

Committee	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date	18 April 2024
Title	Streetscene Service
Aelod Cabinet	Councillor Berwyn Parry Jones
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council appreciates the importance of creating a sense of local pride by ensuring that Gwynedd's communities are clean and tidy. Having a poor-quality local environment can have far-reaching and negative effects. It can affect wellbeing, deter people from using green spaces and is also associated with higher rates of crime and anti-social behaviour. In addition, it can adversely affect the local economy and tourism.
- 1.2. In an effort to achieve our goal of Clean and Tidy Communities throughout Gwynedd, we have now incorporated the following services within one new Service, the Streetscene Service, to enable a focus on the appearance and image of our roads and streets:
- Street Cleansing
 - Street Enforcement
 - Tîm Tacluso (Ardal Ni)
- 1.3. It is therefore timely to update members on progress in consolidating these services and share the Department's vision for improving the cleanliness and tidiness of our towns and villages into the future (one of the Council's priority aspirations for the next 5 years).

2. Background and Current Situation

- 2.1 Following the restructuring of the Environment and Highways and Municipal Departments in 2022, we took the opportunity to undertake a high-level review of the Street Cleansing Service to establish whether there were any barriers preventing the Service from working effectively and efficiently.
- 2.2 As a result of the review, it became clear that it would be beneficial to incorporate the Street Cleansing, Street Enforcement and Tim Tacluso services within a single Streetscene Service as this would provide a joined-up approach to keeping our communities clean and tidy for our residents. To this end, a Streetscene Service Manager was appointed in November last year and a Task Group was established to act on the recommendations / improvements arising from the review.

2.3 This report focuses primarily on the progress of the Streetscene Service in realising the recommendations within the review. It also provides a broad overview of the work and performance of the Street Enforcement Team, Tim Tacluso as well as the Smart Bin Trials.

3. New Arrangements / Procedures

Street Cleansing

3.1 The review highlighted a number of situations where improvements were required. However, ten main issues were highlighted as requiring prompt attention. The recommendations to overcome these issues, as well as progress to date on them, are as follows:

Recommendation	Progress	Completion date / end target
1. It is recommended that all Risk Assessments and Safe Operating Procedures be reviewed and reissued to the workforce	All Risk Assessments and Safe Operating Procedures have now been reviewed, updated, and reissued to the workforce. These documents have been audited and approved as part of an audit by the BSI into the Department's 45001 accreditation.	20.10.23
2. Guidance should be provided to the workforce confirming their start times	The workforce has now received guidance and instructions to standardise their working hours. The arrangements have been working more effectively since then.	27.10.22
3. It is recommended to appoint a Manager and establish a new structure	The Streetscene Service Manager has been appointed and a draft structure developed.	01.09.23
4. It is recommended to review existing cleansing routes to establish whether they are fit for purpose	It has already been recognised that the existing cleaning routes need to be completely updated. To this end, the Department has nearly completed the evaluation process on specialist IT systems for route optimisation and the successful company will be appointed in due course.	30.04.24

5. A full review of the Service's overtime is recommended	The initial priority will be to continue to maintain the current level of service that includes overtime commitments. Over time, it is anticipated that new technology, route reconfiguration and shift pattern will improve the effectiveness of the Service.	September 2024
6. Fleet Review	The intention is to modernise the Street Cleansing fleet in line with the principles of the Council's Green Fleet Plan. A task group has been formed to assess long-term hire vehicles and to formulate a strategy in relation to sustainable fleet arrangements for the future. However, it is only after the route review has been completed that we can properly determine the type and number of vehicles required to maintain an effective and efficient service. Any decisions made will be made with the assistance of the fleet manager.	Permanent with progress review in 2024
7. Conduct a full workforce job description review	Meetings took place with the workforce during 2023 to gain a better understanding of their roles and ensure that their job descriptions reflected their true circumstances. The revised job descriptions were submitted for re-appraisal in November last year. There was no change to their pay scales. However, the unions are eager for us to revisit the situation and this will be carried out in due course.	04.03.24
8. Transfer of administrative responsibilities	The administrative arrangements previously operated by the Refuse Collection and Recycling Service have now been transferred to the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department's Business Unit.	01.02.24
9. Raising public awareness of all the good work done by the Service	A series of social media posts highlighting the work of the Street Cleansing Service have recently been released. This will continue and include updates on best practice and innovation.	04.10.23 and permanent

10. Follow-up consultation in relation to the Tidying Teams within the next 12 months to determine if our residents have seen an improvement in the look and neatness of the County	The Service proposes to produce an online stakeholder survey in the near future. This consultation will monitor progress, satisfaction levels and consider further developments and ongoing improvements into the future.	September 24
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3.2 Following on from recommendation 9 above, the good work carried out by the street cleansing teams has tended to be unnoticed due to their limited visibility since they start their work very early in the morning, before the majority of the public have gone about their daily routines. To this end, the Department submitted a bid for revenue funding last year for the realisation of a Town Centre Pilot Scheme that would make them more visible.

3.3 We can confirm that the bid has been successful and arrangements for establishing town cleaners with litter carts / electric sweepers will commence in due course. The plan is to locate the cleaners in selected urban areas in all three operational areas and change their working hours from between 05:00 - 13:00 as present, to 08:00 - 16:00 so that they are visible to the public.

Street Enforcement

3.4 Additional wardens were appointed to address problems that had arisen since the pandemic period which saw more litter being created, bins filling up faster and dog fouling problems increasing. Our wardens have been busy raising awareness and patrolling problem areas across the County.

3.5 Keep Wales Tidy carries out an independent review of the standard of street cleanliness on an annual basis. Here are their key findings from their 2023 review:

- The overall cleanliness of Gwynedd's streets has seen a slight improvement this year.
- There is a consistent pattern to litter distribution in Gwynedd, with streets with terraced housing in more urban settings more likely to have litter problems.
- There has been an increase in the number of drinks containers, excluding cartons and fast-food cups, on our streets since last year.
- Dog fouling has decreased slightly from the previous year.

3.6 The review declared that cleanliness checks were carried out on 141 intersections on various streets within the county and that 95% of streets inspected received a Grade B or above, which are streets considered to have an acceptable level of sanitation by the public. We are pleased to report that our performance this year exceeds the Wales' average.

3.7 Since the Service combined with the Street Cleansing Service and Tîm Tacluso, collaboration and resource sharing has strengthened. Their work is often interlinked; therefore, it is hoped that the combination of services will lead to higher levels of cleanliness and tidiness within the County whilst also achieving our goal of creating clean and tidy communities and a sense of local pride.

Tîm Tacluso (Ardal Ni)

3.8 Since the Teams were established, their work has contributed significantly to improve the look and image of our streets and we are happy to report that they have received very positive feedback from Members and Community/Town Councils as well as residents.

3.9 A hub has been developed within the Member's Portal so that Members are able to connect with the teams. The information below can be accessed via the hub:

- Digital form (application for work)
- Teams' routes on an interactive map
- Customer satisfaction questionnaire
- Photos/details of the teams' latest work.

3.10 It is intended to provide access to community and town councils to allow them to submit applications for work and share feedback. A message will be sent out in due course to inform them of this development. The Department will also offer to visit the Area Forums, Community and Town Council Meetings etc. to remind them of the set-up and to promote the principles of the teams with an emphasis on collaboration.

3.11 The Teams continue to be very busy and recent successes include a close focus on the look of Upper Bangor, street washing and chewing gum removal in Dolgellau, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Bangor City centre.

4. Smart Bin Trials

4.1 Since the start of the summer season last year, the Department has been trialling 5 smart bins in busy locations throughout the County (Bangor, Caernarfon, Llanberis and Pwllheli). Due to a compression device within these bins, the bin capacity is between 7 and 10 times as large as a normal bin.

4.2 The bins are completely green and use solar energy to recharge the battery.

4.3 These bins can communicate with the back office, including messages confirming that the bin is full or requires service. This work continues to develop.

4.4 The result so far is that the Council has not received complaints about overflowing bins where these have been set up in very busy locations.

4.5 The future aim is a further increase in the number of smart bins in a busy tourist area.

5. The Next Steps

5.1 Below is a summary of the Streetscene Service's top priorities:

a - Street Cleansing	<p>We will continue with the work of fully realising the recommendations of the Street Cleansing review and see the optimisation system as being crucial to this end.</p> <p>Realisation of the Town Centre Scheme locating cleaners in selected urban areas in all three operational areas.</p>
b - Street Enforcement	<p>The Welsh Government is likely to release a National Litter and Tipping Prevention Plan during the next 12 months which means that the Department will have to update its Code of Practice.</p> <p>This work is anticipated to be a priority for the Street Enforcement Team.</p>
c - Tim Tacluso	<p>We aim to strengthen the Tim Tacluso's relationships by working with local organisations/communities with particular attention to public open areas.</p>
d - Smart Bins	<p>We intend to add to the number of smart bins through the UK Government's local and community prosperity investment programmes.</p>

5.2 Following the submission of this report to the Communities Scrutiny Committee, any comments Members may have will be brought to the attention of the Council's Cabinet on 27 May 2024.