

SCRUTINY BOARD

26 FEBRUARY 2013

STREET CLEANLINESS REVIEW

Report by Environment and Neighbourhood Quality Panel
Councillor A Lenaghan (Scrutiny Lead)
Councillors R Cousins, F Edwards, H Farrow and O Kennedy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following a meeting of the Scrutiny Leads to discuss the Quarter 1 Corporate Health Check concern was expressed over figures detailing a fall in levels of street cleanliness, particularly litter levels across the borough.
- 1.2 In order to understand the reasons for this the Environment and Neighbourhood Quality Panel were tasked with investigating what work was being done to improve the figures.

2.0 HOW THE WORK WAS DONE

- 2.1 Members of the Panel received a briefing from the Executive Head for Environment and Neighbourhood Quality, the Neighbourhood Quality Service Manager and the Open Spaces Supervisor outlining how the service operated, why the figures had declined and what was being done to resolve any issues.
- 2.2 The Panel then attended a meeting at the Depot where the Panel was provided with a presentation on Street Scene Indicators from the Environmental Quality Team Leader and the Neighbourhood Quality Service Manager, followed by a detailed discussion of the issues. This was followed up by meetings of the Panel.

4.0 KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Quarter 1 figures in the Corporate Health Check revealed that with regards to litter the target had been missed. The target figure was 5% however the actual figure achieved had been 8%.
- 4.2 Litter figures were compiled through Environmental Rangers choosing 120 randomly selected 50 metre cross sections of street/roads etc across the borough. These sections would then be graded from A-D, A being excellent and D having significant amounts of litter and detritus. All Environment Rangers received training to evaluate streets/roads and no assessments take place immediately after a clean. During the survey prior to the collation of Quarter 1 figures no cross section received a D and only 5% received a C.
- 4.3 To combat the reduction in the figures litter hotspots were being reviewed and patrols being implemented as necessary. Extra work was being undertaken to try and identify hot spots and it was recognised these were generally town centres in the morning and areas around school runs. Some of these problems involved people throwing litter out of cars and it was agreed these types of problems could not be

SCRUTINY BOARD

26 FEBRUARY 2013

alleviated by changing the number of bins, although litter bin placement was under constant review.

- 4.4 Since the Quarter 1 results the hard work undertaken by the officers has resulted in a vast improvement in the Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 Health Check figures. The figure achieved in Quarter 2 was 5% which met the 5% target and Quarter 3 showed a further reduction to 2% which is very encouraging. These show that the service is working well and heading in the right direction.
- 4.5 Issues surrounding litter on private land was also raised and the Council is continuing to work with other landowners such as Portsmouth City Council to help facilitate the sharing of information and provide support for each other.
- 4.6 One area that the Panel believes could be further explored in the future is the development of a Smartphone app currently being developed by Winchester City Council which would allow officers and members of the public to report any litter. The Panel feel that the success of the app should be monitored, along with the expense involved, and investigations conducted into whether it would be feasible to develop a similar app for Havant Borough Council. Other methods of communication could also be explored, social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter may also be utilised as a method for members of the public to report litter. As we move to a more IT knowledgeable society it is important to utilise any tools available as well as maintaining and improving traditional forms of communication.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Overall the Panel feel that a lot of work is being undertaken to decrease levels of litter throughout the borough. Despite the fall in cleanliness in Quarter 1 recent results have been pleasing and the Quarter 2 and 3 figures show the problems have been resolved and current litter levels are at 2%, which is well below the 5% target. These promising figures reveal the large amount of work being undertaken to maintain street cleanliness. The Panel also feels that the fact litter levels are not an issue which residents have been raising with councillors recently is down to the hard work of the litter picking teams.