

Report of: Head of City Works

To: Executive Board

Date: 4th February 2008

Item No:

Title of Report : Update on progress against the ENCAMS audit on street cleansing.

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: This report updates the committee on progress against the recommendations listed in the ENCAMS audit on street cleansing.

Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Fooks

Scrutiny Responsibility: Environment

District(s) affected: All

Report Approved by: Legal – Jeremy Thomas
Finance – Andy Collett

Policy Framework: Improving the environment in which we live and work.

Recommendation(s):
That the Board note the completed actions set out at Appendix A and endorse the action plan set out at Appendix B.

Background and context

The Executive Board requested an update against the actions listed in the ENCAMS audit carried out in Spring 2007, this can be seen in the appendices. The work has progressed well and recommendations are presented as complete (Appendix A) and outstanding (Appendix B) with associated actions against them.

2 The Oxfordshire Community Partnership has a target in its Local Area Agreement to reduce the proportion of relevant land and highways assessed as having litter and detritus below an acceptable standard (BV199a) from a county average of 20% to 11% over the three-year life of the agreement. In order to help the five districts make improvements and achieve this target, the

Partnership commissioned ENCAMS to undertake an audit of street cleansing practices across the County.

- 3 The audit looked at the following five aspects:
 - Establish how the work in each of the districts is undertaken
 - Assess how each council evaluates its BV199a performance
 - Review the liaison arrangements with the County
 - Ensure methodology for assessing BV199a is consistent
 - Make other recommendations to improve performance
- 4 In September 2007 ENCAMS presented the results of their audit to Executive Board. There were a total of 25 recommendations for Oxfordshire. Oxford City had many examples identified as good practice. The areas for focus were specifically surrounding training and sweeping detritus.
- 5 Performance results for BV199a (The percentage of land / highways that has litter / detritus below an acceptable level) are encouraging. The results for the second trimester show only 7% of our streets fall below the national standard of grade B. This is an improvement on the last snapshot survey taken in July, which was 21%.

Recommendation

- 6 That the Board note the completed actions set out at Appendix A and endorse the action plan set out at Appendix B.

Name and contact details of author:

Colin Bailey

Telephone: 01865 252901

Email: cbailey@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers: None



Appendix A
Oxford City Council summary of completed actions against ENCAMS
recommendations for Street Cleansing Practice within Oxfordshire

No	Recommendation	Status & Comments
1	Each authority to ensure advice in the BV199 guidance manual is followed	Complete
3	Authorities should share BV199a results with operational staff	Complete
4	Identifying poor performing land uses and assess options for improvement.	Complete and ongoing - BVPI199a inspections identify land uses. Examples are: primary retail, secondary retail, high density housing areas etc... The areas are assessed for reasons behind poor grading and solutions are being included in schedules to ensure they are addressed.
6	Where relevant, look to engage recreation and housing departments to ensure they understand their role within BV199a improvements.	Complete - Working with the parks department (NEATS). Parks now have a greater understanding of what is required of the BV199 measure and this is proving helpful. Working in partnership with OCH and other housing associations
8	Where applicable replace town and parish councils cleansing with an integrated service delivered solely by the district council	Complete - Not applicable to City Council
9	The Clean and Green Group agree a common level and type of training for all cleansing operatives working within Oxfordshire. To be adopted by the five district authorities and based on good practice from the county.	Complete - The City Council is leading this initiative and has already progressed with NVQ training. We have accessed Learning and Skills Council funding for candidates to complete an entry level NVQ level 2 qualification. 34 staff have expressed an interested in this qualification and over 50% have completed to date. The countywide cleaner greener group support this approach, as it is a nationally accepted qualification and part of a recognised national framework, which meets different learning needs.
10	Ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills to cleanse effectively with the equipment with which they are provided	Complete - The NVQ training is addressing this. In addition we have initiated internal training called 'toolbox talks'.
11	All supervisors attend a BV199 grading training course to ensure the supervisors have the knowledge to supervise the BV199a standards.	Complete - Training for supervisors in place and messages are rolled out as part of supervision and internal training.
12	Oxford City to review reliance on agency staff both from a cost and efficiency of service delivery when compared to employing full time staff.	Complete - KPMG completed a value for money study in August where it highlighted that ENCAMS have misunderstood how the Council uses agency staff, which is mainly on refuse collection. KPMG found 2 agency staff being used for street cleaning rather than the 24, which was quoted in the ENCAMS report.
13	Look to tackle litter-picking culture and encourage sweeping.	Complete - The training available in cleansing standards is addressing this.
14	Reinforce the message to staff to clean all areas of the street including the backedge, behind utility boxes and around street furniture.	Complete - As above, training is addressing this issue.
15	Encourage the correct use of the equipment to maximize the efficiency of cleansing.	Complete - As above, training is addressing this issue with a particular focus on instructing staff to

		address the problem with manual sweeping if the mechanical sweepers are obstructed and detritus / litter remains.
16	Look to introducing peer mentoring as a method of tackling poor performance.	Complete - There is now more time for team leaders to mentor staff and share good practice. There are now 4-man area crews, which ensure a mixture of less and more experienced staff.
17	Review current disciplinary procedures and determine whether current procedures provide the right tools to tackle poor performance.	Complete - The disciplinary process sufficiently addresses the issue. Supervisory training and performance management of front line operatives is to be enhanced to address any poor performance.
18	Supervisors to pay specific attention to the cleansing of detritus, and where applicable monitor and address poor performance.	Complete - As above, training is addressing this issue.
19	Manual staff should be able to work more effectively with mechanical sweeping. This will ensure inaccessible areas are not missed by the mechanical sweepers and manual staff to clean town centres more thoroughly.	Complete - As above, training is addressing this issue.
20	Ensure the supervisors and chargehands Roles and Responsibilities allow for maximum supervision on the street by streamlining their office-based duties.	Complete - This recommendation was made specifically for another district but we have reviewed our roles, responsibilities and scheduling with this in mind.
21	Authorities move away from the use of black sacks as sweeping bags, as this can encourage fly-tipping and influence public satisfaction	Complete – Moved to Grey sacks
22	Conduct an audit of street furniture to ensure the council's assets such as litter bins function and do not adversely influence the perception of the council.	Complete - There are regular street furniture audits completed (litter bins, finger signs and seats). These are constantly evaluated as part of service development / planning.
23	Authorities to incorporate the recommendations and findings from this review, particularly from the observational assessments, into service plans for 2007/08.	Complete - Recommendations from audits are used in service planning. They will feature in the new corporate planning cycle due to start progressing in January 2008. They will also feature in corporate monitoring exercises
24	Look to reduce amount of litter dropped on the streets of Oxfordshire via targeted enforcement actions. This should include the sharing of intelligence and potentially countywide initiatives to increase awareness.	Complete and Ongoing - Work is progressing within the Cleaner Greener group for example the campaign 'Wrap It, Bin It, Easy Isn't it' caused a 63% decrease in chewing gum litter thrown in Oxford's city centre streets.

Appendix B
Oxford City Council summary of outstanding actions against ENCAMS
recommendations for Street Cleansing Practice within Oxfordshire

2	BV199a surveyors' forum is created to ensure accuracy and consistency of grading	Part complete - A new Environmental Equality and Cleansing Group has been established as part of the OWP officer group structures. A surveyor's forum will be formally established through this group.
5	Ensure footpaths, underpasses and alleyways are included on relevant schedules	Substantially complete - This action requires more work at a detailed operational level. Site surveys will be carried out on routine monitoring inspections.
7	Look to work in partnership with registered social landlords (RSL) to agree common standards of cleanliness. This could also include options to provide a cleansing service on RSL land.	Part complete. - Working in partnership with OCH and other housing associations to encourage a tidy environment within their boundary. Common standards of cleanliness have to be formally agreed.
25	The Cleaner Greener Group to consider the development of countywide litter campaign.	Part complete and ongoing - We are working closely with our internal working enforcement group and that of the countywide partnership. This action will evolve through the new Environmental Equality and Cleansing Group.