

Waverley Borough Council

Street Cleaning Review 2012

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	4
2.	Street Cleaning- Waverley's Statutory Responsibility.....	4
3.	Why is Street Cleaning Important?	5
	Defra- "Achieving Improvements in Street Cleansing & Related Services"	5
	The LGA (Original) Reputation Campaign 2005	5
	The Local Context- Place Survey and Participatory Budgeting Exercise	6
4.	Waverley's Corporate Priorities.....	7
5.	The Review Method.....	7
	Review of the current service	7
	Literature Review/ Review of Best Practice.....	7
	Engagement with Environmental Services Team	7
	Engagement with Veolia Environmental Services	8
	Analysis of Customer Feedback and Performance Data.....	8
	Engagement with Elected Members	8
	Engagement with Town & Parish Councils.....	8
6.	Street Cleaning in Waverley- Current Arrangements	8
	Overview	8
	Mechanical cleaning	9
	Barrowman service- Performance cleans.....	10
	Community Cleaning Crew	10
	Fly tipping	11
	Graffiti Removal.....	14
	Cleaning of the A3 and A31.....	14
	Sandy Hill Caretaker Service.....	16
7.	Current & Historic Performance Standards	17
	National Indicator 195	17
	Findings of the Current Inspection Regime.....	18
	Public perception & Customer Feedback.....	19
	Citizen's Panel Findings.....	19
	Comment Cards.....	20
	Formal Complaints regarding Street Cleaning	21
8.	Community involvement	22
	Street watch.....	22
	Waverley & Guildford "Cleaner Safer Greener" Project	23
	Community Clean-ups	23
9.	Monitoring performance.....	23
	Contract Monitoring Officer.....	23
	Input from residents.....	24
	Municipal Integrated Management System (MIMS).....	25
10.	Working with Partners	25

<i>Surrey County Council</i>	25
<i>Towns & Parishes</i>	27
<i>Guildford Borough Council</i>	27
11. <i>Vehicles & Plant</i>	27
<i>Redesigning the fleet</i>	28
<i>Branding</i>	28
12. <i>Environmental Improvements</i>	28
<i>Recycling Litter Bins</i>	28
<i>Manual segregation of litter-pickings</i>	29
13. <i>Conclusion</i>	29

1. Introduction

Street cleaning in Waverley is the responsibility of the Environmental Services team, with the operational aspects carried out through a commercial contract with Veolia Environmental Services.

This 7-year contract (with an option to extend for up to a further 7 years) was entered-into in November 2005.

At special meetings of the Executive and Council, held on 30 August 2011, Members considered a report regarding the future of the waste, recycling and street cleaning service at Waverley and, at those meetings it was resolved that the contract should be extended for a further 7 years from November 2012.

Throughout negotiations with Veolia, the focus of the contract variation and extension discussions was on securing a higher-performing, more efficient waste and recycling service, which would deliver improved customer satisfaction and better environmental outcomes.

It was agreed that the street cleaning aspects of the contract (alongside the garden waste subscription service, and bring site provision) would be given further scrutiny once the core service had been agreed and introduced.

With the new waste and recycling service introduced in April 2012, and now delivering on its promises, this report is intended to focus on the street cleaning service (both in relation to the contract with Veolia, and in wider terms). It considers what is good about the current service and what could be better, looks at current and historic customer feedback, examines current best-practice in street cleaning, and recommends a number of changes to the service as a result.

2. Street Cleaning- Waverley's Statutory Responsibility

The Council has a legal duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to keep streets clean and other places clear of litter and refuse. The specific activities covered by this legislation are:

- Litter Collection
- Street Sweeping
- Pavement Sweeping
- Litter bin provision and emptying
- Dog bin provision and emptying
- Graffiti removal
- Fly tipping removal
- Fly posting removal
- Litter awareness and promotion

A Code of Practice has been issued under the Environmental Protection Act and this defines the standards of cleanliness (graded A – D) that are expected in different types of locations (zones) and under different circumstances. For each zone the code gives a response time where practical for cleaning an area that has become littered.

3. Why is Street Cleaning Important?

The maintenance of a clean and tidy local environment is generally recognised as one of the highest-priorities amongst local people, and has the potential to significantly impact on the social and economic wellbeing of an area and its residents. It is also an extremely visible aspect of the role of the local authority and therefore has a direct impact on satisfaction levels with the Council.

Defra- “Achieving Improvements in Street Cleansing & Related Services”

The Ministerial Foreword of the 2005 Defra publication, “Achieving Improvements in Street Cleansing & Related services” sets out clearly why Local Authorities should take the issue of street cleaning seriously:

The quality of the local environment, and in particular standards of street cleansing, are increasingly becoming the barometer that the public uses to judge how well an area is being managed and its suitability as a place to live, work, visit or bring up a family.

Survey after survey have shown the importance the public attach to clean streets and that standards of street cleansing are a key factor in how people view their local council. There is no doubt that if the streets are dirty, people have less confidence that the council will be able to run its other services well.

The quality of the local environment, therefore, must be a central concern for Leaders of Councils and Chief Executives, as well as for responsible Cabinet Members, Service Directors, and Managers in ensuring and sustaining the prosperity of their districts.

The LGA (Original) Reputation Campaign 2005

These principles are further built upon by the Local Government Association’s 2005, “Reputation Campaign”. This initiative arose from research which showed that residents often value their councils far less than the services they provide, and it aimed to tackle this ‘credibility gap’ by ensuring high standards in the key environmental services that most affect people’s quality of life. It also sought to ensure councils received full credit for what they did, by improving how they communicated their successes.

MORI research identified 12 core actions that, when delivered well, have a marked and positive impact on a council's reputation. The core actions fit into two broad categories, as follows:

Cleaner, Safer, Greener:

- Adopt a highly visible, strongly branded council cleaning operation.
- Ensure no gaps or overlap in council cleaning and maintenance contracts.
- Set up one phone number for the public to report local environmental problems.
- Deal with 'grot spots'.
- Remove abandoned vehicles within 24 hours.
- Win a Green Flag award for at least one park.
- Educate and enforce to protect the environment.

Communications:

- Ensure the council brand is consistently linked to services.
- Manage the media effectively to promote and defend the council.
- Provide an A-Z guide to council services.
- Publish a regular council magazine or newspaper to inform residents.
- step up internal communications so staff become advocates for the council

It is proposed that these 12 identified actions form the basis of this review and provide a framework against which both the current service and future proposals can be compared.

The Local Context- Place Survey and Participatory Budgeting Exercise

The themes set out above are very much reflected locally, with recent consultation exercises revealing that people place a high degree of importance on the cleanliness of their local area, and yet do not believe the current standards (or, perhaps more appropriately, the Council's contribution towards them) are good enough.

For example, the Place Survey of 2008 revealed that overall, only 58% of Waverley residents were satisfied with the Council's performance in terms of keeping public land clear of litter and refuse; and the Council's 2009 'Budget Consultation' exercise revealed a strong preference for street cleaning budgets to be protected or enhanced in preference to other areas of council spend. These findings and those of other similar surveys are examined in further detail in Section 7 of this review

In response to this feedback, a number of measures were put in place in 2010 with the aim of raising the profile of the service and thus improving customer satisfaction. These linked closely to the identified actions highlighted above, as follows:

- all street cleaning team members being supplied with new, Waverley-branded uniforms
- the addition of a Community Cleaning Team who focus in particular on the outlying village areas in Waverley (to deliver a high visibility, high-impact 'hit squad' approach to the cleaning of the borough's more rural areas).
- an additional driver and van for the eight week leafing season.

- the production and use of ‘customer comment cards’ to raise the profile of the service, and to obtain customer feedback on cleaning standards.

4. Waverley’s Corporate Priorities

Waverley’s Corporate Plan 2012-2015 identifies the following priorities which recognise the importance of the local environment (and street cleaning in particular), the need to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction, and the need to work with others to meet the identified needs of our residents:

- Value for Money: Demonstrate our commitment to excellence by achieving overall satisfaction ratings for Waverley’s services that place us among the best performing councils in England.
- Understanding Our residents’ Needs: We will work with our parish councils and with community and voluntary groups to meet the identified needs of our residents
- Environment: We will work to ensure that the highest standards of cleanliness and good maintenance are delivered in the public realm of our Borough: we will increase the amount of resources dedicated to street cleaning, and we will continue to improve our grass-cutting and grounds maintenance services.

This report seeks to address how the street cleaning service can be further enhanced to ensure that these priorities can be met.

5. The Review Method

This review has been carried out using the following methods:

Review of the current service

The current service, both in terms of what Veolia are contractually obliged to carry out for the Council, and in terms of the ‘client’ function has been looked at in great detail in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement

Literature Review/ Review of Best Practice

A literature review has been carried out, and other Councils’ practices have been looked at in order to identify examples of Best Practice which could be incorporated into Waverley’s service into the future.

Engagement with Environmental Services Team

The Environmental Services Team have been involved in a consultation exercise with the aim of identifying the priorities and ideas being generated ‘from the coalface’

Engagement with Veolia Environmental Services

Key personnel from the Veolia/ Waverley Street Cleaning operation have been involved in the process, to help shape the proposals as they were developed and to highlight any practical challenges they might present.

Analysis of Customer Feedback and Performance Data

Current and historic customer feedback and performance data has been analysed in order to identify trends and recurring issues and how they might be addressed.

Engagement with Elected Members

In September 2010, as part of a series of Members' workshops on Waste management, a specific session was held to look at street cleaning. The feedback from this session has been revisited to help inform this review.

Engagement with Town & Parish Councils

A similar consultation exercise was carried out with Town and Parish representatives in September 2010- and the feedback from this exercise has also been used to inform this review.

6. Street Cleaning in Waverley- Current Arrangements

Overview

As discussed previously, the street cleaning service in Waverley is delivered through the Council's Waste Management Contract with Veolia Environmental Services, and covers a range of areas including the cleansing of streets, the emptying of litter bins, and the removal of fly-tipping, graffiti and dead animals which are either reported to the Council by residents or noted when officers are carrying out inspections.

The client-side of the service, which includes the management of the customer interface as well as the day-to-day management and monitoring of the contract, is managed by the Environmental Services team.

Veolia's street cleaning operation in Waverley is delivered through a combination of mechanical and manual work, and currently comprises the following resources:

Resource	Quantity	Notes
Team Leader	1	
Mechanical sweeping vehicle + driver	3	Carrying out scheduled sweeping according to frequencies defined in contract
Caged vehicles + driver	4	Emptying litter bins, dealing with fly tips, etc

Rapid response caged vehicle + driver	1	Rapid response to fly tips and also deals with graffiti
Community cleaning vehicle + driver + assistant (<i>added following the 2010 review</i>)	1	<u>Monday</u> - Farnham, Weybourne, Upper Hale, Frensham, Tilford; <u>Tuesday</u> - Godalming, Milford, Witley, Elstead; <u>Wednesday</u> - Haslemere, Beacon Hill, Chiddingfold, Hindhead; <u>Thursday</u> - Cranleigh, Bramley, Hascombe, Wonersh, Shamley Green, Alfold; <u>Friday</u> - Ad hoc/ responsive work & trouble-shooting
Barrowman	4	One operative in each of the main centres of population
Trainee assistant	1	Currently in Haslemere
Caretaker + caged vehicle	1	Partnership-funded resource for Sandy Hill
Public convenience cleaner	1	Temporary arrangement pending formal tendering of the public convenience cleaning contract
Seasonal leaf-sweeping resource	3 (+ 3 hired vehicles for 8 weeks)	3 sweepers hired in for 8 weeks, with 3 existing sweepers continuing with 'performance' cleans and carrying out supplementary leafing work.

Mechanical cleaning

All public roads in the borough are subject to frequency-based mechanical sweeping operations. Depending on a variety of factors, these are cleaned on one of the following frequencies:

- Twice daily
- Three times weekly
- Twice weekly
- Once weekly
- Fortnightly
- Monthly
- Bimonthly
- Quarterly

These frequencies have largely remained unchanged since the original Waste Management Contract was drafted in 2004, and there is considerable anecdotal evidence (from complaints, inspections and feedback from Veolia operatives) that it would be appropriate to re-visit the current frequencies to bring the cleaning schedules up-to-date and to ensure available resources are being used in the most efficient way possible.

Furthermore, it is felt that the recent positive experience of ‘zoning’ the refuse collection rounds to create a more resilient and higher-impact service could also be replicated to some extent on the street cleaning rounds; both improving efficiency and increasing the ‘visibility’ of the service.

Recommendation 1: Officers to work with Veolia to revisit current mechanical sweeping frequencies, to bring them up-to-date and explore the possibility of ‘zoning’ street cleaning activities, to ensure the most efficient use of resources and higher visibility of the service.

Barrowman service- Performance cleans

The street cleaning contract allows for the provision of a ‘barrowman’ in each of the four main centres of population in Waverley. These operatives are responsible for bringing the centres up to the Defra ‘Code of Practice on Litter & Refuse’ Grade A standard by 8am each day of the week, and then for restoring the defined areas to this standard within 1 hour of deterioration between the hours of 8am and 3pm, Monday to Friday inclusive.

Community Cleaning Crew

The Waverley Community Cleaning Crew is a resource which was added to the Contract in 2010 in response to the relatively poor ‘Place Survey’ feedback and was intended to address an identified deficiency in the service around high visibility, high impact, responsive manual cleaning in the smaller village centres around the borough.

Initially funded for a trial 12-month period, the crew has been an extremely valuable and successful addition to the service, generating a significant level of positive feedback and making a real impact on the quality of the local environment in towns and villages across Waverley. It is therefore now a core element of the contract.

Looking at building on this success, Veolia were asked to put forward proposals as to how they might add further value to the street cleaning service, and have come back with some initial ideas as to how things might be further enhanced.

Specifically, they have put forward proposals to recruit two additional operatives, with a vehicle, to supplement the Community Cleaning Crew, and to focus on further improving the cleanliness of town and village centres, housing estates, etc, primarily through manual sweeping and litter-picking of traffic islands, garage areas, etc; through assisting with the manual cleaning of difficult-to-clean roads (such as narrow residential streets with parked cars); providing more ‘attention to detail’ in specific hotspots; and through assisting with the removal of fly-tips. This service enhancement will cost approximately £80k per annum with a vehicle, and a budget for this amount has been allocated as part of the 2012/13 street cleaning revenue budget.

It is felt that this additional resource could further build upon the good work and positive impact of the Community Cleaning Crew and create further capacity to provide a high-impact, highly responsive service.

Recommendation 2: Officers to work with Veolia to refine proposals for an additional 'community cleaning crew' within the allocated additional budget of £80,000, and to agree an appropriate package of high-impact work for this crew.

Fly tipping

The Environmental Service team is also responsible for the management of fly-tipping in the borough.

Research has been carried out into the recorded incidents of fly-tipping in Waverley over recent years, to identify whether it is getting worse; to establish whether the Council's current approach to enforcement, (and its current response-rates to fly-tipping clearance) are still effective; and to consider whether there is any merit in looking at changing tactics in order to address any emerging issues.

Given the relatively low number of recorded incidents of environmental crime in the borough, it has not historically been considered appropriate for the Council to commit time and resources to actively enforcing such issues as it is empowered to do under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005. Instead, the Council has managed the issue through challenging targets on clearing up reported fly-tips and removing abandoned cars, in order to ensure that, when such issues do arise, they are not left untended for longer than would be considered acceptable.

The two relevant local indicators are-

- LEnv3- % Abandoned Vehicles removed within 24 hours (Target 100%)
- LEnv5- Average number of days taken to remove a fly tip (Target 1.5 days)

Over the 16 quarters between the beginning of 2008/09 and the end of 2011/12, the 1.5 day target for removal of fly-tips has only been exceeded on one occasion; with the average time taken over that time being just under 1 day. The consistent achievement of this target means that the council rarely has to deal with accumulations of more than one 'tip' in one location, as the fly tipped material is generally removed before it attracts further incidents. Over the same 4-year period, in excess of 80% of all abandoned vehicles have been removed within the 24-hour target.

The chart below sets out the number of incidents of fly-tipping recorded by the Council's Environmental Services team from 2005/06 to date. Looking at these figures, it is clear that since 2006/07, the annual number of recorded fly tips has consistently been between 425 and 471, with no evidence of an upward-trend in recent years.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
TOTALS	654	471	425	434	440	456	427

Fly-tipping is not an issue that is spread evenly across the borough. As well as the main urban areas of the borough, there are some localised issues in areas such as Dunsfold, Bramley, Milford and Elstead. However, few of these hotspots appear so bad as to warrant any investment in dedicated enforcement action or covert surveillance.

An analysis of payments to Veolia suggests that the removal of fly-tips in the borough currently costs the Council an average of £9,000 per annum, with the removal of abandoned cars being a cost-neutral exercise due to the current scrap value attached to abandoned vehicles.

Under the provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, the council has the power to carry out enforcement to deal with certain environmental crimes, including fly-tipping; and the Executive considered its options in this regard in July 2009.

At that time, it was recognised that environmental crime in Waverley was low, with National (and local) Indicators all being 'good' or 'satisfactory' and it was therefore concluded that;

- The Council's Scheme of Delegation be amended so that the relevant Heads of Service be delegated to authorise their nominated officers to enforce the relevant provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005;
- The option to employ a dedicated enforcement team be kept under review and reconsidered should the incidence of environmental crime escalate to a level that might justify that investment;
- The Council adopts the default level of Fixed Penalty Charges and the discounts for early payment; and
- Officers investigate the opportunities for joint working, on the enforcement of the provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005, with neighbouring District Authorities.

In accordance with these recommendations, the Council's current Scheme of Delegation specifies that enforcement of the relevant provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 may be delegated to Officers as nominated by the relevant Heads of Service.

However, as was detailed in the July 2009 Executive report, any form of enforcement function (be that empowering existing officers to carry out enforcement action and back-filling their other work, sharing with a neighbour, or providing a dedicated enforcement resource), is likely to cost significantly more than the £9,000 per year currently spent on reactive fly-tip clearance. Indeed, an annual figure of £60,000 would probably be more appropriate, even before taking account of the additional drain on the Council's Legal team to ensure that any action taken is robustly pursued when required. For this reason, and due to the relatively small scale of the problem in Waverley, no decision has yet been taken to invoke these powers.

Instead, the Council has tended to rely on education and persuasion in the past in an attempt to tackle the problem at its source.

This has manifested itself in a number of ways, including the Council's past involvement in 'stop and search' events which have been co-ordinated by Surrey Police, and also involve other local partners such as the Environment Agency and VOSA. The events involve the police pulling a selection of vehicles off the road to check documentation, or licenses (in the case of vans carrying a load). The Environmental Services Team has, in the past, supported this operation by attending events and also checking waste carriers licenses. Although the team is limited in its capacity to take action, the Environment Agency has in the past taken up cases where there has been incorrect paperwork.

Although there is only a small chance of actually catching people who are about to fly-tip it is felt that, with enough publicity and through a highly visible local presence, such initiatives can be a strong deterrent to prospective offenders.

In addition to this, the Council also ensures that, where possible, appropriate signage, warning of the penalties that fly tipping carries, and/or physical barriers are placed in many of the known hot spots. Although it could be argued that, without the back-up of enforcement, signage and other such measures are not likely to carry much weight, it is felt that such actions, when combined with a swift clear-up response, do work well to deter potential offenders.

Finally, although rare, there are occasionally incidents of fly-tipping where a name or address is found within a fly tip, or some evidence exists of an issue arising out of a particular property nearby. In such cases, the team will write to those identified, advising them of the Council's discovery, and warning of the potential penalties attached to such offences. As above, although this is not currently backed-up with formal enforcement action, it is nonetheless felt that this direct action is an effective means of deterring re-offending.

Given that little has materially changed in terms of numbers, types or location of fly tips in Waverley since the current policy approach was agreed, it is not felt that a change in approach is warranted at this time.

Officers will continue to work closely with Veolia to ensure that the challenging removal targets are met and, where possible, exceeded; and will also continue to ensure that signage and physical deterrents are installed and/or maintained where appropriate. In addition, partnership 'stop and search' campaigns will take place when the opportunity arises. However, it is not proposed at this time, in light of the findings of this study, to invoke the powers available to the Council under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005, to enable a more proactive enforcement regime to take place in Waverley.

Recommendation 3: The currently effective ‘responsive’ approach to fly tipping should continue, with the current challenging removal targets remaining. The Council should continue to actively engage in education and persuasion campaigns where appropriate, and keep the issue of enforcement under review.

Graffiti Removal

Graffiti removal is currently covered by a 2007 variation to the Waste Management Contract involving the annual payment of £10,000 per year in return for up to 22 hours’ graffiti removal per month. This agreement was negotiated for a period of five years to the end of November 2012, to reflect the depreciation period for the specialist high pressure -washer that Veolia purchased for the purpose.

In practice, the Council rarely uses the 22-hour allocation, and has found that (whilst Veolia can offer good response times to deal with offensive material, etc), the quality of workmanship is not always to a satisfactory standard. Indeed, this is reflected by the content of some of the formal complaints received by the team over the past 12 months.

Given that the current agreement is to expire in November this year, it is felt that now is an opportune moment to explore whether there is a more effective (and potentially lower-cost) alternative solution.

Guildford Borough Council, who currently provide a graffiti removal service in house, are looking to market-test this service, and have indicated that there may be scope to seek joint tenders for this work.

In addition, Veolia have indicated that they would be keen to explore alternative funding models (perhaps based on ‘day rates’ rather than a lump-sum), and to work with the Council on improving the proficiency of the operatives involved in order to improve the quality of service provided. Officers are currently exploring both options in detail.

Recommendation 4: Develop a more professional, effective, responsive and cost-effective approach to dealing with graffiti removal across Waverley; work with Veolia on developing an improved model and explore alternative options such as partnership working with neighbours/ exposing the work to competition.

Cleaning of the A3 and A31

Two major roads pass through the borough.

The A3 runs from north to south from Milford in the north, to Bramshott in the south west corner of the borough, and provides road links to both London and the South Coast.

The A31 runs along the top of the Hogs Back between Guildford and Farnham, with the Waverley stretch running between the A331 Blackwater Valley road to the west of Farnham.

WBC is responsible for litter clearance on stretches of both of these roads. Both are high speed and therefore present a variety of health and safety issues which must be risk assessed, and a programme needs to be put in place which ensures the safety of staff and motorists. Where possible it is always desirable to seek to work with other statutory bodies such as Surrey County Council and the Highways Agency to take advantage of any scheduled traffic management and lane closures.

Turning to specifics, this Council is responsible for removing litter from the A3 between the Milford turn-off at the junction with the A283 and B3001, South to Bramshott; however, we are not responsible for litter-picking or cleaning in the Hindhead Tunnel. The responsibility for keeping this short stretch clean rests with the Highways Agency and their management contractor Mott McDonald.

There are significant sections of the A3 which crews can get on to and walk along safely without the need for traffic management (verges/side of the road), and these areas are scheduled for regular inspection and if they are littered will be cleaned. The remainder, excluding the central reservation, is litter picked under traffic management. This is currently carried out on a scheduled basis twice a year. There may be an opportunity to work on these areas in addition to the scheduled cleans if other partner authorities need to work on those stretches of road. This should provide an opportunity to clear any litter that has been reported in these areas in the period between the two scheduled cleans.

The central reservation can only be cleaned with significant lane closures on both sides of the carriageways. This operation has to be carried out at night to minimise the disruption to motorists and is currently carried out once a year. Such lane closures are expensive and the traffic management alone costs around £1,500 for each 4km lane closure.

Lay-bys are scheduled for regular litter picking and bin emptying.

Waverley's section of the A31 stretches from the A331 Blackwater Valley Junction, through Farnham, to the borough boundary west of Wrecclesham.

Most of the nearside lanes (verges/side of the road) can only be litter picked under traffic management. This is scheduled at regular intervals four times a year. Areas that can be attended to without traffic management are scheduled for regular inspection and if they are littered will be cleaned.

The central reservation can only be litter picked under traffic management. This is carried out in partnership with Surrey County Council when the grass is cut, twice a year.

As can be seen above, the maintenance of these high-speed roads in a clean and litter-free condition presents a significant challenge and can be costly. As a consequence of these challenges, the roads are sometimes not as litter-free as they should be, and have been the cause of formal complaint in the past.

In order to try and address this, attempts have been made in the past to ensure, where possible that this Council's street cleaning and verge cutting operations interface with SCC operations such as gully cleaning, sign cleaning and street light maintenance (and, where possible Guildford BC's own street cleaning operations on these roads) but success has been mixed.

Further work is now underway to ensure closer coordination between all parties concerned with a view to improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the operation, to enhance the environment in these areas, and to minimise disruption to motorists.

Recommendation 5: Work with SCC, GBC and the Highways Agency to develop better partnership working and a more coordinated approach to the maintenance of the A3 & A31 in order to improve standards of cleanliness.

Sandy Hill Caretaker Service

As part of the 2005 Waste Management Contract, the Council accepted joint responsibility with First Wessex Housing Association, for the cleansing and maintenance of the common areas of the Sandy Hill Housing Estate in Farnham, which presented a unique set of environmental challenges associated with the relative deprivation of the area . The estate comprises 525 dwelling units on an edge-of-town site of approximately 15 hectares, and the agreement involves the provision of a full-time Caretaker Service (40 hours per week, Monday to Friday) who is responsible for cleaning all public areas, removing Graffiti and Fly-tips and carrying out small general maintenance tasks.

The cost of this service- £56,706 per annum (2011/12 prices) is shared between WBC, First Wessex and SCC as follows:

- Waverley £23,245
- First Wessex £25,915
- SCC £7,546

This is an unusual arrangement which is not replicated anywhere else in the borough despite there arguably being other social housing areas in equal need of such a service. The net cost of this service to Waverley compares to an estimated cost of approximately £10,000 per annum if it were to be stopped altogether and replaced with a more conventional street cleaning approach using peripatetic crews to carry out litter picks/ bin emptying/ fly-tip clearance, etc.

However, the unique partnership-funding approach taken in this case means that, for an investment of some £23,000 per year, Waverley is able to attract an additional £33,000 from other agencies- which, it could be argued, is a positive outcome for this relatively deprived area.

In acknowledgement of the fact that the arrangements for Sandy Hill are unusual and have continued unchallenged for 7 years, Officers have been working over recent months with First Wessex and SCC to consider whether the service is still fit for purpose, to look at whether it should continue at all and, if so, how it might change into the future.

This exercise has revealed that, at over £57,000 per annum, the price currently paid to Veolia for a single operative and a vehicle is comparatively high and, as a consequence, First Wessex have now developed a counter-proposal where they would be able to provide an improved service of two operatives and a vehicle for £53,000 per annum.

Furthermore, it was felt that the work required to maintain the estate in a good condition no longer warranted a full-time, 40-hours-per-week presence, and it has therefore been proposed that The Chantrys (the only other Farnham Estate with both WBC and First Wessex properties) should benefit from 2 days of this resource on a weekly basis.

The First Wessex proposal represents a cashable reduction on current costs of approximately £4,000 (of which Waverley would receive approximately £1,500), whilst also delivering a much enhanced service to a second social housing area in Farnham. Furthermore, given that the proposal would negate the need for Veolia to continue to carry out litter-picking and litter bin emptying at the Chantrys, a further annual saving of £2,000 can be expected.

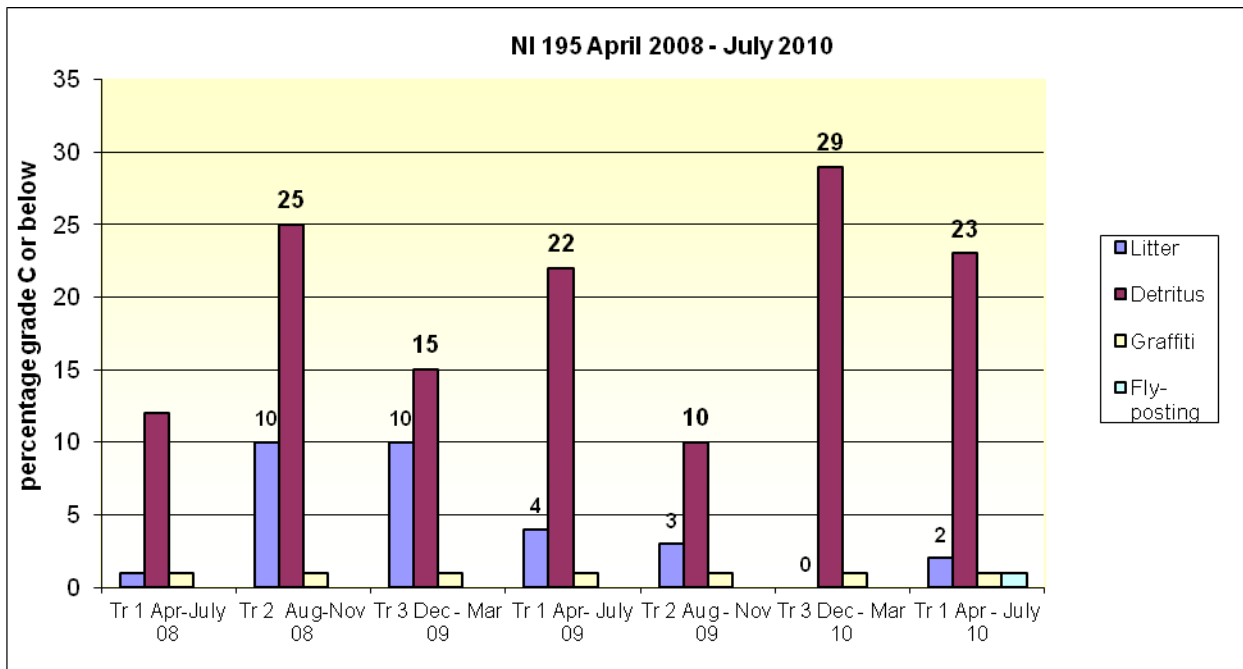
Should it be decided to pursue this revised model, a 'Service Level Agreement' would be drawn-up between WBC, SCC and First Wessex for a three-year arrangement running from November 2012 to October 2015.

Recommendation 6: Vary the Veolia contract to remove the Sandy Hill Caretaker Service, and enter into a new financial arrangement with First Wessex Housing Association to provide an enhanced service, at a lower cost, across both the Sandy Hill Estate and The Chantrys.

7. Current & Historic Performance Standards

National Indicator 195

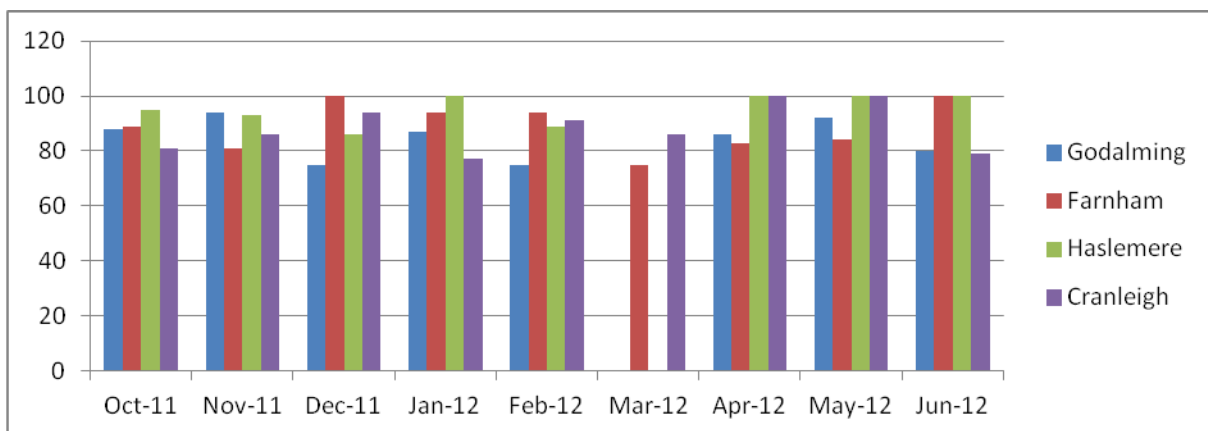
Until May 2011, street cleaning was measured using NI195, which entailed the inspection of a random sample of street transects in the Borough at any given point in a four month space of time. This national indicator assessed cleanliness in terms of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting. When looking nationally at results for this indicator Waverley consistently performed in the top quartile.



Since the deletion of NI195, Waverley has commenced its own performance monitoring system which focuses on monitoring the work of our street cleaning contractor by closely following the street cleaning schedule. The Contract Monitoring Officer currently monitors a minimum of 20 streets per week across the Borough, and all recycling sites are visited a least once during a fortnight period. This allows analysis of the performance of the contractor and enables areas for improvement to be quickly and easily identified.

Findings of the Current Inspection Regime

The new inspection regime commenced in the summer of 2011, and as can be seen in the following graph, results to date are strong, with 89% of scheduled cleans passing the inspection. However, there are pockets of lower scores- specifically with fortnightly cleans, which score an average 'pass rate' of only 80%.



**NB- the lack of data for Godalming & Haslemere in March 2012 was due to the fact that inspection resources were diverted to the waste & recycling service roll-out and so no inspections were undertaken during this period.*

Public perception & Customer Feedback

It is clear from the available data that one of the main problems facing the street cleaning service historically (both locally and nationally) has been public perception. In Waverley, there were frequent complaints that residents never saw the street cleaning vehicles, and this was deemed particularly to be the case in the more rural areas. The Place Survey results from 2008 confirmed this position, with the subsequent Budget Consultation exercise reaffirming the importance that local people place on this issue.

As previously mentioned, the 2010 service enhancements (which included a re-branding exercise, the introduction of a 'high impact/ high visibility' community cleaning crew, and the production and use of customer comment cards) set-out to address this issue.

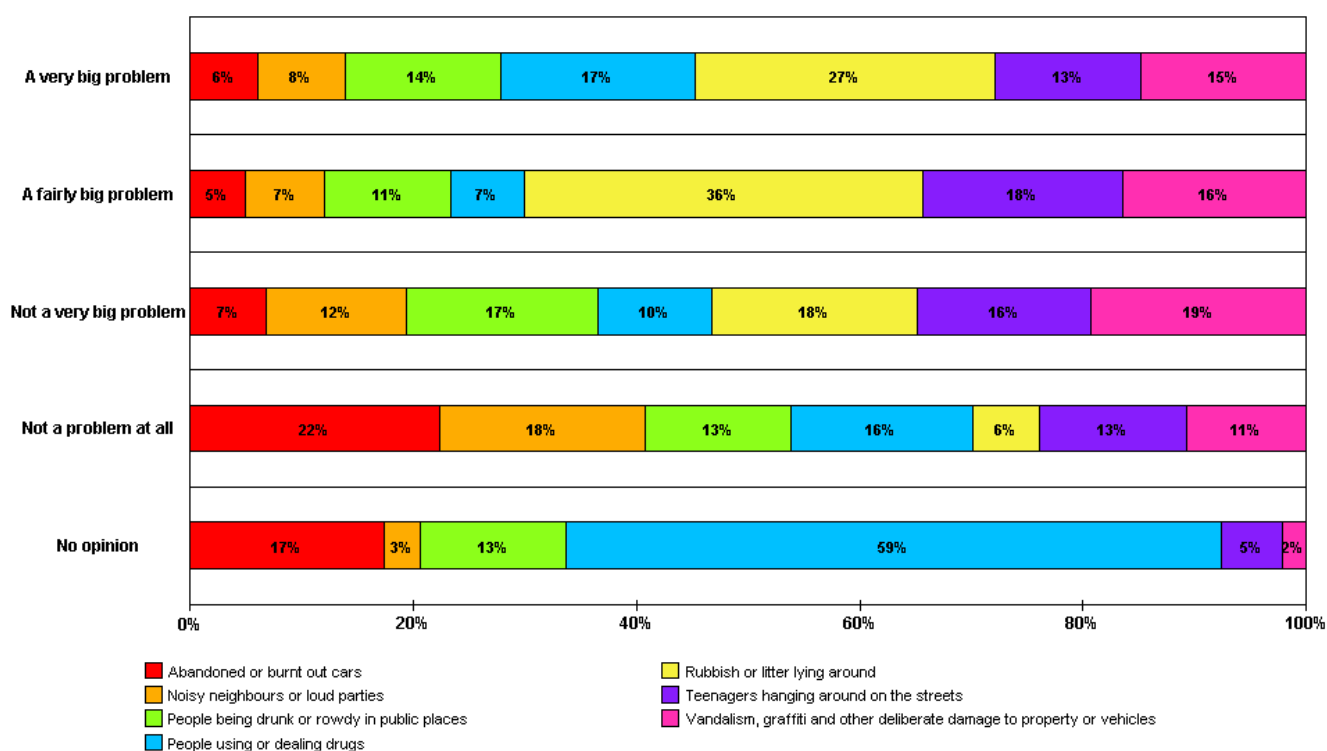
The detailed findings of the various relevant consultation exercises carried out over recent years are set out below.

Citizen's Panel Findings

In 2010, following the disappointing 'Place Survey' results of 2008, the Council's Citizen's Panel was asked questions both about the local environment (with particular reference to community safety), and their spending priorities.

The findings of the survey indicated that, whilst most people think that community safety/anti-social behaviour issues are either not a very big problem or not a problem at all in their area, for those that did think there were community safety issues in their areas, the biggest issue was felt to be "rubbish or litter lying around", with vandalism and graffiti also scoring high. The following chart illustrates the results of that survey in further detail:

Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are?



In the same consultation exercise, panellists were asked to carry out a priority-setting exercise, to follow-on from and re-affirm the findings of the 2009 'Participatory Budget' exercise. Again, street cleaning emerged as a very strong favourite in terms of spending priorities, and was also highlighted as the single service area with the greatest potential negative impact arising from any service reductions. In summary, the results indicated that residents place a high value on, and are impacted strongly by local environmental issues such as clean streets, available and well-maintained parks, playing fields, open spaces and countryside, and consider this area of the Council's work to be a high priority for (at best) additional expenditure, and (at worst) protection from service reductions.

In recognition of this fact, the Street cleaning budget has been protected from any reductions for 3 consecutive years; and the Council has in fact agreed two separate budget increases totalling approximately £160,000 between them to enable service enhancements during that time; the first of which was to fund the 2010 service improvements, and the second of which is an as-yet-unallocated sum of £80,000 to finance specific improvements identified in this review.

Recommendation 7: Protect current levels of expenditure on street cleaning to reflect the high priority the service is given by local residents.

Comment Cards

As part of the aforementioned 2010 service improvements, the Environmental Services team developed, with Veolia, a simple 'comment card', which could be used to post through a selection of doors on a recently cleaned street, or handed out to passers-by by street cleaning operatives.

The card was introduced on a trial basis, and has been used primarily by the 'Community Cleaning Crew'. It was intended to perform two separate functions- firstly, to raise awareness that street cleaning activity had taken place in a given area, and encourage residents to look at their local area critically following a clean; and secondly, to obtain an additional layer of customer feedback and insight to help identify any recurring themes and inform future changes to the service.

The use of 'Comment Cards' commenced on a trial basis in January 2011 and, to date, approximately 150 cards have been returned.

This relatively low number of responses (which equates to approximately 8 per month on average), is thought to be partly due to the fact that the cards have primarily only been circulated in areas where the Community Cleaning Crew has been working- and partly due to the fact that it requires effort to physically post the cards.

The results from those that have been returned, however, have been extremely positive. The graph below summarises the headline responses received to date:



Analysing the comments received on the cards, it becomes clear that, despite the generally positive responses, two specific issues are repeatedly reported. They are:

- The challenge of cleaning around parked cars on residential roads
- The fact that cleans are to a good standard, but are too infrequent

These challenges and potential ways to address them are considered in further detail elsewhere in this review.

The information gleaned from this customer feedback, combined with the awareness-raising impact of the cards is felt to be extremely positive, and it is therefore felt that the use of the cards should be continue and, indeed, extended into the future.

Recommendation 8: Extend use of comment cards to cover all street cleaning activities, and require Veolia operatives to target 10% properties on routine street cleaning rounds. Include email address/ link to online form/ text option to encourage feedback.

Formal Complaints regarding Street Cleaning

To complete the picture, the number, severity and causes of formal complaints received about the street cleaning service over from September 2011 to the end of July 2012 has also been examined. This exercise has revealed that during this period the Council received a total of 12 formal complaints about the service from 8 complainants. These concerned the following specific issues:

- Insufficient frequency of litter bin emptying
- Delay and poor standard of workmanship with graffiti removal
- Lack of litter-picking on the A3

- Poor standards of street cleaning in residential roads with parked cars

It is interesting to note that the themes emerging from the Customer Comment Cards feedback and formal street cleaning complaints are broadly consistent and have been addressed through a number of the preceding recommendations.

8. Community involvement

There have historically been some small-scale attempts to involve interested citizens in monitoring, shaping and delivering the street cleaning service across Waverley, but these have generally not been given the time and resources they deserve, and have consequently been short-lived, and of limited value.

Street watch

Of most significant note was the ‘Street Watch’ initiative, which was put in place to encourage feedback from residents by requesting they monitor street cleaning in an area or road of their choice (usually their own, and neighbouring roads).

Dates of the forthcoming scheduled cleans were provided and comments cards were given out, to be completed and returned to the office. From this it was possible to determine whether or not a clean had taken place as scheduled, and the standard of the work carried out (from the perspective of the resident).

This was not only a useful means of maximising the ‘ears and eyes’ available to the Council for contract monitoring purposes, but also had the added benefit of engaging some of our (often more challenging and critical) customers to assist with delivering a positive outcome for their local area.

Unfortunately, the scheme has suffered over recent years from a lack of investment in time and energy, and is currently no longer actively promoted or managed.

It is felt that a new, reinvigorated scheme could be of significant benefit to the Council, and result in a much improved standard of cleanliness (and perception of cleanliness) across the borough, as well as providing an ongoing opportunity to engage with complainants in a more positive and proactive manner. It is also felt that such a scheme could now benefit from the significant technological advances that have taken place over recent years- potentially using a variety of electronic methods of communication to facilitate easier and timelier exchange of information.

Recommendation 9: Introduce and promote an improved and reinvigorated ‘street watch’ programme across the borough- using a range of communication channels to maximise participation.

Waverley & Guildford “Cleaner Safer Greener” Project

Between 2009 and 2011 this Council took part in a joint nomination scheme with Guildford Borough Council where Town, Borough and Parish Councillors, residents associations, community groups and interested individuals were asked to nominate areas of concern for a special clean up. This scheme was funded by the Local Strategic Partnership, with the funding being used to carry out additional cleans in areas currently not included on cleaning schedules, and other identified environmental improvement projects.

There remains a sum of £6,000 in the ‘Cleaner Safer Greener’ budget, which could be used to reinstate the scheme, or for other means of public engagement such as the provision of free equipment for community clean-ups.

Community Clean-ups

The Council is often approached by Town & Parish Councils and community groups wishing to arrange community litter-picks and clean-up days.

Waverley currently receives around 5 enquiries per year about the provision of equipment for community litter pick days. These are directed to Veolia who currently charge a small hire fee, and residents are required to pick these up from the Farnham depot. Waverley will provide bags free of charge for these events, and will clear the waste from an agreed point after the event as part of the street cleaning service. These arrangements can often prove to be a disincentive to an otherwise enthusiastic group of residents and would benefit from being made easier.

In addition to these events, there are usually around 5 community clear up days per annum organised by the Housing Team with the aim of improving the appearance of housing estates in the borough. Veolia are paid to carry out this clear up service, but on occasions have offered voluntary support for carrying out some of the works on the day.

<p>Recommendation 10: Use an element of the unallocated ‘Cleaner Safer Greener’ funding to purchase litter picks, high-visibility jackets, and other equipment, to provide free to regular ‘clean-up’ groups to further encourage their activities.</p>
--

9. Monitoring performance

The performance of the street cleaning contract is monitored through a variety of means, many of which have already been mentioned.

Contract Monitoring Officer

Following the creation of a new post following the 2011 Star Chamber process, the Environmental Services team now has two dedicated Contract Monitoring Officers (one full time and one part time), who carry out routine inspections (both proactive and reactive) in order to ensure that the Waste Management Contract (both street cleaning and waste & recycling aspects) is being delivered to a good standard.

Since the deletion of the National Indicator NI195, the team has devised a more useful and meaningful local indicator to assess street cleaning standards, and this regime is implemented by these officers; the aim being that approximately 10% of Veolia's street cleaning activity is formally monitored in any given period.

This information is currently used to inform decisions within the Environmental Services Team, and is shared with Veolia on a quarterly basis, when any emerging trends and/or areas for concern are discussed. It is felt that, given the high profile of street cleaning this information should achieve greater visibility into the future, and form part of a suite of performance measures that are reported to Corporate Management Team on a fortnightly basis.

Recommendation 11: Street Cleanliness measures to be reported regularly to Corporate Management team as part of a suite of performance measures

Input from residents

Of course, by its nature, street cleaning is a highly visible service, and hence much performance monitoring is carried out on an informal basis through Waverley's residents. This is sometimes through the aforementioned 'Comment Cards' and 'Street watch' initiatives, but generally simply through informal reporting and feedback regarding specific problems/ requests for remedial cleans, etc., generally by telephone.

In this respect, our residents are an extremely valuable resource and are able to provide us with a comprehensive oversight of our street cleaning activities across the borough- something that would simply not be possible using Council-employed monitoring officers alone.

In addition to the previously stated aims to reinstate 'Street Watch' and make better use of Comment Cards, it is felt that much more could also be done to encourage this informal feedback, and to analyse and act upon it when it is received, for example:

- Provision of an SMS 'report it' number
- Provision of easy to use, prominently located on-line forms
- Promotional activity to encourage feedback
- Better provision of street cleaning data on-line (street cleaning schedules, etc)
- Possible use of emerging 'smart phone' technology, including the use of smart phone 'apps' to enable residents to report (with the use of a photograph) a local environmental issue.

Recommendation 12: Explore technologies and develop a broad range of methods for encouraging more informal feedback on the street cleaning service, and ensure this is routinely analysed and acted upon.

Municipal Integrated Management System (MIMS)

As part of their waste contract variation offer Veolia have undertaken to introduce in-cab technology, and accompanying web-based software to assist with the real-time management and monitoring of the waste and recycling operation.

Although not currently used for street cleaning operations anywhere else within Veolia, it is felt that this same system, due to be installed in all refuse vehicles from October this year, could also be used on the Street Cleaning service. This would provide Officers with a constantly-updated means of following Veolia's progress against the agreed cleaning schedules, which in turn would result in a much better, more accurate and timely service to our customers.

Recommendation 13: Work with Veolia to ensure that MIMS is introduced across the street cleaning fleet, and that it is integrated as far as possible with WBC's back office systems and publicly-accessible street cleaning schedules.

10. Working with Partners

The responsibility for the maintenance of the public realm does not, of course sit entirely with this Council. A range of other public, private, and voluntary-sector partners also have a role to play (sometimes statutory, and sometimes discretionary) in the cleanliness of the borough.

Surrey County Council

As the Highway Authority, Surrey County Council is responsible for the maintenance of much of Waverley's 'street scene'. Most notably, the responsibility for gully-clearance, weed-spraying of the highway, and highway verge maintenance (including highway trees) is theirs.

This has historically led to a rather disjointed approach where, in the worst case scenario, Veolia might sweep a street the day before the County Council cut the verges and spread cut grass onto the road; or where there is disagreement as to whether a blocked gully (Surrey's responsibility), or fallen leaves on top of the drain cover (Waverley's responsibility) are the cause of a particular flooding problem.

This challenge has recently become slightly easier to overcome as a consequence of the passing of responsibility for highway verge maintenance from SCC to WBC, but there is still much scope for closer working on 'streetscene' issues if we are to ensure a more 'seamless'

service to our customers, and officers will continue to work with SCC to ensure a more coordinated approach is taken into the future.

Towns & Parishes

The Town and Parish Councils in Waverley vary considerably in size and capacity; some (such as Farnham Town Council) are reasonably large, delivering a range of services (sometimes including such things as graffiti removal and the coordination of 'clean-up days') through a small direct labour force, whilst others are relatively small, with few responsibilities and limited scope to deliver such services.

Regardless of their size and scope, however, it is important that Waverley works closely with Town and Parish councils to better understand and deliver on local environmental priorities.

In order to achieve this it is felt that a regular programme of 'walkabouts', involving WBC Officers and Members, Town/ Parish Council representatives and Veolia operatives should be introduced in order to facilitate a better dialogue between all concerned and to deliver improved results as a consequence.

Recommendation 14: Introduce regular 'walkabouts' with appropriate WBC officers, Veolia operatives, borough councillors, town/ parish representatives to identify issues and agree local street-cleaning priorities.

Guildford Borough Council

With a significant shared border, WBC and Guildford Borough Council are, in many ways, natural candidates for closer partnership working on street cleaning and, with this in mind detailed meetings took place in 2010 and 2011 to explore opportunities in this regard.

However, for a variety of reasons (not least the challenges associated with bringing together a contracted-out service with a directly provided one), these meetings did not deliver any changes, and this council's current contractual commitments mean that any wholesale collaboration is now unlikely until at least 2019.

Nonetheless, there are opportunities for smaller-scale collaboration on such issues as the aforementioned traffic management/ street cleaning of the A3 and A31 and graffiti removal- both of which will receive continued attention over the coming months.

11. Vehicles & Plant

Having launched and embedded the new waste and recycling system Officers have now started work, with Veolia, on preparing for the commencement of the second seven-year term of the street cleaning element of the contract in November 2012.

This will involve the introduction, over the coming 12 months of a completely new fleet of street sweepers, with other replacement vehicles to follow over the ensuing years. This provides a good opportunity to ensure that the contract is appropriately equipped for the coming seven years.

Redesigning the fleet

The review of street cleaning schedules is likely to have an impact on the range and number of vehicles required to deliver an effective street cleaning service across Waverley. It is therefore considered appropriate to follow the aforementioned re-scheduling exercise with a fundamental review of the street cleaning fleet.

Branding

Clearly, it is of utmost importance that all vehicles engaged on the contract, along with the uniforms of the street cleaning operatives, are strongly branded to identify the service with the Council.

Recommendation 15: Officers to work with Veolia to ensure a appropriate fleet of vehicles, with strong WBC branding is procured to deliver the street cleaning service between 2012 and 2019

12. Environmental Improvements

Recycling Litter Bins

A successful capital bid was submitted for the 2012/13 financial year for the purchase and installation of 20 recycling litter bins across the four main centres of population, to encourage 'recycling-on-the-go', and to further disseminate the recycling message. These bins which take the same commingled mix of materials as is collected from the kerbside, have now been installed, and are being emptied as part of the existing street cleaning service.

The aims of the project are as follows:

- To increase the recycling rate in Waverley.
- To allow residents access to recycling facilities when they are 'on the move.'
- To provide publicity about Waverley's recycling scheme.
- To reinforce the recycling message by creating a culture of recycling in residents' everyday lives rather than just at home.

Anecdotal reports from other authorities have shown that high tonnages are rarely achieved through recycling litter bin schemes, and that the recycling collected tends to be of a lower quality than that achieved through kerbside schemes. However, the main advantages that authorities look for are the added publicity and the reinforcement of the recycling message.

If, after analysis of usage levels and material quality, the scheme proves successful it is proposed that it could be rolled-out further across the borough, further reinforcing the recycling message and making an even larger contribution towards landfill diversion. This is potentially a project that could be funded through developer contributions towards recycling initiatives.

Recommendation 16: Monitor the success of the new recycling litter bin scheme and source funding for further bins if it proves successful.

Manual segregation of litter-pickings

The next logical step would then be to ask the town centre ‘barrowmen’ to segregate the litter they collect from the town centres into recyclable and non-recyclable factions.

This is an initiative that has recently been introduced in Surrey Heath, and- as much of the litter discarded in town centres is glass and plastic bottles, drinks cans and paper, it has resulted in over 25% of all litter-pickings being recycled.

Recommendation 17: Introduce manual segregation of litter-picking in town-centre areas and monitor the success of the scheme.

13. Conclusion

Street cleaning is an extremely important and high profile aspect of the council’s business, and has a significant impact on the reputation of the Council and public perception of the local area. This has been recognised over recent years through increased investment in the service, and this investment has delivered marked improvements and increased satisfaction levels.

The end of the first 7-year contract term presents an opportunity to carry out a fundamental review of the current service, and to make any changes deemed necessary to make it fit-for-purpose for 2012 and beyond. Furthermore, now that the Environmental Services team has delivered the new waste and recycling service, there is now an opportunity to give greater focus to the street cleaning service, ensuring that standards are consistently high, that customers know what to expect and how they can get involved, and that we engage effectively with all public and private sector partners involved in maintaining the public realm in Waverley.

The recommendations contained in this report are the culmination of a review of the current service specification, of customer feedback, and of current best practice elsewhere, and are intended to deliver a cost-effective, high quality and responsive service into the future.