

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel **DATE:** 2nd Dec 2014

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Commissioner for environment and open spaces
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PART I **NON - KEY DECISION**

STREET CLEANSING: PUBLIC EXPERIENCE

1 Purpose of Report

To respond to the Neighbourhood and Community Services (NCS) Scrutiny Panel from enquiries raised from the initial Street Cleansing briefing note provided in November 2014. This report will demonstrate current performance and improvements for the future for the service. It will also demonstrate the proposals for the new proposed Street Cleansing scorecard.

2 Recommendation/Proposed Action

Waste & Environment and Environmental Services team are requested to provide comment to NCS Scrutiny Panel regarding issues raised through the provision of the Street Cleansing Briefing Note (provided in Appendix 1). These responses are provided in Section 5:

- A. when was the change in policy on street cleaning made, and how was this communicated with Councillors;
- B. the input / output system;
- C. how decisions were made as to when a street needed cleaning;
- D. the use of mechanical cleaning;
- E. responsibility for spurs owned by housing / highways;
- F. cleaning of the High Street and public perception of Slough town centre; and
- G. a statement regarding prosecutions for littering offences

3 The Sustainable Community Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3a. Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities

Slough Borough Council has stated through the Sustainable Community Strategy in the Environment and Regeneration section that Slough has made good progress in recent years to improve the local environment and is now one of the cleanest boroughs in the South-East.

Furthermore it also states that the council will support and ensure residents can:

- Volunteer for community clean up campaigns; and
- Keep their neighbourhood clean and tidy.

Street Cleansing is intrinsically linked to waste management and the Sustainable Community Strategy states that Slough will:

- move up the waste hierarchy and increase the amount of waste recycled;
- reduce the overall amount of waste produced; and
- reduce dependency on landfill for final waste disposal.

3b. **Sustainable Community Strategy: Cross-Cutting themes**

Residents play an important part in the sustainable management of the borough's waste and ensuring that any waste that is produced is placed in the correct receptacle for disposal. Most commonly this relates to placing waste in the kerbside residual and recycling bins. However, this also relates to the disposal of litter using split litter / recycling bins.

Therefore, all residents have a civic responsibility to contribute to a cleaner, greener Slough, demonstrating the cross-cutting theme of **Civic responsibility**.

Successful street cleansing processes will ensure the town is kept tidy and clean, while unsuccessful processes may have inadvertent consequences such as a rise in fly tipping, detritus or littering, which damages the image of the town. This relates to the theme of **Improving the image of the town**.

3c. **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

There are no references within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for street cleansing.

3d. **Corporate Plan 2014/15**

The Slough Borough Council Corporate Plan states that one of the major infrastructure changes is to replace 80% of street bins and 100% of park bins with split litter and recycling bins across the borough.

Improve the customer experience

Service users expect efficient and reliable litter bin emptying, gully and channel sweeping which the service will strive to improve.

Deliver high quality services and facilities to meet local needs

In designing street cleansing provision, local circumstances will be taken into account, to deliver the most appropriate service for users. For example Transport Hubs and the Central Business District have more stringent cleansing regimes due to their prominence and importance both commercial and industrially. The service will aim to be of a consistently high quality.

Develop new ways of working

The service will make the most of new technology and best practice to increase efficiency, improve levels of service and deliver improved environmental, economic and social outcomes where these changes are cost effective or in tandem with contract review or renewal.

Deliver local and national change and improvement

The council will constantly review services to ensure they meet changing needs, resources and opportunities. The will ensure that street cleansing has a core role in the delivery and support of Council plans and that it remains a prominent frontline service delivered to all residents, businesses and visitors to the town.

Achieve value for money

Through efficiencies and harnessing new technology and ways of working street cleansing will deliver a consistently high level of service. This includes the use of new technology and ways that are specific to the urban environment of Slough and specifying zones of importance.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

None.

(b) Risk Management

None.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of an EIA.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 As a Unitary Council Slough Borough Council is responsible for all street cleansing, gully and channel sweeping, litter picking and detritus sweeping operations within the borough. The Street Cleansing function for Slough Borough Council is delivered by Amey under the Environmental Services contract which runs until November 2017. The contract covers Waste Collection, Waste Management, Waste Disposal, Highways, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance;
- 5.2 A series of enquiries were made by NCS Scrutiny Panel to a Briefing Note provided by Environmental Services on 29th October 2014.
- 5.3 *'When was the change in policy on street cleaning made, and how was this communicated with Councillors'*

The change was communicated to the Councillors on 17th October 2011 in Key Decision to Cabinet as '£75k Improve efficiency in street cleaning'. This report is enclosed in Appendix 2.

5.4 *'Is the Amey Street Cleansing contract an input or output system'*

In an input system streets are given a frequency of cleansing by the Council such as daily, weekly, fortnightly etc. The Contractor charges for a clean irrespective of whether the street requires cleansing or not; and the Council pays whether the street requires cleansing or not. Usually the Council will be billed on a per metre basis as there will be a specific cost to each street for each scheduled visit.

The benefit is clarity as to when a street is scheduled to be cleansed and the quality and frequency can be more closely monitored; but the liability is with the Council, you have to pay if the street is not monitored irrespective of its condition. Therefore, this option requires a higher input of monitoring from the Council and therefore is likely to cost more as a service and more from a client perspective.

In an output system the Contractor has the responsibility and therefore the liability to maintain the streets at a certain level and ensure they are brought back to an acceptable standard within a specified time. The Contractor takes the risk that they have sufficient resources to provide the service; the service tends to be an area based process and crews visit/patrol but do not clean streets which have not fallen below the unacceptable level and can therefore cover larger areas; the Council pays for what has been done not what may need to be done. Rectification work should be kept to a minimum by the Contractor as it with the correct contract management framework the contractor will need to finance any additional rectification spend.

In both cases, there will always be times when a street requires additional cleanses between its scheduled cleanse/visit; in the case of 'output', additional cleanses are at the Contractor's cost to bring the street back to the standard. With the 'input' service the Contractor will require paying for additional cleansing because the Council has specified how often the street should be cleansed and is their liability.

The present street cleansing contract with Amey is output based.

5.5 *'How decisions were made as to when a street needed cleaning'*

Amey management assesses their resources and knowledge from their historical data over previous years to deliver a service to fit the revised budget.

5.6 *'The use of mechanical cleaning'*

Mechanical sweeping of residential streets is scheduled for once every six weeks; main routes receive a weekly sweep and the High Street receives a daily sweep.

In addition there are two small sweepers which carryout footway sweeping across the borough and a street 'flusher' which focuses predominantly on the High Street.

5.7 *'The responsibility for spurs owned by housing / highways'*

The Environmental Services Contract includes the cleansing of the Public Highway (including roads, gullies, channels and sweeping of the pavement) and Parks & Open Spaces. However, it does not include the cleansing of grass areas, garage areas, parking areas, walkways or drying areas within Housing maintained land. The cleansing of these areas is delivered by caretakers and sub-contractors employed by Neighbourhood Services.

5.8 *'The cleaning of the High Street and public perception of Slough town centre'*

The High Street and Heart of Slough area is cleansed several times a day from 06.30 until 19.00 Monday to Saturday and 06.30 until 18.00 on Sunday.

The type of light grey stone both within the Heart of Slough and the High Street has created issues regarding staining of the pavements from viscous sugar based liquid and oils. The accumulation of grit, chewing gum and detritus has deteriorated the aesthetics of the developments. In addition to this the street flusher is used to wash the streets when resources and weather permit and jet washing on occasions to deal with the ongoing staining issues. However, a more sustainable long term solution will be required going forward.

All litter/recycling bins in the High Street and Heart of Slough are emptied on a continual basis to prevent them from overflowing. All street bins in Slough are currently being mapped and collated by the Waste & Environment team. Once all bins have been mapped then a program of rationalisation shall be undertaken to ensure that litter bins are in the most appropriate places in the borough.

6 **Conclusion**

NCS Scrutiny Panel is requested to provide comment to the Cabinet regarding:

- A. Progress of the split litter / recycling bin implementation across Slough;
- B. The development of the proposed Street Cleansing Scorecard 2015/16 in Appendix 3.

7 **Background Papers**

Appendix 1 - Street Cleansing Briefing Note reviewed by NCS Scrutiny Panel on the 29th October 2014

Appendix 2 - Cabinet 17.10.11 Draft Budget Strategy and MTFP 2013-12 to 2015-16

Appendix 3 - Proposed Political Street Cleansing Scorecard 2015/16