

Joint Area Committee – South – 7th October 2009

10. Performance of the Streetscene Service

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Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Area South Committee on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the Area for the period October 2008 – September 2009.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report.

Report

Since the last report, the service has been fully occupied finishing the previous financial years work programs, and since then, starting the new seasons workload. However we have achieved some satisfying results; the main points are listed below: -

- Improved our performance in NI 195 result of 8.6% (street cleaning)
- Improved our NI 196 performance result (fly tipping) to Level 1 which is classed as very effective
- Achieved BVPI 218 a & b (Abandoned Vehicles) performance results of 100%
- The town won a Gold award in the Britain in Bloom competition, with a discretionary 'local roots' award for St Johns Churchyard's 'Beach Display' and seven neighbourhood awards resulting in four certificates of merit & three outstanding awards.
- The service also dealt with 3 major flooding incidents in 2008/9, delivering approx 5,000 sandbags across the district
- We have renewed the contracts for the maintenance of Critical Ordinary Watercourses with the Environment Agency & the maintenance contract for the Cartgate Picnic Area with InterRoute
- Achieved 2* ratings from internal audits of our Horticultural Services, Lufton Stores, Open Space Management and Fleet Management & the Operators Licence.
- Achieved the savings targets required from the service
- Won the maintenance contract for the Ivel Barbarians sports ground maintenance

Horticultural & Streetcleaning Operations

From a horticultural perspective -It's been a hard season!

The ongoing rain through the summer has meant that mowing operations have been relentless with grass growing at levels which we normally only see in spring, carried on throughout the season. This has also had the knock on effect of making herbicide applications difficult to schedule, as we can't spray in the rain! However, with all these things taken into account, the team has responded brilliantly and the Area has looked well tended throughout.

Our Yeovil in Bloom team has, as always, split its time between maintaining the basket displays & the florally planted schemes and once again they have been both a pleasure to view and a discussion point among visitors – along the line of “Which one do you like most?”

One event, which did raise considerable interest, was the ‘Spring Bedding Giveaway’ that took place in St Johns Churchyard when we took out the ‘used’ bedding at the end of the winter season. The result of this was that 95% of the bedding plants used, were donated to a range of causes.

On the 17th September we had the presentations for the South West in Bloom presentations that were held at the Westlands Sports Club and once again the team ‘polished’ the town so that visitors got a real feel for what South Somerset has to offer. We were of course, delighted with the outcome of the competition and it is a fair reflection of all the effort put in by the officers, operational teams and residents groups involved.

In tandem with this, our team also made considerable preparations for the Tour of Britain stage that came through South Somerset with the stage, finishing in Yeovil on 18th September and our street cleaning & horticultural maintenance teams once again delivered the goods producing a route which was clean, well maintained and pleasing to see both in person & on the television coverage.

As well as delivering our routine maintenance program, we have been involved in some one off works, including the re-landscaping of planted areas at College Green with the help of Cllr Peter Gubbins, and extensive tree thinning on the Alvington bunds, to address residents’ issues with the plantings next to their fences.

In the office, we are working on our costings and efficiencies of operations, investigating technologies, which will help us to work ‘smarter’.

The Streetcleaning teams were also involved again with the ‘Westfield Community Clean Up’ over the two weeks. During this time, the team removed white goods & other fly tipping, carried out further weed control, graffiti removal, extra sweeping, litter picking & sign cleaning. To accompany this work, our Arboricultural team completed some tree work in the play area.

As well as the Westfield initiative, we were also involved with Operational Relentless, and our town centre team focussed on removing broken glass, clearing additional litter and fly tipping from areas outside of our normal cleansing areas. While the Enforcement Officers carried out environmental patrolling with Police officers & PCSOs.

The service has continued with staff training, and we are proud that 10 of our street cleaners are starting an NVQ2 in Waste Management.

As well as this, horticultures Vicky Hamilton, Mark Rendell & Chris Meil recently passed their NVQ level 2 in Amenity Horticulture.

Vicky also achieved the BTEC National Award in Horticulture obtaining distinction level pass, and Sarah Pinder (Nursery Apprentice) completed the RHS advanced in Amenity Horticulture.

Jon Brown has recently completed a Tree risk assessment course in order that the team has that capability to continue with the tree risk management program, and Jon will be studying more on this topic over the coming months.

In addition to this, the service also has a dozen staff involved in the Skills for life program coordinated by HR.

Streetscene also actively works with agencies to encourage the long term unemployed to gain work experience, and this year we have enabled approx 20 people to gain experience through the County Training program, and we wish them well in their search for employment.

NI 195 & 196

Following changes to the streetcleaning service, we are delighted to show that our street cleaning performance (NI195) has again improved from 12.6% in 2007/8 to 8.6% 2008/9. As always, we are aiming to deliver further improvements in this area of service in 2009/10.

In addition to this we have also improved our NI196 score (for managing fly tipping) from level 2 in 2007/8 (effective) to level 1 (very effective). This means that we have taken more enforcement actions against fly tips, and have received less instances of fly tipping compared to the previous year. This is especially pleasing for us, as it follows a reorganisation of the way in which we respond to responsive street cleaning works. My thanks to the team who tackle this area of work.

Local Area Quality Inspections

Once again we have carried out monitoring of the overall standards of streetcleaning and grounds maintenance via the process of site inspections carried out in conjunction with the local ward members. Since April this year we have changed from selecting random inspection zones, to inspecting on a Ward basis.

The results from these inspections are reported in the table below.

September 2008 > August 2009

Month	Location	Results
October	Middle Street, Milford Park, Roping Road, Lower Wraxhill Road, Greenwood Road & Artillery Road	33% Good 55% Fair 12% Fail
November	Freedom Avenue, Westfield Ave, High Lea, Oxford Road, Highfield road & Hundredstone Park	50% Good 30% Fair 20% Fail

December	Monmouth Rd, Greenhill Rd, Goldcroft, West Hendford, Watercombe Heights, Bluebell Rd, Whitemead & Badger heights	60% Good 20% Fair 20% Fail
January	Petters Way, High Street, West Park, St Andrews Road, Yew Tree Close, Lower Realm, Mead avenue	50% Good 40% Fair 10% Fail
February	Lower Fairmead, Runnymede Rd, Rosebery Ave, Crofton Park, Princes St, Watercombe Lane, Dorchester Rd & The Toose	60% Good 40% Fair 0% Fail
March	Redwood Road Area, Westville Area, Chelston / Glenthorne Ave, Coombe Street Lane Area, Westland Road area, Lynx Trading Estate & Top of Abbey Manor	70% Good 30% Fair 0% Fail
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance	86% Pass, 47.5% at Good Level with 14% Fail	
<p><i>Although the team narrowly missed the targets set, it should be noted that these are very high standards to achieve, being designed to give the service demanding targets to strive towards. Our performance in other indicators – such as Ni195, Ni196, Britain in Bloom, etc, show the quality of performance that is delivered by the team.</i></p>		
2009/10 Inspections		
April	Yeovil West	77% Good 33% Fair 0% Fail
May	Yeovil East	56% Good 33% Fair 11% Fail
June	Yeovil Central	56% Good 22% Fair 22% Fail

July	Yeovil Brympton	67% Good 33% Fair 0% Fail
Aug	Yeovil South	78% Good 11% Fair 11% Fail
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance date	to 92% Pass, 66% at Good Level with 8% fail	

Enforcement

Our officers are currently working on the development and introduction of Dog Control Orders that will alter the control of dogs & dog fouling, anywhere on publicly accessible land in the district.

A workshop has been arranged with Parish Clerks & Members on 27th October at the Innovation Centre (this is an open invitation for any interested parties). For further details please contact Lyndsey Williams.

The Orders would also enable us to:

- Ban dogs from certain areas - e.g. play areas & sports pitches during playing seasons.
- Impose restrictions on any publicly accessible land which is either free to use, or paid to access. At the moment we can only control dog fouling in built up areas, however the DCO's would enable us to expand this power.
- Enable authorised officers to instruct someone to put their dog on a lead
- Enable us to can designate areas where dogs must be kept on a lead
- Allow us to restrict on how many dogs can be walked at any one time by one person.

We have also been working with Restorative Justice Panel on some incidents of graffiti & vandalism in Area South, so far we have one case will have the outcome delivered at the beginning of October & we are waiting for the Police to give us the go ahead on the other, at which stage we will implement the practical works.

In addition to this we have also worked with the Probation Service regarding Community Payback; and graffiti removal, litter picking and the repainting of benches & fences at Yew Tree Park has resulted.

Officers have continued with regular patrolling across the area, teaming up with PCSO`s to carry out joint patrolling covering a range of issues, in particular in the St Johns & Birchfield areas of the town.

As usual one of our most common areas of calls is regarding abandoned vehicles and our performance on the speed with which we respond to these is measured via BVPI218a & b, I am delighted to inform members that the team has achieved 100% performance on this work, with every reported vehicle dealt with within the set timescales.

Recently a program of work was coordinated to remove graffiti in all the underpasses in Area South using a range of specialist products to remove the inks without damaging the passageway walls. This has made a notable improvement the look of these areas making them appear more cared for and hopefully, safer to use.

Actions following the last report

- Production of plants and the installation of summer bedding schemes - completed
- Fencing around pond at Oak tree park - completed
- Tree planting at various locations - 200 trees - completed
- Renovation of the Fiveways, Westlands roundabouts has been completed & the renovation of the Bunford Roundabout will take place this winter
- Continued work on the Larkhill Open Space Project –this area of work is developing well & the Project was entered for a Neighbourhood award in this years South West in Bloom competition
- Bluebell road tree screening - removal of nurse crop and thinning of remainder – completed
- Continued work on the Open Space Strategy – this work is progressing well
- Capital bid for new fencing at Yew Tree park – this bid was successful and the replacement fence will be installed soon.

What's coming next?

- Work has commenced on the bids to renew the Yarlington Homes & Thorne House maintenance contracts
- Bunford Hollow Roundabout redevelopment
- Environmental pond works at Oak Tree Park
- Tree planting at Lyde Rd
- Ongoing bulb planting
- Re-fencing & tree planting at Yew Tree Park
- Our Arboricultural team are starting the remedial tree work at Sampsons Woods, ordered by the Councils Countryside section
- The trees along Weston Avenue are being replaced following the recent resident consultation
- The team will be re-landscaping the grounds around the United Reformed Church in Princes Street
- We will be re-evaluating & re-landscape a number of shrub planted areas around the Town
- New pathways at Larkhill Open Space will be installed to improve access for users of the site
- Work will continue to address the issues of lighting in Birchfield Park

Financial Implications

All issues highlighted in the report will be achieved within service budgets.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

Increasing resident satisfaction with the built environment from 44% (2006) to 60% by 2012

Background Papers: Progress reports to Area Committees on Performance of Streetscene
