

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE		Report No. 11		
Date of Meeting	24 th July 2008			
Title of Report	Cleansing & Amenities Improvement Plan – Quarterly Update			
Portfolio	Waste & Sustainability			
Link to Corporate Priorities	Customer Focus and Waste & Recycling			
Key Decision	No			
Executive Workplan Ref	B383			
Public Report	Yes			
Summary of Report				
This report is to update Members on the improvements being undertaken by the Cleansing and Amenities Service Improvement Board.				
Officer Recommendations				
That the Executive:-				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the work undertaken within Cleansing & Amenities and the improvements, which are beginning to be implemented. 2. Request that a future update report be submitted to the Executive in October 2008. 				
Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.				
Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
Yes	None	Yes	Yes	None
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is to update Members on the work of the Cleansing and Amenities Service Improvement Board as agreed by the Executive on 6th December 2007.

2. Service Improvements

- 2.1 The Service Improvement Board (formerly known as the C&A Best Value Improvement Programme Board) was set up following the Best Value Review of Cleaning & Amenities in 2005. The Service Improvement Board is focused on improving service delivery and performance.
- 2.2 The Service Improvement Board is chaired by the lead member, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive and has senior officer representation from front line and support service areas within the Council. It meets fortnightly and is focused on implementing improvements in line with the transition to one Council for Wiltshire.
- 2.3 The SIB would publicly like to thank Cllr Toby Sturgis for his guidance and support during his time as lead member. SIB welcomed Cllr Christine Crisp as the new lead member with effect from 6th June 2008.
- 2.4 The Board commissioned an independent review of current operations to establish where service improvements and efficiencies could be made, where additional capacity and resources may be required, and what could be achieved prior to the transition to the new Council.
- 2.5 Based on the review, the Board has endorsed an action plan for improvements in a number of areas, which was considered by the Executive on 6th December 2007 and agreed. The detailed project plan is available and will be reviewed by the Board on a regular basis and reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis. This report represents the second quarterly report to the Executive and outlines below the progress made to date.

Improvement Areas	Progress to date
Waste Collection – Domestic	<p>Missed bin performance continues to be less than 100 per week during March, April and May. Attention is now focused on enforcement of side waste and other standards.</p> <p>Refuse drivers have been re-designated as Team Leaders to reflect their level of responsibility. They are currently undergoing a major training programme to improve their core supervisory skills. Linked to this is a communications programme aimed at improving the flow of information through the organisation.</p> <p>We have offered HGV training to Loaders with the aim of reducing the use of agency drivers and offering a career path. NVQ training for refuse staff is planned in the autumn.</p> <p>The inability to obtain replacement bins, due to a European shortage, is hampering relations with some households. New supplies will be available by the end of July.</p> <p>See Performance Management below</p>
Waste Collection – Trade	<p>A commercial waste report was presented to The Executive on 24th April recommending price increases of around 25%, reflecting increases in costs, particularly disposal and fuel costs. New charges were agreed and these have generally been accepted by customers. With new customers being added (5 in July) finances remain in line</p>

	<p>with budget.</p> <p>One area of concern is the reaction of some customers (ie care homes, educational establishments, charities) who have been reclassified as schedule 2 customers. Under the redefinition, these customers do not pay the disposal element of the charge and are therefore looking to reclaim this money from previous years. The risk however is likely to be minimal.</p>
Recycling – Kerbside	See Communications below
Recycling – Green Waste	<p>A green waste strategy was presented at the last quarterly update. Implementation has been hindered due to a European shortage of wheeled bins with some suppliers quoting '09 delivery. We have however, been able to secure a supply of 600 bins in July and a further order due in October. This initial order will satisfy the 500 potential customers who have already registered an interest.</p> <p>In the meantime through working with our colleagues in Salisbury we have managed to obtain a supply of grey bins which will be labelled as 'Green Waste'. Having secured this supply our roll out strategy is about to begin.</p> <p>We remain confident of hitting our target of 2,500 new customers and of increasing our % composted.</p>
Streetscene – Street Cleaning	<p>Street Cleansing performance has improved dramatically resulting in the dept. beating its LPSA stretch target for 07/08 by nearly five percentage points from 17.5% to 12.67% (the lower the % the better the performance). Following the considerable work underway in this area we anticipate single figure performance in next year's results.</p> <p>New street cleaning and bin emptying schedules have been implemented across the district with the emphasis on improving villages and main arterial routes.</p> <p>Working practices and times have also been changed and notice served on those affected employees. As a result, new work patterns will be fully operational from the end of August.</p> <p>Publicity regarding the emergency response teams and targeting of grot spots has resulted in a good response from the public that is helping define work patterns. Collaborative work is being explored with other agencies including working with Community Safety as part of their 'month of action' in September.</p> <p>Recruitment problems have hindered further progress with two new staff starting in the last month but five further vacancies remaining unfilled.</p> <p>See Performance Management below for further information on improvements in this area.</p>
Public Conveniences	<p>A review of working practices was undertaken for this area. It was decided that change at this point was unnecessary. However, monitoring will increase.</p>

Enforcement	<p>A new enforcement policy is currently being written on a county-wide basis that will form the basis of our enforcement work for the remainder of 08/09.</p> <p>Due to long term sickness an agency employed Enforcement Officer has been appointed on a short term basis to implement this policy, to review current procedures and carry out a focused enforcement programme.</p>
Grounds Maintenance	<p>Discussions are ongoing with regards section 106 monies. Some improvement works are planned across the district – utilising this money as appropriate.</p>
Small Works	<p>A review of the drainage / cesspit operation has been carried out. The operational implications of this review are currently being worked through.</p>
Transport Workshop and Fleet	<p>A new replacement programme has been agreed and is being implemented.</p> <p>A review meeting with Westlea has taken place. They are happy with our service and as a result we are currently drawing up a Service Level Agreement.</p> <p>Staff resources are currently stretched having lost one fitter and the apprentice within the workshop. The issue of recruitment and retention in this area is being reviewed.</p>
Financial Review	<p>A major review of service budgets has been carried out that has aligned resources and budgets by service. Sound financial information is now available for C&A as we move towards unitary status.</p>
Systems Improvement	<p>“Whitespace Power Depot”, a software package specifically designed for waste collection, street cleaning and grounds maintenance has been purchased. The Trade Waste element is due to go ‘live’ in August. Progress has been hampered by errors within the address data. As a result, work on all the services is likely to continue through the rest of the year. However, it would appear that the unitary authority will use this system as its main software for Amenities and Waste so the current work will put NWDC in a very good position.</p>
Customer Focus	<p>Work with Customer Services is ongoing. Currently, a member of staff from Customer Services is spending a month with C&A to help improve understanding of issues between the two depts. On completion of this month the bulky waste service will be transferred to Customer services.</p> <p>Communications, particularly, by phone has been identified as a problem within C&A and as a consequence a review is underway to investigate the best way of managing the ‘front of house’. The implementation of these findings will take place during September.</p>
Communications	<p>A very successful programme of ‘Roadshows’ took place during June which encouraged recycling and gained useful feedback for future initiatives.</p> <p>A report has been prepared for CMB/Executive on July 17th outlining the options for raising awareness of AWC and recycling in general that aims to build upon the O&S report earlier this year.</p> <p>C&A have worked closely with the Comms Team to update messaging</p>

	<p>on vehicles and leaflets for green waste and educational material that has supported the improvement programme.</p> <p>A complete review of the C&A section of the NWDC website has been completed. The next stage is to load information regarding street cleaning rounds and bin emptying rounds. This will be done once the new working patterns are fully in place at the end of August.</p> <p>Regular meetings are being held throughout the organisation to improve communication, both in teams and larger groups.</p> <p>Dialogue with staff in Monkton Park has improved significantly and we are now sharing ideas and greater understanding of respective work.</p>
Staffing Structure – Roles and Responsibilities	All posts have now been filled, however long term sickness has hindered a number of staff moving into their new roles.
Human Resources	<p>Significant progress has been made on HR within the depot led by Karen Ogilvie.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training programmes have been delivered for new managers/STL's and the Refuse Team Leaders covering all aspects of their work. 2. Performance Appraisals are underway 3. Attendance reviews are being carried out 4. The disciplinary procedures have been tightened 5. The interview and induction process has been (and is continuing to be) fine tuned to match the requirements of the operation. 6. Responsibility and authority is being passed further down the organisation following the appointment of Senior Team Leaders and Team Leaders.
Performance Management	<p>A robust system of data collection is now in place and this information will shortly be shared with operational managers.</p> <p>C&A has recently received very positive feedback on its performance from Peoples Voice and from an independent DEFRA report, details of which are attached as appendices. There were two areas of concern that were highlighted as needing particular attention. The first was to do with litter on open spaces and highway verges which is being addressed by changes in Streetscene and the second was the response to enquiries and complaints that is being dealt with under Customer Focus</p>
Infrastructure	A working group is currently looking at four issues involving the physical assets of the depot. These are office accommodation, waste management licensing, security and the workshop. Building work will start shortly and is planned to continue for the next three months.
Unitary Issues	A number of staff within C&A are currently taking part in working groups to look at transitional issues for Waste and Streetscene in the Unitary Authority.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The cost to implement the improvements as shown above remains as detailed in the December Report and has been agreed as part of the recent budget setting process. The cost of implementing a new structure requires revenue growth of £150,000 (£75,000 ongoing and £75,000 one off). Given the number of reviews shown in the action plan a contingency sum of £75,000 has been identified in 2008/9 to include £35,000 specifically agreed for training and licensing. In addition, a one-off capital growth of £40,000 for the purchase of Emergency Response vehicles was agreed.

3.2 Service Budgets have been realigned to ensure integrity and to reflect changes made and plans for the future.

4. Community & Environmental Implications

4.1 The service provided within Cleansing and Amenities impacts on every household and many businesses throughout the District. The improvements being implemented aim to improve the level of service and satisfaction of our customers.

5. Human Resources Implications

5.1 Existing roles and responsibilities have been revised in line with a new structure. Appointments to the new structure are complete, however long term sickness, particularly on the support side of the organisation has hindered progress.

5.2 A dedicated HR resource, providing advice and mentoring on policies, procedures and people management, was introduced in February and has been a major influence on the HR progress made to date.

5.3 An Interim Project Manager was appointed to oversee this Improvement Plan through to Vesting Day.

6. Risks

6.1 Improvement work in this area is progressing well and recent feedback provides positive feedback on the impact of this work.

6.2 The transition to Unitary may deflect resources from achieving some of the Improvement Programme. However, this will be monitored and where possible actions done to mitigate any loss of resource.

6.3 The potential risk of reclaims from Trade Waste Schedule 2 customers. As this is a national problem the risk is felt to be minimal. Total risk, however, could total between £5,000 and £10,000.

Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Peoples Voice questionnaire – summary of findings	
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	Previous Executive Reports and Resolutions	
Previous Decisions Connected with this Report		
Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference
Procurement of Waste Management Software	Executive – 1st November 2007	E105
Executive Report	Executive – 6th December 2007	E129
C&A Quarterly Update	Executive – 13th March 2008	E200
Commercial Waste Collection Charges	Executive – 24th April 2008	E221
Report of the Household Waste & Recycling Task Group	Executive – 24th April 2008	E218
Report of the Household Waste & Recycling Task Group	Overview & Scrutiny – 28th February 2008	