

GRAFFITI AND FLY-TIPPING

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Relevant Strategic Priorities, CIOs – Attractive and Inclusive City; Safe City; CIO's – CIO1, CIO3

1. Why has this report come to the Committee?

- 1.1 Consideration of matters relating to graffiti and fly tipping from part of the Committee's work programme in the current Council year.

Performance in respect of graffiti and fly-tipping, as measured previously by BVPI's and now National Indicators (NI's), have been and continue to be reported to the Committee on a quarterly basis. Graffiti is included, along with litter, detritus and fly-posting as part of the NI 195 – a measure of improved street and environmental cleanliness.

Fly-tipping is covered by NI 196.

- 1.2 The report seeks to advise members of performance in the period April to December 2008 and measures being taken to address both issues.
- 1.3 The presence of graffiti and fly-posting influences residents' and visitors' perceptions of an area. Addressing those matters, therefore, is a positive contribution towards the Council's strategic priorities of an Attractive and Inclusive City and a Safe City. NI195 is one of a suite of indicators included within the Local Area Agreement (LAA), under the theme of "developing high quality places to live".

2. Background

- 2.1 The measurement of cleanliness standards for NI 195 covering litter, detritus, graffiti and fly- posting is undertaken in accordance with guidance issued by DEFRA. This requires surveys of 300 transects (sites) across a range of land use classes (30 sites in each) within wards selected on a rotating basis every 4 months- a total of 900 sites being surveyed each year.
- 2.2 The survey procedure remains largely as it was for the purposes of BVPI 199.

- 2.3 Standards are assessed according to the basic 4- point scale of A (clean) to D (heavily affected) set out in the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse with intermediate grades giving a range of seven potential scores- A, B+, B, B-, C, C- and D.
- 2.4 The indicator reflects the percentage of those sites graded B- and lower .Sites graded as B- attract only half the weighting of sites graded C and D to reflect the borderline position.
- 2.5 Litter (NI 195a), detritus (NI 195b), graffiti (NI 195c), and fly- posting (NI 195d) are all assessed in the same way at each site.
- 2.6 In establishing base- line performance and targets for the Local Area Agreement 2008- 2011 the Council's procedures for planning and undertaking surveys were recently independently audited by Encams and found to comply with DEFRA guidance.
- 2.7 Findings from the surveys are now fed into a DEFRA hosted website which can produce reports that allow local authorities to compare the position locally with that nationally; and can assist in identifying areas where improvements can be made.
- 2.8 Members will be aware that for the purposes of LPSA2 there was also a further measure of performance which related to the time taken to remove graffiti in particular circumstances.
- 2.9 Performance in respect of fly- tipping is reported in accordance with NI 196. This indicator, however, is not included amongst those that form part of the LAA.

3. Current Position

Graffiti

- 3.1 The Street Scene unit within Community and Cultural Services continues to respond to reports of graffiti, including that of an offensive nature, on or within the highway and offers a free of charge removal service for graffiti on adjacent structures where permission (by way of a disclaimer) can be secured from the owner. The removal of graffiti from structures or surfaces in private ownership outside the boundaries of the highway remains the responsibility of the owner.
- 3.2 Graffiti on Council buildings and structures is removed under instruction or notification from client sections or users by the Building Maintenance unit.
- 3.3 Results from the first two tranches of the NI 195 surveys for 2008/09 show that 3% and 4% of sites, respectively, suffered from unsatisfactory levels of graffiti- a position that reflects national findings. Sites with unacceptable levels of graffiti were predominantly subways.

- 3.4 In the period April to December 2008 there were 417 incidents of graffiti reported to the Street Scene unit. Those incidents were responded to within an average of 2 working days.
- 3.5 As part of the Council's Improvement Programme measures are being implemented to improve the response to incidents of graffiti and other local environmental matters by equipping and training front- line staff to identify, report and deal with such matters.

Fly- tipping

- 3.6 Recorded incidents of fly- tipping in the first eight months of 2008/09 numbered 5433. The average time taken to deal with these matters was within one working day.
- 3.7 The majority of incidents are reported by front- line staff and involve smaller quantities of rubbish. Those areas with a large number of terraced properties report a greater frequency of incidents.
- 3.8 Seven prosecutions have been pursued in the last fourteen months regarding cases in the Back on the Map area. The most recent success being reported in the local press within the last week.
- 3.9 The Council's Strategic Investment Plan has provided for the complement of Environmental Enforcement Officers to be increased to twelve. The majority of the team are now in post with the interview procedure for the team manager underway. The incorrect presentation of bins and rubbish for collection and the investigation of fly- tipping incidents will be a priority for the extended team.
- 3.10 The Strategic Investment Plan has also provided for a programme of interventions to tackle fly- tipping as well as secure improvements to cycle paths. Works involving the removal of rubbish and vegetation, the provision of fencing and barriers and facilities to locate CCTV cameras at problem locations have been identified and reports regarding the programme have been or are to be considered by each of the Area Committees.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to consider and note the report.

5. Background Papers

NI 195 Survey Results 2008/09- Tranches 1 and 2
Flycapture records 2008/09

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