

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Environment Directorate

Business Plan 2015/16

For

Neighbourhood Services

Prepared by the

**Waste & Neighbourhood Services Manager
and
Head of Service, Streetcare Division**

Sponsors

Councillor Edward Latham
Cabinet Member for Environment

and

Councillor Sandra Miller
Cabinet Member for Streetcare and Highways

Introduction

Neighbourhood Services forms part of the Waste and Neighbourhood Services section. The section was established as a part of service realignment with the Streetcare Services Division in January 2014 and details of the staffing structure and operating centres are shown as Appendix 1. In summary there are currently 142.5 employees within the Neighbourhood Service working from the Service Response Centre at the Quays in Briton Ferry, Tawe Terrace Depot in Pontardawe, and various satellite parks and cemeteries throughout the county borough.

The service is responsible for the following:

- Dog Warden Service.
- Maintenance of Cycle-ways.
- Maintenance of School Grounds (*where contracted*).
- Maintenance of sports fields and bowling greens (*where contracted*).
- Tree maintenance service.
- Supporting community/volunteer groups.
- Grass cutting and verge maintenance.
- Maintenance of bus shelters and street furniture
- Cleaning of streets including the removal of fly tipping, graffiti removal etc.
- Weed spraying and weed removal.
- Pot hole repairs (in conjunction with the Highways and Drainage Service).
- Maintenance and strategy of Council owned Country Parks, Cemeteries, Ornamental Parks, Playgrounds, Allotments, Canals, Skateboard ramps.

The revenue budget for the service in 2015/16 is £6,869,040 (which includes a £3,345,884 reduction since 2006/07).

Key Achievements and Performance Summary for 2014/15

- Survey of countryside structures (Dams)
- Continued to provide a competitive and high quality service to schools including some that have chosen to return from private sector providers
- Environmental standards as measured by the LEAMS index maintained.
- A successful campaign was carried out in relation to the number of dogs rehomed – this has led to a reduction in the kennelling costs.

- Discussions and agreements with sports clubs concerning the future maintenance of sports fields.
- Gnoll Estate Country Park, Afan Argoed Forest Park Visitor Centre, Victoria Gardens and Talbot Memorial Park have all successfully retained their 'Green Flag Status' for 2014/15.
- Continued working in partnership with The Police, Fire Service, Coastal Housing in and around the Renewal Area of Sandfields East & Aberavon – resulting in funding being sourced by partners to secure a fourth year employing a dedicated Waste Enforcement Officer for the Renewal Area.
- Continued partnership working with Keep Wales Tidy and other organisations such as the Community Pay-Back Scheme (probation) resulting in clean-up exercises, litter removal, environmental improvements to areas not normally managed by the Council such as un-adopted land and Tyre Amnesty events.
- Annual employee and development programme completed.

What are the most important things for this service to achieve?

The key objectives for 2015/16 that have been agreed with the Chief Executive, the Director of Environment and the sponsoring Cabinet Members are divided between divisional and service specific objectives as follows:

Corporate/Divisional Aims and Key Objectives

Aims

To play a key role in ensuring Neath Port Talbot is a place where people want to live, work and visit; to deliver services that improve environments and amenities; to help revitalise communities and facilitate the role of Council elected representatives as Community Champions.

To secure these aims the following vision and values have been adopted:

Vision

Citizen admired services which are resilient, adaptive, efficient and effective

Values

Mutual trust and respect, leading by example, no blame, team and collaborative working, empowered staff, fairness, acting with integrity, openness and doing what matters

Service Specific Aims and Objectives

Within the above context the purpose of the Neighbourhood Service as identified by the public through a System Review is:

<p style="text-align: center;">Purpose of Neighbourhood Service</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">To provide safe, clean and tidy neighbourhoods</p>

Furthermore, specific service objectives are:

SO1 To provide continuously improving services which meet the needs and expectations of users and the general public, in a cost effective and professional manner.

SO2 To undertake approved schemes to agreed cost, quality and time.

SO3 To minimise waste, recycle, and make the most sustainable use of materials where possible.

SO4 To provide services which deliver ‘What Matters’ as identified by the public which is (in terms of top 5):

- Clean streets
- Safe and tidy roads/footways
- The grass is cut, weeds and overgrowth dealt with
- No dog fouling
- No Fly tipping

Priorities to be achieved for 2015/16

To achieve our aims and objectives the following key priorities have been identified:

1. To deliver the savings allocated within the Council’s Forward Financial Plan and contain overall expenditure within the cash limits set for the service.
2. To maximise attendance at work and minimise sickness absence.

3. To ensure performance management arrangements in the Service are effective and in line with the Council's Corporate framework, including the completion of Employment Development Reviews.
4. Continue to review services to ensure efficiencies are achieved.
5. Continue to provide services that work to provide a safe, clean and tidy environment supporting town centres and communities.
6. Provide efficient grounds maintenance services to schools.
7. Progress further cemetery memorial survey work.
8. Work with other officers and user groups to improve park facilities.
9. Strive to maintain environmental standards within the context of budget reductions.

Why have these priorities been set?

These priorities have been set for the following reasons:

- 1 To fulfil the requirements of the agreed Forward Financial Plan developed through detailed consideration over several months by the Corporate Management Group (Corporate Directors' Group and Heads of Service) in consultation with Members and Staff. This was required following the UK Comprehensive Spending Review and subsequent decisions by Welsh Government concerning the allocation of funding over the Public Sector in Wales.

Delivery of the following savings is currently required from the Neighbourhood Service:

<u>Saving</u>	<u>2015/15</u>	<u>2016/17</u>
Sportsfields – cease maintenance	£150,000	
Afan Forest Park – lease visitor centre	£200,000	
Gnoll Park – budget reduction	£142,000	
Cemeteries – reduce casual staff	£10,000	
Waste Enforcement / kennelling	£25,000	
Bus shelters – budget reduction	£5,000	
Street naming – budget reduction	£5,000	

2. Taking forward the outcome of the corporate reviews of Performance Management and Sickness Management
3. Business continuity and resilience
4. To deliver efficiency savings and continue to enhance value for money where possible.
5. From the findings of the Local Environmental Audit Management System (LEAMS), whilst dog fouling is reducing the level is still unacceptable to residents.
6. Evaluated management information measures based on call centre data to identify issues and implementing changes where deemed necessary and within available finances.

What risks have been identified and how will risks be managed.

Business planning includes an annual risk assessment detailing the identified risks, an assessment of each risk, and how the risk is to be addressed. The risk assessment for the Neighbourhood Service is given in the appendices and linked actions are identified in the Service Action Plan.

How will we secure the identified priorities to be achieved?

The Service Action Plan which covers the identified priorities is given in the Appendices.

Other than actions relating to day to day maintenance activity the main thrust of current activity within the section is to deliver the required contribution to the Forward Financial Plan and identify efficiencies through service reviews.

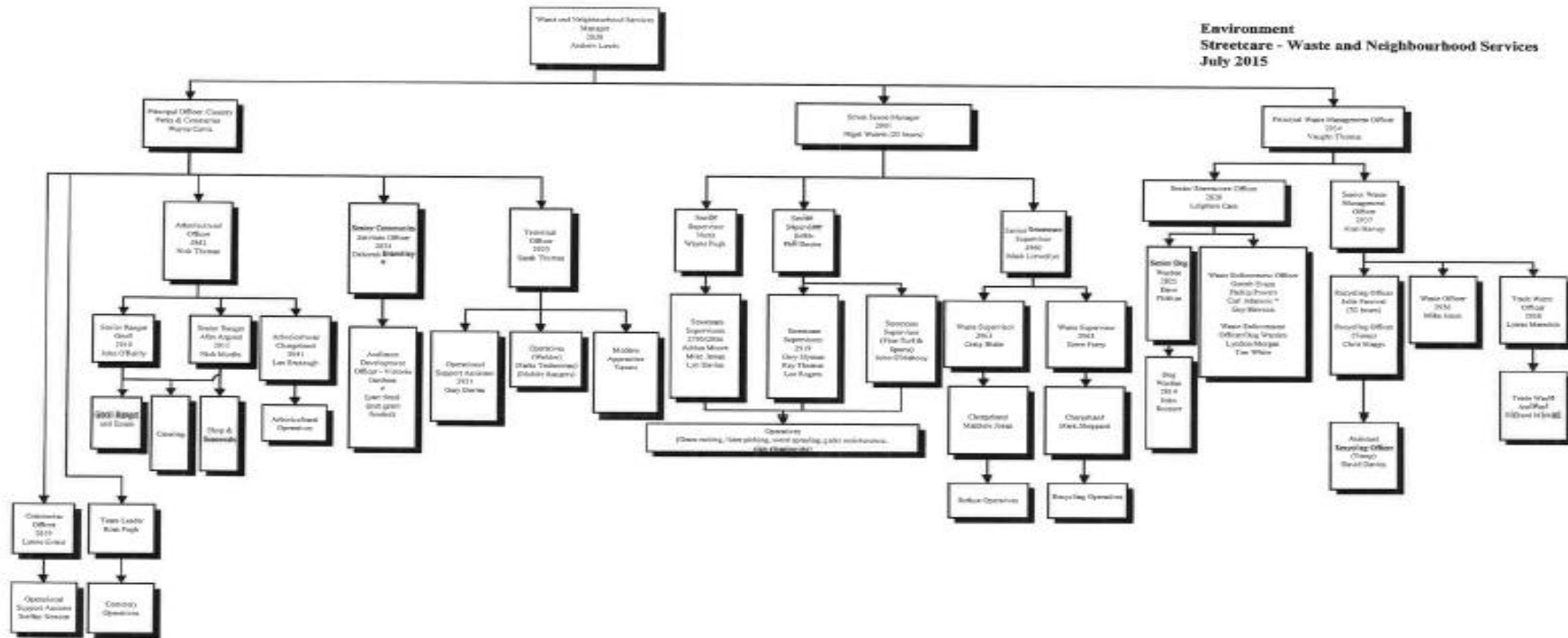
The reason for making financial savings is set out above whilst the need to review services follows on from system reviews of various elements of the service.

Performance Management

Each Accountable Manager in Streetcare Services is required to produce a Business Plan given they are responsible for substantial front line service responsibilities and resources, and often have substantial change programmes. The Head of Service and relevant Cabinet Board Member have contributed to and approved this plan against which progress will be reviewed with the Accountable Service Manager approximately midway through the financial year. In addition, during the year the plan may be scrutinised by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

To help facilitate effective performance reporting and scrutiny, the Accountable Manager (Andrew Lewis) and/or Technical Lead Officer (Wayne Curtis) is also required to produce a Performance Report Card including key measures, targets (where appropriate) and benchmarks (where appropriate), that can be used to gauge how well the service is progressing in achieving the prioritised outputs and outcomes. This Performance Report Card will be presented to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee during 2015/16.

APPENDIX 1



* On secondment, part funded by Renewal Area Partnership
covering duties for the term of the grant

Key Performance Standards & Measures

Appendix 2

<u>Indicator Code</u>	<u>Performance Indicator/Measures</u>	<u>2012/13 Actual</u>	<u>2013/14 Actual</u>	<u>2014/15 Actual</u>	<u>Linked Actions</u>
NS 01*	Percentage of public mail responded to within 8 working days	64.4%	84%	67.36%	NA12
NS 02*	Sickness			Available June	NA11
NS 03*	Sickness			Available June	NA11
NS 04	Number of memorials reassessed	-	-	New PI	NA01
NS 05	Cleanliness Index (LEAMS)	67.8 2011/12	67.5 2012/13	67.7 2013/14	NA05, NA07
STS/006	Percentage of fly tips removed within 5 working days	95.25%	95.25%	Available June	NA07
NS 06	Number of school grounds maintained	55	50	52	NA06
NS 07	Percentage of savings successfully implemented	100%	100%	100%	NA07, NA08
NS 08	Number of fixed penalty notices issued for littering	205	245	315	NA04, NA05
NS 09	Number of fixed penalty notices issued for dog fouling	85	71	50	NA04, NA05

Risk Assessment for Neighbourhood Service

Appendix 3

<u>Risk No.</u>	<u>Risk Description</u>	<u>Cause of Risk</u>	<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Risk Score</u>	<u>How Risk is to be addressed</u>	<u>Linked Actions</u>
NR01	Condition/safety of cemetery memorials.	Lack of detail in surveys.	4	4	16 H	Safety testing of cemetery memorials	NA01
NR02	Failure to improve public perception of dog fouling.	Dog owners not clearing up dog faeces.	2	3	6 M	Changes to dog bin specification, awareness campaigns and enforcement	NA04, NA05, NA 07, NA09
NR03	Service efficiency.	Current dog warden service provision above minimum legal requirements.	4	4	16 H	Continual review of existing service. Assess how competitive the rates/fees are.	NA 07, NA09,
NR04	Loss of income.	Competition for school grounds maintenance.	2	2	4 L	Challenge existing costs and quality of service	NA06
NR05	Continual reduction to visible services.	Budget reductions as part of Forward Financial Plan (FFP).	3	4	12 H	Review working systems to minimise impact via the systems review	NA05
NR06	Lack of forward planning	Implications of FFP for 15/16.	2	3	6 M	Plan for known implications	NA07, NA08, NA09
NR07	Failure to improve perception of littering in streets.	Increased flouting of littering laws and a reduction in budgets.	3	3	9 M	Education, Awareness campaigns and enforcement	NA04, NA05, NA 09
NR08	Reduce budget for Gnoll Country Park.	Budget reduction.	4	3	12 H	Review working systems & use remaining budget more strategically.	NA07, NA08, NA10

Service Improvement Action Plan

Appendix 4

No.	Action	Officer Responsible	Target date Mile-stones	Linked Indicators & Risks
NA01	Review testing of cemetery memorials.	WC	March 2016	NR01, NS04
NA03	Work with relevant council sections and the friends group to secure funding.	WC/AL	March 2016	NR08
NA04	Investigate the provision of an enhanced enforcement service.	WC/LC	September 2015	NR02, NR07, NS05, NS08, NS09
NA05	Carry out awareness raising campaigns in relation to littering, dog fouling and chewing gum disposal.	WC	March 2016	NR02, NR07, NS05, NS08, NS09, STS/006
NA06	Continue to provide a competitive and high quality service to schools.	NW	March 2016	N04, NS06
NA07	Continue to be innovative in managing services.	AL/NW/WC /VT	March 2016	NR03, NR57, NR08, NS07, STS/006
NA08	Plan ahead for any known constraints 2015/16.	AL/NW/WC /VT	September 2015	NR03, NR08, NS07
NA09	Review existing dog warden service.	VT/LC	December 2015	NR03
NA10	Increase flexible working and retrain where possible to reduce impact of reduced posts.	NW/AL/WC	June 2015	NR08
NA11	Continue to work with HR and Trade Unions to implement the agreed elements of the workforce strategy	AL/WC	March 2016	NS02
NA12	Continue to ensure procedures are in place to accurately record mail responses.	WC	March 2016	NS01