

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 3RD SEPTEMBER 2008

STREETSCENE SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress on the Council's Streetscene service which has now been in operation since April 2007.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In April 2007 management of the Council's Outdoor Amenities Service, Ground Service Unit was combined with the management of the Street Cleaning Service to form an integrated service known as Streetscene.
- 2.2 The aim of the integration of the services was to improve service effectiveness, remove demarcation of tasks and increase efficiency as part of the Council restructure which was agreed in November 2006.

3. PROGRESS REPORT

- 3.1 The management of the services has now been integrated into a single team with staff taking responsibility for the delivery of both services. Changes to the management structure which are required to reflect this integration and support the future development of the service are the subject of a separate report for consideration by Cabinet.
- 3.2 Prior to the integration of the service there were identified problems with litter collection as two separate teams of staff had different areas of responsibility and they would only remove litter from their own designated areas. This demarcation has now been removed and teams now remove litter etc. from the area they are operating in regardless of whether or not the litter is on a soft or hard landscaped area.
- 3.3 These changes have been supported by additional training for staff particularly in the use of specialist vehicles and machinery to allow greater flexibility and enhance the availability of cover for holidays, sickness and other absences. This additional flexibility has also assisted when one-off deep cleans of specific areas have been carried out.
- 3.4 A review of the Street Cleaning work programme was also carried out and this led to the rolling introduction of new staff teams which are more mobile, have improved equipment and supervision and are able to concentrate resources on known problem areas. Initially some community representatives were sceptical about these changes however positive results have been achieved and the changes have now been welcomed in most areas. In addition new litter bins have been provided

in problem areas as resources allow and bins are being stickered to inform people that they can be used for properly packaged dog waste.

- 3.5 By bringing together the budgets for Outdoor Amenities and Street Cleaning an improved programme of vehicle and machinery replacement has now been implemented since April 2007:
- 3 X 636 Mechanical Sweepers + Trailers (Additional Machines)
 - 3 x 414 Mechanical Sweepers (Replacement)
 - 2 x Trailer Mounted Chewing Gum Removal Machines (New)
 - 2 x Major Mechanical Sweepers (Replacement)
 - 1 X Minor Mechanical Sweepers (Replacement)
 - 1 X Crew Cab Pickup Vehicle (Replacement)
 - 4 x Additional Pick Ups (Hire)
- 3.6 In April 2008 £50,000 was added to the Streetscene budget to address issues with the many new roads which have been provided in housing developments over several years. Resources were further enhanced by the allocation of £50,000 from the Fairer Scotland Fund which, when combined with existing resources and funding from Housing Services has allowed the Hit Squad service to be retained and developed with four squads available during the summer and two maintained for the full year covering the whole of East Ayrshire.
- 3.7 In terms of improving performance the service has achieved a significant improvement in its Local Authority Audit Management System for Street Cleanliness (LEAMS) score, which has risen from 66 to 71. In-house monitoring also shows a reduction in instances of problems with dog-fouling and broken glass; however these problems persist and require constant attention.
- 3.8 The whole Streetscene Service is now committed to achieving the ISO 9002 Quality Award which was previously held by the Street Cleaning Service. Intensive work went in to updating standards, systems and procedures across the new combined service and accreditation was awarded in August 2008.
- 3.9 The Streetscene Service is actively involved in benchmarking activities through the Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) and this is proving beneficial in terms of identifying industry best practice and measuring performance. The service also makes use of the Flycapture recording process to log issues relating to fly-tipping and this ensures objective measurement that underpins performance assessment.
- 3.10 Staff from the Streetscene Service have supported officers from the Council's Legal Section and Strathclyde Police on litter enforcement projects and this work will continue to ensure that the public are aware of their responsibilities with regard to litter. Further targeted efforts to address known problem areas are being planned.
- 3.11 Work has now started on improving the co-ordination of routine tasks such as weedkilling, gully cleaning and grass cutting with staff in the Roads Service to ensure that works are carried out in the most efficient manner.

3.12 An initiative is currently being developed in partnership with the Kilmarnock Standard and a range of other partners including SEPA, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Strathclyde Police to highlight the difficulties being faced in relation to fly-tipping and the very positive action being taken to address the issue. It is anticipated that this will result in a number of features in the local press during October and November. Members will also recall the formation of the Corporate Enforcement Unit which was approved by Cabinet prior to the summer recess.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications attached to this progress report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The formation of the Streetscene service has improved the Council's ability to respond to its responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The Streetscene service makes a significant contribution to the Improving the Environment theme of the Community Plan through its work to maintain green spaces and remove litter and also to the Improving Community Safety theme in terms of removing fly-tipping and graffiti.

7. SUMMARY

7.1 The Streetscene Service has now been in operation for eighteen months and the ongoing integration of Outdoor Amenities and Street Cleaning teams under a single management structure has delivered benefits in terms of improving service performance. The service must continue to improve to meet community expectations and there is more work to be done in terms of efficiency and effectiveness over the next year in order to secure continuous improvement across the whole of East Ayrshire.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. note the positive progress made in Streetscene services since April 2007
- ii. recognise the achievement of accreditation under the ISO 9002 Quality Award
- iii. otherwise note the content of this report

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS – NIL

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