

REPORT TO THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY		Report No. 10		
Date of Meeting	11 September 2008			
Title of Report	Cleaving & Amenities Improvement Plan			
Portfolio	Waste & Recycling			
Link to Corporate Priorities	Customer Focus			
Public Report	Yes			
Summary of Report				
This report is to update Members on the progress taking place within Cleaving and Amenities.				
Officer Recommendations				
That the Committee note the ongoing improvement works taking place within Cleaving & Amenities.				
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
None	None	None	None	None
Contact Officer	Chris Couzins-Short, Interim Manager, ccouzins-short@nortwilts.gov.uk , 01249 706353			

1. Introduction

This report is to update Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the work of the Cleansing and Amenities Service Improvement Board up to the end of August 2008.

Improvement Areas	Original Proposal	Work completed to date
Waste Collection – Domestic	It is recommended that further work is undertaken to improve waste collection efficiencies and performance. This will include the fine tuning of rounds, reviewing the collection rates and implementing a number of human resources procedures to reduce overtime costs, the use of agency staff, ensure higher attendance records and reduce sickness levels.	<p>Fine tuning of rounds within Calne has taken place. Management action has reduced missed bins to a minimum and overtime is limited to breakdowns or problems beyond our control. Missed bins have reduced from over 2000 per week in autumn 06 to 500 per week in Oct 07 to less than 100 per week on average during 08.</p> <p>A more rigorous sickness monitoring system has been implemented that has had resulted in a reduction of short term sickness levels.</p>
Waste Collection – Trade	It is recommended that the viability of this service is assessed and future management options be considered.	A review has been conducted including a financial analysis. As a result charges for 08/09 were increased on average by 26% taking income to over £600,000..
Recycling – Kerbside	Implement a continual programme of education and awareness needs to go into getting the recycling message across to encourage those not currently recycling to participate. A campaign strategy in conjunction with the Wiltshire Waste Partnership needs to be implemented.	<p>A series of roadshows were held in June under the banner of “Are you doing enough”. This led to very positive feedback and highlighted the need for plastic/cardboard recycling as well as greater information on what can be recycled. As a result messaging has been reinforced on vehicles and leaflets are being sent out to all householders on materials.</p> <p>A further round of roadshows is planned for the autumn with the main message of “love food/hate waste”. These roadshows are geared towards increasing general recycling.</p> <p>Executive approval has been given along with a budget of £55,000 for the introduction of a number of bring sites, based in town centres, for plastics and cardboard. Implementation is planned for November.</p> <p>Recycling rates have increased from 21.06% in 06/07 to 23.9% in 07/08. First quarter performance for 08/09 is 26.13%.</p>
Recycling –	Evaluate the current garden	A garden waste strategy was written and

<p>Garden Waste</p>	<p>waste collection scheme. A well thought through strategy and careful management is required to ensure this service is operated in a financially sound manner.</p> <p>Report to Executive on proposals to reduce waste and increase recycling to an agreed target for 2008/09.</p>	<p>implementation is ongoing. Progress has been hampered by the European shortage of wheeled bins.</p> <p>The strategy is to increase take up from 6413 households taking part to 8504 (11.2% to 15%). With 900 requests currently being supplied and further delivery of bins in the pipeline we remain confident of hitting the target and returning this service from a loss of £50,000 to breakeven.</p>
<p>Streetscene – Street Cleaning</p>	<p>Implement a street cleaning schedule across the district and a bin emptying schedule. Review existing working practices in line with schedules and revise staffing resources accordingly. Implement emergency response teams to provide efficient reactive service complementing the agreed schedules. Procure 2 service vehicles for emergency response teams. Work with other councils as part of the transition programme to co-ordinate work in this area.</p> <p>Report to Executive on proposals to manage the implementation and emptying of litter bins across the district.</p>	<p>Out of all of the services Street Cleansing has seen the greatest amount of change.</p> <p>New street cleaning and bin emptying schedules have been implemented across the district.</p> <p>Working practices and times have also been changed and notice was served on those affected employees. As a result, new work patterns became fully operational from the end of August.</p> <p>Significant investment has been made in additional staffing and vehicles aimed at improving this service, particularly aimed at response times.</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>Despite recruitment problems, that have led at times to being 25% under-resourced 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). First quarter performance for 08/09 is due in the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>Following the considerable work underway in this area we anticipate single figure performance in next years results</p>
<p>Public Conveniences</p>	<p>Align resources to the plans for closure and transfer. Review current working methods for</p>	<p>A review of working practices was undertaken for this area. It was decided that change at this point was unnecessary.</p>

	cleaning and propose options for consideration.	However, monitoring will increase.
Grounds Maintenance	<p>Undertake a review of the service to include an assessment of data, inventory of equipment and schedule of works.</p> <p>Review the system for managing the implementation of section 106 land.</p> <p>Review the level of work undertaken.</p> <p>Produce an action plan to include improved co-ordination between other councils in delivering this service.</p>	<p>Work on data gathering is planned for the autumn.</p> <p>A review of S106 management is taking place across the authority.</p>
Small Works	Undertake review of works and assess viability and ensure records to demonstrate value for money. Record and measure the amount of non scheduled work carried out.	A review of the tanker operation has been carried out. Charges are currently being reviewed alongside the implications of options.
Transport Workshop and Fleet	<p>Devise a new replacement programme that is built into the Council's budget and equipment fund.</p> <p>Review the service to both internal and external customers to ensure financial viability and impact of the service.</p> <p>Assess workshop extension requirements in accordance with health and safety.</p> <p>Undertake a review of the main cost elements of this service area and propose efficiencies in coordination with the transition to one council for Wiltshire.</p>	<p>A new replacement programme has been compiled and has been implemented. Capital investment of some £800,000 is being spent during 08/09, covered by the Capital Budget. This programme has been conveyed to WCC and we are working together to ensure the security of the ongoing replacement programme.</p> <p>A review of external works has been carried out and as a result an agreement has been drawn up with Westlea which is currently being discussed. This agreement clarifies services to be provided and puts the service in a much firmer financial position.</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	The Cleansing and Amenities exceeds £4m. It is proposed to undertake a review of all the service budgets to assess if costs/income are correctly allocated and where efficiencies could be made.	A complete overhaul of C&A's budgets has taken place, taking into account the impact of all the changes made to date. As a result, the original request for £150k plus contingency of £100k has been reduced to a one off revenue growth of £75k, plus a £35k budget targeted purely for training purposes.

Systems Improvement	<p>Implement “Whitespace Power Depot”, a software package specifically designed for waste collection, street cleaning and grounds maintenance (as approved by the Executive on 1 November 2007). The implementation of the new system will focus on customer needs and service improvements and provide accurate performance information.</p>	<p>Work continues on the implementation of Whitespace with the Trade Module going live in September. Problems have arisen with data validation and this has led to a number of delays.</p> <p>Whitespace will become the new Council’s preferred software for Waste and Amenities.</p>
Customer Focus	<p>Review the first point of contact for Cleansing and Amenities service requests and complaints. It is proposed to review the customer contact centre and increase staffing to accommodate all enquiries relating to domestic waste collections, green waste recycling and bulky waste collections.</p>	<p>Work is ongoing to move the first point of contact to Monkton Park and implement a front of house service at the depot.</p>
Communications	<p>Implement a communications strategy to include campaign management, up to date web pages, service news, as required to customers and Members, regular staff briefings and management meetings.</p>	<p>A communications strategy has been implemented that includes campaign management, updated web pages, service news and regular staff briefings and management meetings.</p> <p>Part of this has centred around householders and in particular recycling and part has been internal. An example of the improvement made was the communication during the recent strike action</p>
Staffing Structure – Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Implement a revised operational structure that clarifies roles and responsibilities of all staff. Create opportunities to devolve responsibility and provide training and development in people and management skills. Actions for improving the service will be “owned” by staff accountable for their delivery with an overarching project plan led by a dedicated project lead officer.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Service Improvement Board will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Improvement</p>	<p>A new structure has been implemented that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>A comprehensive training programme has been carried out for new operations managers.</p> <p>Ownership and responsibility is being pushed down through the organisation with targets set for all staff via the appraisal scheme.</p>

	Plan with the lead project officer.	
Human Resources	Review roles and responsibilities. Set clear targets and expectations for all staff. Implement revised structure. Agree standards and expectations for the service. Implement appraisals, briefings, return to work interview and support for managers to manage more effectively.	See above. Standards and expectations have been agreed across all services. Appraisals are being carried out across the dept. Karen Ogilvie from HR has driven significant advances in sickness monitoring, disciplinary actions, recruitment and appraisals.
Performance Management	Install a robust system for collation of performance data. Agree targets and goals for the service area and accountability for delivery. Undertake a review of time and value of external groups and meetings.	A system for performance management is now in place and being fine tuned as its usage increases. An example of the monthly report to the Service Improvement Board is attached.
Infrastructure		Capital investment of £220,000 was agreed in 07/08 for office refurbishment and a workshop extension. The original proposals have been revised to cover offices, workshop, stores and security. Capital investment is also required to comply with the Environment Agency demand for a waste licence.

Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1
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