

Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Streetscene

Monday, 1 September 2008

Present: Councillor Adrian Lowe (Chair) and Councillors Julia Berry, Doreen Dickinson, Debra Platt and Peter Wilson

08.11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry Brown, Pat Haughton, June Molyneaux, Shaun Smith, Joyce Snape and Stella Walsh.

08.12 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared an interest in respect of items on the agenda.

08.13 MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Streetscene held on 20 August 2008.

08.14 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions from Members of the public.

08.15 CONSIDERATION OF EVIDENCE

Following the receipt by Members of the detailed Schedule of Maintenance relating to Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance, Members raised several issues.

Coming out of the last meeting Members produced the following issues to be looked at:

- How often are the maintenance schedules updated?
- Are the schedules ever monitored to check whether the work has been carried out?
- On the street sweeping schedules it shows that they are done regularly three times a year. At what time of the year are they due and do they vary from area to area.
- Is it possible for Members to receive an example of a Maintenance Schedule that has been completed with comments/missed areas/additional works with a signature?
- Promote the Contact Centre number to the Parish Councils to enable calls to be monitored.

Maintenance Schedules are updated as and when changes are made such as the adoption of green space, roads and updated as the work is done.

It is the responsibility of the Team Leader to ensure that the work on the Maintenance Schedules are carried out. Actual checking is rare as it is down to the responsibility of the Team Leader.

The frequency of the street sweepings can vary, but are done generally 3 times a year, with 6 times a year for the side roads. If there is leaf fall then it is done more frequently.

A copy of the completed maintenance schedule was circulated which showed the comments of the driver.

A reminder was made that all calls should be channelled through the Contact Centre to enable a check and monitor the complaints and observations that are made to the Council.

An explanation was given of the service request system called 'Flare' as this system would be quicker to ring through the Contact Centre rather than direct to staff in the department.

Members expressed concern that the monitoring of the Maintenance Schedules was not being carried out as most Members could identify areas within their Wards in which work was not being carried out. Members expressed surprise that side roads are swept 6 times per year, as they doubted from observations that this was being carried out.

Members also asked whether the type of litter bins were right for particular areas with an increase in demand in some areas and repeated requests for the bins to be emptied.

A request was made from the Members that all Councillors should receive the Maintenance Schedules to enable each Member to check and monitor their particular ward and provide feedback. This could be one of the recommendations from the Inquiry.

Concern was expressed that the Maintenance Schedules that had been circulated to Members at a previous meeting were incorrect and out of date.

The Streetscene Manager reported that up to date maintenance schedules were currently being prepared from scratch. The up to date list would be circulated to Members when available.

As a result of the Value for Money review process that had taken place earlier in the year, a number of recommendations had been accepted by the Executive Cabinet and these would address many of the issues that had been raised regarding the service provided by the Streetscene Division.

As a fact finding exercise Members **AGREED** to the invite submitted by the officers to visit the Bengal Street Depot to see a demonstration of the machinery used, as well as meet the staff and possibly to go out on one of the litter collection or street sweeping routes.

Chair