

**STREETSCENE  
MODERNISATION STRATEGY  
2018 - 2020**



# CONTENTS

## Contents

<b>Introduction - Overall vision .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background and Context.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Aims .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Underlying Principles .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Delivering the Strategy .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Assets.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Key Measures .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Key Actions .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Next Steps.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Appendix 1 - Current Position 2017-18.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix 2 - Streetscene Modernisation 2017-2020 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix 3 - High Level Action Plan .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **Introduction - Overall vision**

The 3 year streetscene modernisation strategy approved by Executive Cabinet in January 2017 has been reviewed and updated after evaluating progress made during 2017/18.

The overall vision of the strategy remains to ensure that the streetscene service continues to evolve by streamlining the structure and adopting modern, efficient process and digital changes that meet the needs of all stakeholders over the life of the strategy.

## **Background and Context**

The streetscene service base revenue budget for 2016/17 was £2,086m representing 14.84% of the council's total revenue budget of £14,059m.

Similarly for 2017/18 the base budget of £2,135m represents 14.80% of the council's total revenue budget of £14,419m

During 2016/17 the service employed 56.6 FTE staff representing 20.5% of the total FTE staff of 276. Similarly during 2017/18 55.4 FTE staff represented 20.4% of the total FTE staff of 271.92

The original streetscene modernisation report covered the period 2012-15 and concentrated mainly on the areas of management, culture change and business development opportunities without direct reference to specific service or process issues.

Analysis of the original strategy showed that a number of service areas should be included separately in an up to date strategy e.g. cemeteries and tree management. Health and Safety for both employees and the public should also be addressed.

A position statement showing achievements and successes, resulting from changes in working practices during 2017/18, is attached at Appendix 1

Key elements of the updated strategy 2017-2020 are shown at Appendix 2.

An updated high level action plan, expected to last for the next two years and designed around change themes is attached at Appendix 3.

Detailed milestones, actions and timescales will continue to be managed using the corporate projects system.

The new waste contract which will also involve a substantial amount of work over the next 18 months will be managed and reported separately.

## **Aims**

The updated streetscene strategy has been drawn up as a result of discussions and input from a range of key stakeholders. It establishes a clear way forward for the period 2018-2020 together with a high level action plan for the development of the streetscene service. The approach is designed to develop a modern, efficient and fit for purpose service, well positioned to meet the challenging times faced by local government in the years ahead.

The streetscene service has already introduced a number of change themes designed to challenge working practices and modernise and introduce improvements to deliver high quality services in a co-ordinated way.

Changes in behaviour and culture together with a greater focus on performance and productivity are required to achieve these aims. The updated strategy and its priorities will be shared fully with streetscene staff.

Key stakeholders such as parish councils and community groups also play an important part.

This is the first review of the strategy and a further review will take place in early 2019.

## **Underlying Principles**

There are a number of guiding principles which underline the implementation of the streetscene strategy:

1. Modernising the service to meet increased demands and ensuring that up to date thinking, technology and latest methods are applied in practice.
2. Improving productivity and increasing output particularly in relation to high profile service areas.
3. Realigning and prioritising budgets in line with the strategy and council financial performance.

## **Delivering the Strategy**

The delivery of the strategy revolved around six key areas with associated change themes during 2017/18.

Key areas:

1. Review of key policies
2. Performance
3. Technology
4. Resources and Service Staffing
5. Internal Asset Management
6. External Asset Management

Knowledge gained during 2017/18, and in line with the council's Corporate Strategy and Transformation Strategy, has identified the following key areas for 2018/19 onwards.

Key areas for 2018/19 onwards

1. Corporate strategy project
2. Key policies - operational procedures
3. Quality Control
4. Technology – Phase 2
5. Resources: Budget and Staffing
6. Internal and External Asset Management

A visual representation of these revised key areas can be found at Appendix 2:

## **Assets**

A major element of the strategy is to establish a clear understanding of the volumes and scope of maintenance of council owned and related assets.

An accurate, up to date asset register is essential to ensure that schedules are complete and correct, that the workforce is clear where council priorities lie and to establish fair and accurate special expenses charges.

Significant resources have already been put into reviewing and amending the asset register and this work is set to continue during 2018/19.

## Key Measures

The improvements and new ways of working have already been reflected in a number of the following corporate indicators, particularly those related to grass cutting:

No	Description	Target
1	Grass cutting schedule work completed on time	80%
2	Street cleansing schedule routes completed on time	80%
3	Scheduled litter bins emptied on time	80%
4	Grounds maintenance service requests completed on time	80%
5	Streetscene service requests completed on time	80%
6	Call backs completed on time	100%

These measures and targets will remain in place during 2018/19 and until reliable performance data is available for all elements of the service.

This data will be used to influence operational decisions and changed procedures aligning with the Corporate Strategy Project.

## Key Actions

The delivery of the strategy will take place from 2018-2020 with prioritisation, in the first instance, being given to measures to improve performance across the three core services in line with the 2017 Corporate Strategy project “Deliver a borough wide programme of improvements to street services” aims:

### KEY ACTIONS – 2018-19 onwards

#### 1. Deliver the Corporate Strategy Project – Deliver a borough wide programme of improvements to street services

- a. Review street bin emptying across the borough and implement improvements
- b. Review street cleaning across the borough and implement improvements
- c. Deliver an improved grass cutting service across the borough:

#### 2. Key policies - Operational procedures

- Cemetery
- Memorials
- Trees

#### 3. Introduce formalised quality control procedures.

Although quality checks are undertaken they are ad-hoc by co-ordinators or result from customer reporting.

A formalised checking and reporting routine, with the increased involvement of supervisors, will be introduced during 2018/19.

## KEY ACTIONS – 2018-19 onwards

### **4. Technology – Phase 2**

There is still scope for expansion in the use of technology and scheduling systems and mobile working systems will be reviewed during 2017/18.

### **5. Resourcing – Budget and Staffing**

- a. Budgets and spending will be further reviewed in line with the MTFS and corporate transformation strategy requirements.
- b. Staff Training and Workforce Development
- c. Staff Health and Safety
- d. Workforce Stability and Succession Planning

### **6. Internal and External Asset Management**

Work to understand and improve assets managed by the service will continue during 2018/19

Key actions are detailed in the corporate MyProjects system.

A high level timetable is attached at Appendix 3.

## **Next Steps**

There is still a considerable amount of work to do to successfully deliver the strategy and to effectively meet current and future needs efficiently and economically.

The approach set out in this strategy will lead to a modern service well positioned to meet the challenging times faced by local government over the next few years.

A project team with disciplines from across the council has been established to deliver the programme of work set out in this strategy.

A high level action plan has been drawn up and is outlined in Appendix 3. These dates are estimates and will change as the project develops.

## Current Position – 2017/18

## Appendix 1

### Scheduled Work

#### 1. Grass Cutting

New reports have been developed to record grass cutting performance:

Month	Target %	2016/17 Actuals %	2017/18 Actuals %
April 2017	80	Unavailable	Unavailable
May 2017	80	Unavailable	Unavailable
Jun 2017	80	Unavailable	79.06
Jul 2017	80	Unavailable	78.49
Aug 2017	80	Unavailable	94.75
Sept 2017	80	Unavailable	85.14

These reports were not available in previous years, however a number of reports do reflect the improvement in the service e.g.:

Reason	Assets not maintained 2016/17	Assets not maintained 2017/18
Ground/Weather conditions	1,044	619
Mechanical/Vehicle breakdown	208	1
Unavailability of suitable equipment/vehicle	30	13
Staff unavailable?	297	207
Other with explanation?	19	11
Other without explanation?	85	0
Diverted to other priority work	2,854	0
	<b>4,537</b>	<b>851</b>

The restructuring of the teams with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and a new modern fleet of vehicles has facilitated a massive reduction in the number of assets either not maintained on time or even not maintained at all.

Additional records have also been maintained in respect of:

- a. Weather conditions for grass cutting and weed spraying
- b. Bonus cuts
- c. Quality issues and actions taken

Grass cutting schedules are suspended over the winter months whilst shrub and hedge cutting work takes place. Records of this work will be maintained during this period for input to the MyWork scheduled work system next year.

#### 2. Street Cleansing and Litter Bin Emptying

Although emphasis has largely been placed on grass cutting performance in summer 2017, work to ensure that the street cleansing and litter bin emptying services operate as efficiently as possible has been ongoing.

These services have different issues to the grass cutting service in that most of the duties are undertaken by lone workers and staff absences impact heavily on the service.

Schedules for sweeping, litter bin emptying, litter picking and hand cart duties are all currently under review.

### **Street Sweeping**

Schedules for the mechanical sweepers have been reviewed with drivers and completed on paper but have only been partially incorporated into the MyWork system. The schedules are considered too lengthy and are in urgent need of change.

Statistics do not reflect an accurate picture of the service and are not directly comparable over the two years.

All schedules are due for further review due to potential changes to the service and route optimisation.

For approximately 4 months each winter all sweeping schedules are suspended for leaf fall clearance in specific areas.

### **Litter Bins**

Data related to litter bin emptying performance during 2017/18 is not accurate and therefore not reliable. Schedules are under review; route order software will be utilised and appropriateness of vehicles determined.

## **3. Service Requests**

Service requests completed on time for both grounds maintenance and streetscene have not met the target of 80% throughout the year.

This is mainly due to the extremely tight SLA timescales that have previously been set. The service manager is in the process of reviewing these SLA's and they will be presented to the Executive Member for approval.

## **4. Communities**

The Communities team have significantly contributed to four distinct areas of council service:

1. Maintenance of cemeteries, parks and recreation grounds including inspection and maintenance of play areas, contributing to improved grass cutting performance.
2. Facilitating and supporting corporate events such as the Chorley Flower Show, Picnic in the Park and play days.
3. Leading and delivering on 7 Neighbourhood projects e.g. wildflower planting schemes, creation of footpaths and boundary features and signage
4. Advising and supporting community groups and volunteers in projects and initiatives.

Schedules for regular work are maintained in the MyWork system and ad-hoc work as with the other teams is recorded in My Account.

Additionally in the case of the Communities team event work etc. is recorded and managed in a separate outlook calendar.

## **5. Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is also a critical aspect of service provision and although responses to the corporate customer satisfaction survey show, by percentage, a higher level of satisfaction than dissatisfaction, this is a very limited survey. As at the end of October 2017, no responses were received in respect of parks and open spaces and only 37, showing a satisfaction rate of 62.2%, in respect of street cleansing.

Concentration on the numbers and types of complaints received from the general public appears to be a better indicator of satisfaction with services.



Comparisons between the summer periods 2016 and 2017 show a reduction of 56.34% in the number of grounds maintenance complaints as the numbers dropped from 71 to 31 complaints.

The number of street cleansing complaints remained constant at 29 for both years.

In addition to this elected member and parish clerk feedback by both telephone and email has been very positive e.g.:

1. Bonus cuts have been completed in some areas to the satisfaction of members.
2. Assistance with a parish problem – Adlington Town Council Clerk
3. Shrub work at Preston Rd Chorley – Executive Member
4. Maintenance at Boundary Stone, Weavers Brow – Chorley Councillor
5. Work for scarecrow festival Charnock Richard – Parish Clerk
6. Clear up work – Clayton-le-Woods – Chorley Councillor
7. Damaged verges Astley Village – County Councillor

## **6. External Awards**

The streetscene service has also received a number of accolades in 2017:

1. Britain in Bloom North West – Gold Medal Best Small City for Chorley in Bloom
2. Voluntary groups in and around Chorley, supported by the council, also received certificates within the In Bloom bid as follows
  - a. Mormon Temple – Highly commended award for the Horticultural and Community efforts
  - b. Sensory Garden Chorley Hospital – Outstanding
  - c. Astley Walled Garden – Outstanding
  - d. Lancaster Court Community Garden – Outstanding
3. Green Flag awards for 5 parks.

## **7. Procurement**

- a. One of the milestones in the strategy is procurement and the process for ensuring that all expenditure is necessary, appropriate and best value for money.
- b. Following procurement rules and financial regulations is essential but as an extension of these principles, an analysis of spending over the last three years, in particular on supplies and services has been undertaken.
- c. Both 2015/16 and 2016/17 saw high spending rates and budgets exceeded. A significant proportion of this related to the old fleet of vehicles no longer fit for purpose. Towards the end of 2016/17 new vehicles with warranties were acquired, removing the need for hired vehicles and the cost of major repairs. Also new parts were purchased to ensure that the mowing machines were ready to start the 2017/18 grass cutting season.
- d. Another high cost related to the employment of external contractors to complete work when schedules were overdue or the workforce diverted to other duties. This practice has largely ceased and great emphasis has been placed on completing scheduled work on time. Now, wherever possible the council's own resources are deployed to complete all work.
- e. Vehicle usage and costs have also been reviewed resulting in the sale of the largely redundant skip wagon and the purchase of a tractor and side arm flail to replace the current hired equipment.
- f. During 2017/18 certain criteria have already been established as the service director has had meetings with managers and team leaders to emphasise the need for more budget awareness and commercial thinking e.g.:
  - i. Orders, even for small amounts, must not be placed without firmly establishing the need for the expenditure.
  - ii. Best prices must be secured, 3 quotes wherever possible.

- iii. Down time/travelling time to collect goods or deliver vehicles must be considered, supplier delivery/collection preferred.
- g. Further action will be taken or consideration given during the final months of 2017/18 and 2018/19 e.g.:
  - i. Expenditure on tyres – significant damage is inflicted on council vehicle tyres; this is partly due to the type of terrain that the vehicles are deployed in however some damage may be due to driver carelessness. Records are now maintained by vehicle to establish patterns.
  - ii. Maintaining accurate stores records for PPE and tools and equipment will ensure that the most efficient and economic use is made of the council's stock and a new in-house stores system will be in use in 2018/19.
  - iii. Review of the economy and efficiency of the existing sweeping vehicles, including contract maintenance options.
  - iv. Prompt sales of any unnecessary vehicles or plant.
  - v. An app which can go on Smartphones and iPads to enable drivers to complete their daily vehicle checks is being trialled. This will reduce paperwork, ensure records are readily available and that issues are brought to team leaders' attention promptly.

## **8. Health and Safety**

Issues relating to staff and public health and safety have been addressed during 2017/18 and this practice will continue throughout the strategy. Initiatives have included:

- a. The Health and Wellbeing day.
- b. Working near Roads.
- c. Emergency Aid workshops.
- d. Rolling out of the new approach to risk assessment which means staff who undertake the work play a greater role in completing the assessment.

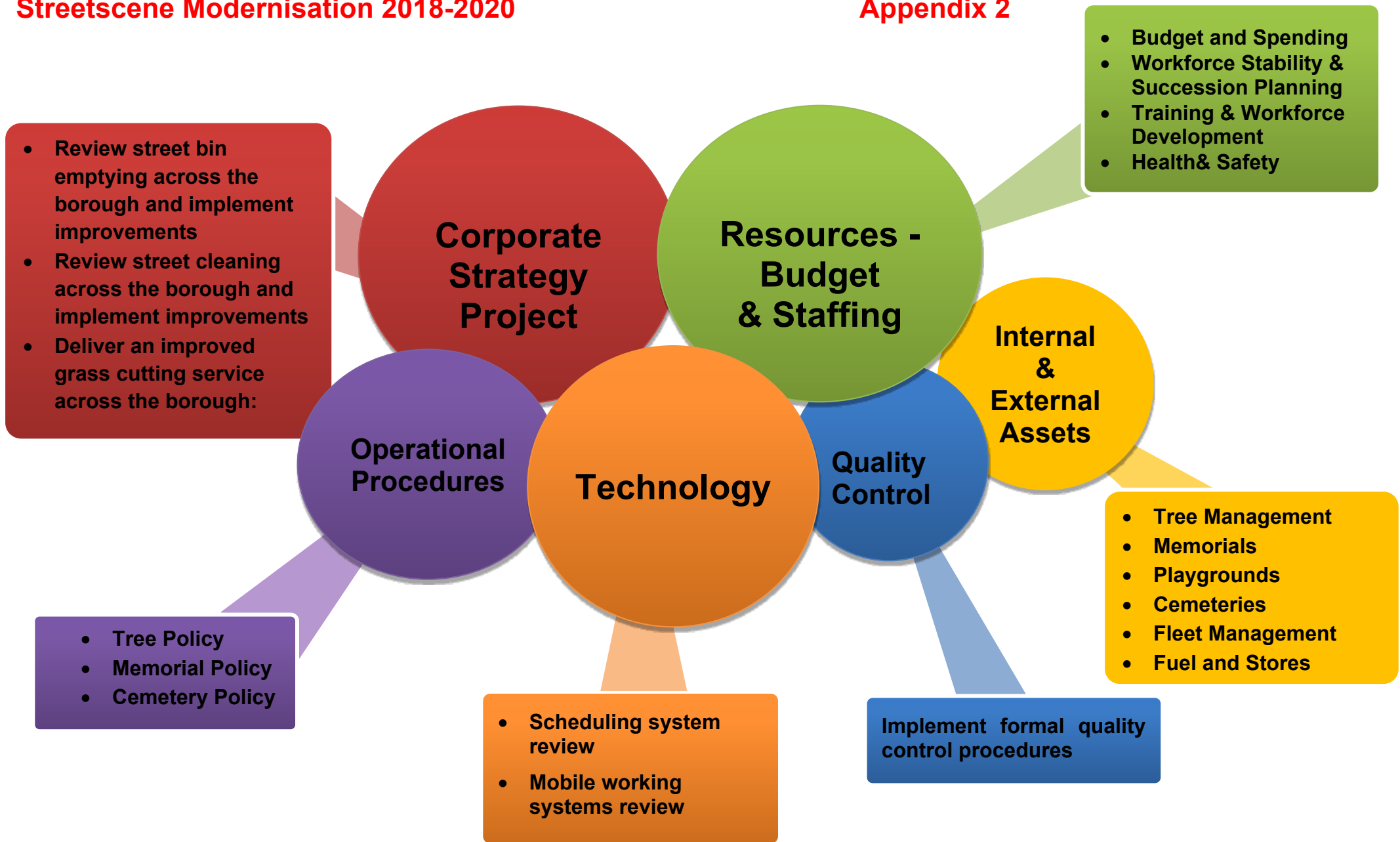
## **9. Training**

As with health and safety considerations, training has been ongoing during 2017/18 and will continue throughout the strategy. Training has included:

- a. Risk Assessment review - The Training Matrix for Streetscene has been completed, providers and resource requirements identified.
- b. Supervisor Training - The 1:2:1 IT sessions have now been delivered.
- c. The HAVs workshop will be scheduled once the HAVs Action Plan is been agreed.
- d. Safeguarding training – this was given as a toolbox talk to all operational staff.

## **10. Call backs**

Call back performance for the whole service including waste services has been consistently good throughout the year. The service receives by far the most requests for call-backs. 1,376 at the end of Nov 17 as opposed to 581 for the next highest. Most of these calls do relate to waste services; however the team as a whole are aware of the importance of customer call-backs. Monitoring of performance will continue at the extended directorate team management meetings during 2018/19.



## High Level Action Plan

## Appendix 3

Priority H/M/L	Change Theme	High Level Activity	Completion Date
H H	Corporate Strategy Project: Deliver a borough wide programme of improvements to street services	Review street bin emptying across the borough and implement improvements Review street cleaning across the borough and implement improvements Deliver an improved grass cutting service across the borough	Qtr 3 2018/19 Qtr 3 2018/19 Qtr 3 2018/19
M M	Technology Phase 2	New systems development/procurement especially for trees Deliver appropriate devices	Qtr 4 2018/19 Qtr 4 2018/19
H	Resources: 1. Budget 2. Staffing	Address transformation strategy savings targets Implement health and safety requirements Implement training plan Implement succession plan	Qtr 3 2018/19 Qtr 2 2018/19 Qtr 3 2018/19 Qtr 3 2018/19
H	Quality Control	Introduce formal inspection and reporting routine Address quality issues	Qtr 1 2018/19 Ongoing
M	Operational Procedures	Establish operational procedures in line with approved council streetscene policies e.g. memorial inspections and cemeteries	Qtr 2 2018/19
H	Internal and external asset management	Continuation of analysis and verification of council assets.	Qtr 4 2018/19

### Note

A more detailed project plan will be included in the corporate My Projects system and as these dates are estimates and will change as the project develops.

The programme of work will be managed by the Waste and Streetscene Services Manager and milestones and tasks will be allocated to responsible officers within the team or based in other services if appropriate.

A further review of the strategy extending it into 2019/20 will be prepared in early 2019.