

Neighbourhood Services Port Folio Holder Update – March 2014

Cllr Dave Shilton

What have the measures in the Portfolio Holder Statement been telling you about how things are going in service during 2013/14?

The three new contracts that commenced on the 1st April 2013 are coming to the end of the first year of operation. Considering the scale of change and the saving of over a £1m per annum, the contracts have performed well.

Street Cleansing

Standards have remained high under the new contractor, due to the scheduled cleansing programme and the reactive work undertaken by the Rapid Response Teams. The introduction of additional Parks Teams in the new contract has seen a significant improvement in the levels of cleansing, and playground maintenance in parks and open spaces.

Grounds Maintenance

The new contract has resulted in improving standards of maintenance, underpinned by a set frequency for each operation. The introduction of a Parks Improvement Team as part of the contract has enabled a number of enhancements to parks and open spaces to be delivered. The implementation of the Green Space Strategy has started with a programme of play areas/parks/open spaces improvements across the district.

Refuse and Recycling

Day to day waste collection operations have performed well with a small number of problems considering over 4 million collections are carried out each year. Recycling material values and tonnages have reduced in the last 12 months, demonstrating the decision to transfer the risk associated with the sale of recyclable materials to SITA was the right one.

Car Parking

Income from car parking activities is projected to be £100k greater than expected, probably due to the extremely mild winter, resulting in minimal traffic disruption.

WCC have decided to externalise on street parking enforcement from November 2014, resulting in the majority of car parking staff transferring to a contractor/WCC. WDC have decided to retain off street enforcement in house, which will require the recruitment to a new staffing structure required to operate the service.

Structural surveys of Linen Street, Covent Garden and St. Peters multi storey car parks are being carried out to determine future maintenance requirements and associated costs.

Which measures have been of particular interest or concern during the period and what have you learnt about your systems from these

measures? Please attach the final version of your SAP customer & operational measures for the year.

There are still legal issues to be resolved from the previous Grounds Maintenance Contract relating to dilapidation repairs and financial deductions.

The decrease in some materials collected via the kerbside recycling service has been concerning, especially in relation to paper, although mixed plastics and cardboard have increased. SITA have employed a waste minimisation officer to support increased recycling, in conjunction with WDC and the Warwickshire Waste Partnership.

Due to the range and scale of the services provided by Neighbourhood Services a review of Service Area measures is currently being undertaken by the team. These will form part of Service Area Plan for 2014/15.

Partnership Boards are in place for each of the three main contracts, to ensure services continue to develop and improve over the lifetime of the contracts.

What have you done to date as a result of learning from these measures?

Risk management is now embedded within the team, updated and reviewed continually.

The Council is still an active member of the Warwickshire Waste Partnership, developing initiatives to reduce waste and increase recycling levels.

As part of the Contract Services Intervention resources within the team were freed up to continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the team/service. Current projects include, strengthening service measures, improving health and safety, team capacity reviews, income from sponsorship activities, better use of reactive maintenance teams and improving communications and marketing activities

What has been the impact of what you have done to date and what else do you plan to do as a result of learning from these measures?

Even though significant service improvements and savings have been delivered by Neighbourhood Services, the Service Area is continually looking to improve.

Funding for the Green Space Strategy and Play Strategy is only in place up to 2017/18, therefore additional funding will be required if the Council wishes to maintain the quality of its parks, open spaces and children's play areas.

The volume of work associated with delivering the Green Space Strategy, Play Strategy, other corporate projects, and the technical horticultural elements of the service, is far greater than the Green Space Development Team can manage. We will need to find ways to bolster the resources in the team in order to deliver these various pieces of work.

Of your key projects (as identified in your portfolio holder statement) how many were completed and how many are not? Of those that were not completed please indicate what the revised dates are.

Project. See Appendix 1

Appendix 1.

Project	Original Completion Date	Status	Comments
Mobilisation of grounds maintenance contract, street cleansing contract and waste collection contract.	October 2013	Completed	All contracts fully mobilised.
Parking Services review relating to the delivery of on-street enforcement	March 2014	WCC have decided to externalise the service therefore WDC have a limited role to play in the process.	WDC are progressing a plan to operate off street car parking separately.
Parking enforcement team intervention new shifts.	June 2013	Completed	The enforcement team are no locality based as a result PCN issue rates have increased by 35% on last year.
Review of off street car park fees and charges	October 2013	Completed	With the successful introduction of linear parking charges to Leamington and Warwick town centres there are no further plans to alter car park charges for 14/15.
Construction of Abbey Fields Car Park	June 2013	Completed	Fully operational and has taken £6k in the first 4 months.
Christchurch Gardens Phase 2 works	July 2014	Completed	
Play area improvements across the district.	5 year funded programme	On-going	Abbey Fields-complete Stamford Gardens-complete Mill Bank-complete Cox's Orchard-complete Campion Hills-in progress St Johns-in progress St. Michael's -in progress

Introduction of additional plastics across the district.	June 2013	Completed	There will be an increase of approximately 260t of mixed plastics recycled in 2013/14.
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