

External Grounds & Street Cleansing Review

Property & Asset Management

Date: 8th April 2024

Author: Andrew Briggs

Wards Affected: All CSNPC Wards

CSNPC Priorities: To provide a high standard of services & facilities.

1. Purpose and Reason

- 1.1 Members had previously requested that a review of the Grounds & Street Cleansing PQMS was completed by a third party.
- 1.2 The drafted report provides the feedback from an assessment completed by Stratton St Margaret Parish Council during Feb/March 2024.
- 1.3 The report also includes a proposed change of the current cleaning schedule, assessment method and reporting process following the feedback received.

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the feedback from SSMPC and thank them for their assistance.
- 2.2 Approve the revised approach to estate cleaning as detailed in 4.4
- 2.3 Approve the revised approach to grading and scoring as detailed in 4.6
- 2.4 Approve officers to seek costs for third party bi annual assessments.

3. Detail

- 3.1 A Briggs met with staff from SSMPC in Jan 2024 to ask them to conduct spot checks of our existing grounds and street cleaning services.
- 3.2 SSMPC agreed to undertake a number of ad hoc inspections and then report back.
- 3.3 Below is the feedback from the review.

'The Parish Council have requested that I evaluate the standard of work carried out by their contractor. The observations and opinions are based on the information supplied to me by the Parish Council.

To expedite matters I will use the Penhill estate as a fair and reasonable representation of the contractors' obligations within the Parish.

This is an area that I am familiar with. During my time employed with SBC, I was charged with cleaning both the upper and lower levels of this estate.

I would like to highlight several things, relating to the clearing of litter, fly tipping, inspection routines and the scoring system used to assess the performance of the

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contractor, and indeed the Parish who validate the work (although I have been informed that the contractor scores their own work).

I received information detailing 34 sites covered by the contractor which achieved a score of (4)'

I note the contractor seems to cover a limited number of areas within the estate.

One example being, he refers to the litter left on (hard surfaces) after recycling collections, but only four streets with the corresponding scores are named as having that problem. Obviously, it cannot just be the four streets within the entire Penhill Estate (see 3.4)

How many streets are inspected and what metric is used to achieve a final score for the whole estate? Clarification on this point would have been helpful to make a more accurate assessment of the work carried out. Although I cover those area specifically, I will of course take a wider view of the estate.

How often is Penhill cleaned, and how many people are deployed on each visit, and has the contractor implemented a plan of works (mapping their routes).

Even with a skilled and motivated team litter will be missed, but I have recorded large amounts of old litter and fly tipping, which implies the programme isn't working and follow up visits are not being actioned.

A very low rating in those instances would be a more realistic score rather than a score of (4). Therefore, the inspection procedure needs reviewing. Consideration for implementing an impartial and more structured appraisal would be helpful.

I interpret hard surfaces to include pavements and roads. There seems to be no reference made to soft surfaces, green areas, hedge row and off road 'common areas. I have noted fly tipping and litter within a meter of hard surfaces that have achieve a score of (4).

One of the waste bins referenced states 'Not emptied at the time of inspection'. Scoring a lower rating of (2). This implies that if emptied before the inspection that a higher score would be achieved. This may seem inconsequential, but I am trying to understand the logic behind the contractor's scoring method and what it demonstrates, other than a box ticking exercise.

Another area that I am familiar with is Beatrice Street. During my inspection I found litter and fly tipping, particularly on the walkways behind the houses. Those areas should be cleaned for the benefit of the residents and public alike. I do not understand why a well-used thorough fare would be ignored.

In Summary:

I do not know if those sites were cleaned before or after the time of my inspection.

However, this is academic. I do not believe that there can be a structured cleaning

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Andrew Briggs on Direct Dial No. 07900782215 or Email: Ops@centralswindonnorth-pc.gov.uk

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program in place given the amount of litter present. I feel the contractor needs to come under greater scrutiny for this.

The Parish Council should have a comprehensive breakdown of the systems it uses that produce a consistent scoring of (4), when in my opinion it is on occasion not achieving a score of (1).

I believe residents of Penhill, and likely others are being let down under the current system as the service being delivered falls below the acceptable standard.

The Parish Council is producing performance charts that validate the contractors continued high scoring of (4), this isn't completely reflective of the reality on the ground. I would suggest that all procedures need an overhaul if any meaningful progress is to be made.

At this point and moving forward, I see no real benefit for further inspections on my part. I think it is unlikely to produce a different outcome.

SSMPC'

- 3.4 Several clarifications were provided to SSMC within the follow up meeting.
- 3.5 A Briggs has asked for photos taken. However, at the time of the report these had not yet been received.
- 3.6 The feedback from SSMPC (whilst raw) does call into question the success of general street cleaning within the Estates, and how this is being accurately recorded and monitored.
- 3.7 This is something CSNPC must review, with a view to identify how resource is currently deployed (how it might be better deployed), what strategy is being implemented to keep on top of cleanliness, and what changes or new strategy could be considered to improve the current service delivery.

4. Review

4.1 Following SSMPC feedback, a meeting was held with M Ware on 3rd April 2024 to discuss the current service delivery and reporting methods.

4.2 Points raised and discussed within the meeting:

Summary – current estate cleaning schedule is failing.

Poor public perception / low visibility of work being completed (recent survey).

PQMS scoring redundant and ineffective.

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What is the current cleaning schedule.

- a. Frequency of 'whole' estate cleaning? - How is cleaning schedule determined and then communicated?*
- b. Operative deployment? (who, where when, how many)*
- c. What mapping / route scheme is used?*
- d. How is the completed work logged?*
- e. Is the current resource utilised and performing at optimising efficiency?*
- f. Is current resource / resources sufficient?*
- g. Best practices or examples from other clients that we could consider?*

Recommendations / Action Plan / Review.

- a. Devise / revise a processed schedule for estate cleaning.*
- b. Create a route mapping and frequency schedule.*
- c. Resource recommendations to improve service delivery (including the tangible impact of implementation - ROI).*
- d. Quarterly review.*

How can we revise / improve the reporting?

Executive monthly summary of incoming issues logs, reports and operative activity.

- a. Visual mapping showing what has been complete and where.*
- b. Data table, showing No' of specific jobs complete / how long etc.*
- c. Upcoming work.*
- d. General observations*
- e. Report of ad hoc or additional works.*

4.3 Within the meeting M Ware agreed to review the current processes.

4.4 It was suggested that a test pilot combining 2 x existing operatives to work together as a mobile team should be trialled.

4.5 Proposal - 2 x Operatives (mobile / sparkle team) to work the following pattern.

4.5.1 Every Monday / Wednesday / Friday (AM) – attend and clean Shopping Precincts / High Street.

4.5.2 Every Tuesday & Thursday (AM) – attend and clean Parks.

4.5.3 Following each morning shift, the 2 Operatives would move into the scheduled Estate(s) to commence a street-by-street sweep. This would involve litter picking, detritus & graffiti removal etc (full job list to be confirmed).

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4.5.4 Each Estate would be worked through over a No' of days (based on size / difficulty), over a repeating cyclical pattern. An example of this could be:

- 4.5.4.1 Penhill Ward – 10 Days
- 4.5.4.2 Gorse Hill Ward – 5 Days
- 4.5.4.3 Pinehurst Ward – 4 days
- 4.5.4.4 Ferndale Ward – 4 Days
- 4.5.4.5 Even Swindon Ward – 4 Days
- 4.5.4.6 Moredon Ward – 4 Days
- 4.5.4.7 Rodbourne Cheney Ward – 3 Days

NB – these durations are currently estimated.

4.5.4.8 It is anticipated to complete the cycle would take approx. 4 / 5 weeks using this method. This would inevitably fluctuate over time depending on volume of work required in each area. The operatives would then return to the first area and start the cycle again (allowances will need to be considered for holiday / sickness etc).

4.5.4.9 M Ware to formalise route optimisation and provide a more concise timeline.

4.5.4.10 Normal litter crew operatives would continue to complete their usual rounds and litter pick within vicinity of bins etc.

4.6 Officers discussed the continuing need for additional resources such as a compact mechanical sweeper and potentially additional operatives.
The trialling of hand push mechanical sweepers was also discussed.

4.7 Monthly reporting to include:

- 4.7.1 *Executive monthly summary of incoming issues logs, reports and operative activity (jobs completed).*
- 4.7.2 *Visual mapping showing what has been complete and where.*
- 4.7.3 *Officer to conduct spot checks prior to Operative completing the area programme. Officer to record findings / observations (with grading score and photos).*
- 4.7.4 *Officer to return post Operatives completion of the area to recording findings with grading score and photos.*
- 4.7.5 *Data table, showing No' of specific jobs complete / how long etc.*
- 4.7.6 *Upcoming work.*
- 4.7.7 *General observations*
- 4.7.8 *Report of ad hoc or additional works completed.*

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4.8 DEFRA Guidance to scoring (extracted from IDV/CSNPC contract):

Grade	Litter	Detritus
Grade A	No Litter or refuse	No Detritus
Grade B	Predominately free of Litter and refuse apart from some small items	Predominately free of Detritus except for some light scattering
Grade C	Widespread distribution of Litter and/or refuse with minor accumulations	Widespread distribution of Detritus with minor accumulations
Grade D	Heavily affected by Litter and/or refuse with significant accumulations	Heavily affected by Detritus with significant accumulations

Weed Growth

Grade A



No weed growth

Grade B



Small shoots visible

Grade C



Significant growth

Grade D



Extensive growth

4.6 Moving forward CSNPC should consider the contracted employment of a third party to provide an impartial / robust assessment of the standard of services being provided, recommended on a bi-annual basis.