff – each member of staff has now had a performance appraisal linked to an individual training and development record. The Locality Manager has developed an extensive staff engagement plan designed to encourage and enhance opportunities for staff dialogue for a workforce that largely works out on-site – this includes all service managers and supervisors being required to meet each member of staff to understand their roles fully and support them to improve the ways in which they are delivering the service.
- 28 Staff sickness and absenteeism has improved on last year but work is still required to provide more stringent sickness management across the team to ensure staff progressing through the sickness stages in the Councils absentee management process.
- 29 The number of grievances in the team and need for formal management instructions and disciplinary action has also reduced over the last 6 months – this is due to a largely to better communication and locality management and supervision arrangements.
- 30 The WNW Locality Manager is currently leading city-wide work on the procurement of a new mechanical cleansing fleet - a city-wide business-case is currently being developed to establish the best model to procure a contract for supply, a further update will be provided to members via the area committee's sub-group.
- 31 The service is continuing its efforts to improve productivity via initiatives such as the use of local skips to minimise tipping times for mechanical cleansing drivers and reviewing staff starting and finishing locations in order to maximise cleansing/ service delivery time and minimise time spent travelling to and from the depot.
- 32 The service remains on-target in terms of budgetary expenditure and performance at the end of period 7 of the financial year. There is a pressure on agency and overtime budgets which is being closely managed and monitored.

Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 33 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.

Council Policies and City Priorities

- 34 The 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.

Resources and Value for Money

- 35 There are no resource implications.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 36 There are no legal implications - the report contains no information that is deemed exempt or confidential.

Risk Management

- 37 There are no risk management implications within this report.

Recommendations

- 38 That Inner West Area Committee note and comment on:
- a) what aspects of the service they feel are working well and delivering against the commitments made in the SLA;
 - b) what aspects of the service they feel are not working as well as they should against the commitments made in the SLA and would like to see improvements made;
 - c) what the Area Committee's views are, what the key service developments and continued top priorities for Inner West should be in planning for 2013/14, particularly in light of the expected on-going financial pressures.

Background documents

None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.