

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

23 OCTOBER 2007

COMMENTS ON SATISFACTION SURVEY IN RELATION TO STREET SCENE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES.

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Margaret Sherrey
Responsible Head of Service	Michael Bell

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In the September meeting of PMB members asked that the relevant Portfolio holder, together with the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management, be requested to look into the reasons why indicators BV89 (Street Cleanliness) and BV90a (Waste Collection) were worse than the national trend, and report their findings to the next meeting of the Board, and that, in connection with BV89, Members be advised of the criteria of the “Apple Award” recently attained by the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the report is noted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 **BVPI 89 Street Cleanliness.** The standard of cleanliness according to BVPI 199 has improved dramatically during the past few years following an investment in equipment and staff by this Council. However the Authority was starting from a very low base and is still catching up other Local Authorities who have had significant investment for a number of years. We are aware that in some areas the current street cleansing equipment is sweeping areas that have never been cleansed according to local residents, consequently the progress of machinery is slow in order to collect the huge backlog of waste evident in some roads. This was highlighted when the original report about the new street cleansing regime was produced and comment made that for a period of time results would only show improvement slowly.
- 3.2 We have seen significant improvement in Charford, Sidemoor and Catshill by the introduction of the dedicated cleansing operative who’s responsibility is to maintain a high standard of cleanliness within the dedicated area. This has been commented by local residents who have recognised the benefits of this dedicated resource.

- 3.3 We are still working with the County Council and BDHT to improve further the cleanliness of the area in a number of ways. Specifically we have met with the County to agree a method of co-ordinating their grass cutting regime with our litter collection to avoid shredding of litter by mowers and attempting to find a solution with BDHT to the dumping by residents of waste material adjacent to bin store areas and within garage sites.
- 3.4 However in some areas perception of the service will still be low despite the favourable comments in other areas.
- 3.5 **BVPI 90a Satisfaction with Household Waste Collection.** During the period since the last survey was carried out this District Council amongst many others has introduced major changes to the service including alternate week collections. Traditionally most residents were comfortable with the previous weekly collections and because there had been no change for many years the system worked reasonably well and generated satisfaction. Requiring residents to sort waste, use alternative containers and only collect residual waste every two weeks generated considerable backlash against the Council.
- 3.6 This has been further compounded by the reduction in the green waste collection service during the winter on 2006/07 and together with the considerable adverse publicity against alternate week collections in national newspapers during the period that this survey was carried out, has generated dissatisfaction amongst some residents.
- 3.7 There is however a conflict within the results in that there is a perception reported of an improvement in the 'doorstep collection of items for recycling'. Approximately half of the refuse collection service is the collection of green waste and this is both part of the recycling service and part of the household waste collection service. It is therefore difficult to be precise about what residents real concerns are about the service in general.
- 3.8 Figures nationally suggest that there has been a reduction in the satisfaction of refuse collection services generally and this seems to correspond with the period during which many Councils have been changing systems in order to improve, from a very low base, the level of recycling.
- 3.9 **Green Apple Award.** The Green Organisation is an independent, non-political, non-activist, non-profit environment group dedicated to recognising, rewarding and promoting environmental best practice around the world. It is best known for organising The International Green Apple Environment Award campaigns - one for environmental best practice, and one for enhancing our built environment and architectural heritage. The awards recognise, reward and promote environmental best practice around the world

- 3.10 The Green Organisation is funded by membership and sponsorship, with valuable support from the Environment Agency, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management, the Municipal Journal and several other professional bodies.
- 3.11 Street Scene and Waste Management had received plaudits from various residents groups including Charford PACT following the introduction of its dedicated litter picker scheme to Charford, Sidemoor and Catshill. We were keen to promote this as best practice and a system that generated results very quickly. We were therefore very keen to promote this system whenever and wherever possible. The Green Organisation is designed precisely for this type of promotion and seemed the ideal vehicle to get the work being done by a very dedicated group of street cleaners recognised more widely.
- 3.12 Publicity is vital to project the recycling and litter messages to the wider audience. It also develops a real pride and commitment amongst operational staff. This award has raised the profile of the service considerably and the morale of all staff involved. In doing so it also promotes the message that this Council is keen to further improve its street cleansing service.
- 3.13 What the award does not do is suggest that we have a top quality service. It recognises aspects of it that are good and recognises that work is being done to further develop the service. For that reason it should be fully supported and recognised as an excellent achievement especially by the operational staff involved.
- 3.14 An extract from the Green Organisation is included as an appendix to this report together with the submission sent from this department.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications from this report.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 How the item links to the Council's objectives and priorities.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no specific risks associated with this report.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no specific customer implications associated with this report.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific equalities or diversity issues associated with this report.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Please include the following table and spell out any particular implications in the relevant box. If there are no implications under a particular heading, please state 'None':-

Procurement Issues
Personnel Implications
Governance/Performance Management
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998
Policy
Environmental

11. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Please include the following table and indicate 'Yes' or 'No' as appropriate. Delete the words in italics.

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Corporate Director (Services)	No
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes
Head of Service <i>(i.e. your own HoS)</i>	Yes
Head of Financial Services <i>(must approve Financial Implications before report submitted to Leader's Group)</i>	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services <i>(for approval of any significant Legal</i>	No

<i>Implications)</i>	
Head of Organisational Development & HR <i>(for approval of any significant HR Implications)</i>	No
Corporate Procurement Team <i>(for approval of any procurement implications)</i>	No

12. **APPENDICES**

Extract from Green Organisation website.
Submission from Street Scene Department to Green Apple Organisation

13. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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The Green Apple Awards 2007

for Environmental Best Practice and Sustainable Development



CALL FOR ENTRIES

We would like to invite you to apply for a Green Apple Award 2007, for Environmental Best Practice and Sustainable Development.

ENTRY CONDITIONS

Completed Entry Forms are invited from any company, council or community that can demonstrate that it is making an effort to have a beneficial effect on the environment and/or can demonstrate that it is embodying the principles of sustainable development by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

THERE IS NO ENTRY FEE

All you have to do is complete the Entry Form with

- Your contact details
- A summary (up to 200 words) of your Project Aim
- A summary (up to 200 words) of your Project Achievements
- A written submission (up to 1000 words) detailing your project (NB: Further guidance on this can be found in the Written Submission section of the Entry Form)
- Be sure to choose the Sector and Category for your entry (though the judges reserve the right to move your entry into a different one if they think it is more appropriate)

Judging criteria and marking

Our judges always take into consideration the resources available to the entrant so, for example, it is possible for a small company to beat a bigger one in their pursuit of Green Apple Award recognition.

Likewise: our judges accept that none of us is – nor (unfortunately) can ever hope to be – perfectly 'green'. So do not be deterred if you find you cannot tick all of the boxes in the list of Judging Criteria. The judges can award up to 12 points on each of the following criteria. They also have the flexibility to award up to 12 additional bonus points for entries they believe have particular merit.

- Environmental benefit. Does the entry identify clear environmental benefits?
- Innovation. Does the entry demonstrate new/novel solutions to existing problems?
- Commitment to achieve by senior personnel involved. Have staff demonstrated their commitment?
- Social benefit. How have communities benefited?
- Economic benefit. What have been the financial benefits?
- Quantitative evidence of impact. Can you measure any of the environmental benefits?
- Future further development plans. How do you intend to build on your success?
- Possible adoption by others. Can your scheme be replicated by other sectors/organisations?

In your Entry Form, please show how your work satisfies any of the above criteria.

Do you have an unblemished record of compliance with relevant legislation and regulation? (You may elaborate on this point if you think it necessary.)

Please also state if any enforcement action has ever been taken against the organisation, together with any measures adopted to prevent this happening again.

- IF POSSIBLE, please also copy your complete entry on to a disk or CD and send that to us at the same time, so that we have both hard copy and an electronic version.
- Send your entry (and any necessary supporting material) to

Green Apple Awards, The Mill House, Mill Lane, Earls Barton, Northampton NN6 0NR to arrive before June 30, 2007

- We will acknowledge safe delivery of your entry and advise you by August 15 whether you have been successful or not.

Are you eligible?

ARE YOU doing something that benefits the environment?
DO YOU deserve recognition for your environmental endeavours?

IF SO, you should apply for a Green Apple Environment Award.

The campaign is open to everyone – companies, councils, communities, countries and individuals. ENTRY IS COMPLETELY FREE and on the back page you will find a sector and category that will accommodate your entry.

Our judges will choose Green Champions plus Gold, Silver and Bronze Winners in every category, and all of our winners will be given free tickets to collect their handsome trophies at the special prizegiving ceremony, with free food and refreshments included.

This will be staged at the HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT in early November 2007.

If you are doing something that benefits the environment, we want to hear about it. Our judging panel will consider your entry on its merits and they always make allowances for contenders who may not have the same financial resources as some of the other entrants.

HOW DO YOU ENTER?

Simply complete the two-sided entry form and submit it with an outline of what you have done that merits a Green Apple Award.

THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

You will be contacted to advise you whether your entry has been successful or not, and if you are one of our winners you will receive an invitation to join us at the Houses of Parliament to be officially presented with your trophy.

How many entries can I submit?

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY: Each entry submitted must be completely separate from any other that is put forward for consideration. No more than four from any one company.

WASTES MANAGEMENT: As above.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES: Each entry submitted must come from a different department. (i.e: No more than one entry per department, but no limit to the number of entries from any one council.)

INTERNATIONAL: No limit to the number of entries from any country, but no more than one from any single Government department, organisation or company.

Send your completed entry to:

GREEN APPLE AWARDS,
THE MILL HOUSE, MILL LANE,
EARLS BARTON,
NORTHAMPTON, NN6 0NR

NB

Send both the hard copy AND A DUPLICATE electronic copy on disk (if possible)

Appendix 2

The Clean Sweep Project

Bromsgrove District Council's Street Scene & Waste Management Service operates a range of functions from recycling collections and dealing with abandoned cars to septic tank emptying and trade refuse collections. One of the most important and often forgotten functions of the service however is street cleansing. Keeping the streets, pavements and open spaces clean and tidy will not often cross our resident's minds until they have to report a spillage, detritus on the road or overflowing litter bins. Before the Clean Sweep Project compliments were a rare thing and service requests from the customer service centre were the only messages that the Street Cleansing Team would receive.

The Street Cleansing Team consists of a 26 strong workforce performing cleansing duties across an area of approximately 83.8 square miles of rural and semi rural land. As Bromsgrove District lies only 14 miles from Birmingham and is crossed by the M5 M42 and M40, this brings a unique set of issues from a cleansing point of view. Muddy roads, high leaf litter and road kill incidents are all increased due to our semi rural location, whilst at the same time Bromsgrove lies in the commuter belt giving rise to high volumes of traffic and the unfortunate litter thrown from vehicles, road kill, over flowing litter bins on main routes, busy town centres with the usual smoking related litter and food waste litter problems of urbanised areas.

The Head of Service together with the Street Cleansing Supervisor identified the need to turn around the way in which street cleansing operated in the authority. The main priority being to improve the actual and the perceived levels of cleanliness in the area.

The first course of action was to ensure the Team had the right equipment for the job in hand. It became clear that due to the size of existing sweepers, some smaller lanes were not able to be swept to a sufficient standard which obviously was not helping to achieve service priorities therefore considerable funding from Capital funds had been agreed to be spent on new plant. A new Scarab Mid sweeper was vital in allowing access to the smaller lanes in the District. New Footpath walk behind sweepers were also ordered, to complement the new manual barrows as well as Swingo compact footpath sweepers for larger areas. Schorling large road sweepers for the highways finished off the fleet and furnished the Cleansing Team with the correct tools to do their job to a high standard.

The Cleansing schedules were the next items to be tackled as these were at the heart of making the improvements that SS&WM strived for. In reviewing and revising the old schedules with the new machinery in mind, the Team were able to increase the coverage of its services and in some cases the frequency of cleansing. This would not only ensure that streets and pavements would be

cleaned of litter in the most effective manner available but that the visibility of the Team would also be increased.

As part of increasing coverage of the District, Managers of SS&WM have started to look for opportunities to also offer their services out to other landowners within the District such as private roads and schools. Currently one agreement has been finalised and all efforts will be made to seek other such mutually beneficial agreements. As private landowners within the Council's boundary can have an effect on residents perception of Council Cleansing Services, this was felt an important move to try and raise the perceived understanding our Council Services and also to forge relationships with relevant stakeholders.

It was well understood that where staff had good morale and healthy working relationships the effectiveness of the Team was enhanced. For a number of years Bromsgrove District Council had recognised an underlying issue with low morale and attempts had been made to turn this feeling around. Within the Street Cleansing Team the Supervisor worked hard at bringing the men together and realising they were working towards a common cause.

One important factor in getting the Team to work as a team was to encourage the men to foster a sense of pride in the work they undertook. This and other points were raised in a Street Cleansing Expectations agenda which laid out standards that were required of the Team and also what could be expected of the Council such as consultation with operatives.

A Team spirit was further nurtured through competitions and other moral boosting actions such as winning the Council's 'Team of the Month' award in May 2007 and also purchasing new uniforms for the Team.

With the implementation of the above practices and procedures compliments to the service started to come in from a wide range of people. The Chief Executive and Members of the Council praised the Teams hard efforts when their work started to pay off and noticeable improvements on the ground were recognised. Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT) meetings regularly held within the District reported good news feedback from residents on the cleanliness of their particular areas and commended SS&WM's efforts in this area. These views have also been echoed by a recent Peer Review undertaken in the Council by the LGA which recognised the hard work going into keeping Bromsgrove a clean and tidy District.

Through the use of the Council website facility and through press releases the residents of Bromsgrove were asked for their input into helping the Street Cleansing team perform its duties to a higher standard. Residents were urged to report incidents of fly-tipping and other waste issues on the street so that the Team could respond to these as soon as possible.

Improvements in performance indicators have shown excellent results such as improved response times in clearance of fly-tipped waste and dead animals and evidence of a much improved rating of local environmental quality show

substantiated evidence towards the Teams hard work and improved performance through Project Clean Sweep. Future plans for the Team include a renaming of the Team to fit in with their new improved image through out the District and also investigations into alternative methods of working. The Team now understand the importance of reacting to our changing environment and will continue to seek other best practice working elements and incorporate these into the new procedures.

Project Aim (No more than 200 words)

It was acknowledged that clean streets in many of our residents minds, equated to safe streets so for the well being and peace of mind of residents and visitors to the District, Street Scene & Waste Management's (SS&WM) wanted to develop the current procedures and practices into a more co-ordinated and encompassing operation.

SS&WM Street Cleansing Team wished to turnaround the negative perception that some Bromsgrove residents had about the cleanliness in the District. The BV199 performance indicator was also suggesting that improvements could be made and therefore the Street Cleansing Team rose to the challenge.

The main aim was to improve actual and perceived cleanliness in the district; this was to be delivered in the following ways:

- 1) Build on the existing resource infrastructure by investing in new efficient machinery
- 2) Use area patrollers to act as a fast response unit for specified areas
- 3) Listen and react to customers comments on our service
- 4) Install pride into the Street Cleansing Team

It was also important that the Team actively engaged with other services in the Council such as Grounds Maintenance and Refuse & Recycling in order to achieve their goals therefore all involved had to be made aware of the drive on Street Cleansing.

Project Achievements (No more than 200 words)

The fleet was enhanced with new technology including a graffiti cleansing machine, Swingo, Scarab and Green Machine sweepers; the additional equipment allowed SS&WM's Street Cleansing team to crack down on areas of concern.

SS&WM launched area patrollers for 3 specific locations of the District to improve cleanliness and safety concerns for inhabitants, effectively becoming a constant presence on the streets.

Input from residents was recognized and through local press releases and web interaction, general public were asked to help the Council in its fight against littering and fly-tipping.

Numerous letters, emails and praise from residents, Councillors, Chief Executive, PACT meetings, Local Housing Trusts have been received as well as excellent feedback from the Peer Review that was recently carried out. Our performance indicators are reflective of the increased hard work in Street Cleansing and are remaining consistently high in this area.

The changes involved a lot of hard work in implementing new improved cleansing schedules and operational procedures but the Team all contributed to the success of the service by making suggestions, working together and going that extra mile to make a difference; they now exhibit Best Practice in some areas and continue to build on this for the future.