



Cabinet Working Party Street Scene & Street Scene Enforcement

Review of recommendations from previous Street Scene Working Groups

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CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

North East Lincolnshire's Council Plan 2025-28 sets out our vision to create stronger economies and stronger communities.

To support this, we want to manage our land to ensure all residents have access to safe and clean streets and open spaces. Clean up and maintenance work will be targeted to areas of need and complemented by working with the community, local volunteers, local businesses, and partners. We will ensure we have the capacity to keep our streets clean and maintain our parks and open spaces for everyone to enjoy.

The Council's contribution to the Place Based Outcomes Framework and the wider development of North East Lincolnshire relevant to this report are:

All people live in a safe environment, can have their say about things that are important to them and participate fully in their communities.

All people benefit from a green economy and high quality environment.

1. BACKGROUND

In 2018, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a Street Scene Select Committee to look at the quality of the local street scene in North East Lincolnshire, including the extent of littering, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour to give it more significant and direct attention. The review looked at the extent of the Council's previous investment in its Smarter Neighbourhoods Programme, related enforcement activities and how the Council worked with communities to enhance civic pride and change behaviours. Following the review, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made 21 recommendations, which were endorsed by Cabinet in November 2018.

On the 5th December 2019 Communities Scrutiny Panel received a 12-month update. These recommendations were then tracked by Communities Scrutiny Panel until 23rd January 2023, where it was agreed to close off on mass any outstanding recommendations.

At the first meeting of the current Cabinet Working Group for Enforcement and Street Scene in July 2025 enforcement actions were considered. This report will review actioned aligned to street scene operations.

This report provides an update on the 9 recommended actions and an overview of the 2025 position.

2. CURRENT POSITION

2.1 That street cleansing work schedules be reviewed and scheduled on the basis of need and that a culture of continuous improvement be adopted.

The new work schedules were implemented in September 2019, transforming the service to a more proactive service organised around the requirements of the Code

of Practice on Litter and Refuse and need. There have been limited changes to the zoned areas since 2019 with the current zone arrangements included in Appendix 1.

There is a sense of professional pride within the service with staff and managers adopting a 'can do' attitude to delivering service enhancements where possible and within available resources.

There are three zone 1 areas within the borough located in Grimsby Town Centre, Cleethorpes Resort and Freeman Street. All zone 1 areas are targeted with resources between 06:00hrs and 09:00hrs for 7 days each week. This work is programmed for when the areas are quiet to enable litter bins to be emptied, and mechanised sweepers to be deployed. The service also carry out jet washing within Grimsby zone 1 on a fortnightly basis.

A Barrow Operative also works within Grimsby and Cleethorpes. The Cleethorpes operative also visits Sidney Sussex and the Boating Lake area on alternate weeks/shifts. This provides a visible presence over 7 days within our zone 1 areas, undertaking litter picking, bin and seat cleaning and manual weeding. The Barrow Operatives are also able to manage litter bins to prevent overflowing during the day and request support if required.

Once the early morning work in Freeman Street is completed any additional callouts are serviced by two operatives in a vehicle.

In the summer months (April to September inclusive) there is a need for enhanced resources in the Resort to maintain the required standards of cleanliness. If budget is identified through the annual budget setting process the service will employ an additional 3 operatives on each shift working 12.15hrs – 22:00hrs. The seasonal staff focus on litter picking and this enables a small number of permanent staff to vary their hours over the summer to ensure there is a presence in the resort until 22:00hrs. The annual process to secure funds for seasonal staff can make it difficult to employ resources in time for the start of the season.

Key Routes and secondary shops are designated as zone 2. These are visited every second day. Parks are also designated as zone 2 and are visited every second day in summer and weekly in the winter as the footfall reduces

The council delivers its urban (zone 3) sweeping and litter picking schedules over a four day period every 4 – 6 weeks. The 9 wards designated as urban are West Marsh, East Marsh, Park, Heneage, Sidney Sussex, Yarborough, South, Freshney, and Croft Baker.

We visit our rural (zone 4) areas every 12 weeks and invest four days of intensive activity. The rural wards are Haverstoe, Scatho, Waltham, and New Waltham/Humberston. Litter picking is delegated to Immingham Town Council. Immingham and Wolds are also visited every 12 weeks but these areas receive additional days to ensure cleanliness is maintained.

In 2025 we recruited a further 4 Barrow Operatives to work in Park and Heneage wards, with two operatives in East Marsh. We also have a presence in Sidney

Sussex, West Marsh and South wards. The impact of the additional Barrow Operatives has been significant and this has enabled the service to invest more than the budgeted resources in the Deep Clean initiative.

The Deep Clean initiative sees operatives working across six wards, with two operatives working for 28 days at a time. The operatives chivy weeds, litter pick, sweep channels by hand and clean any graffiti.

We have also initiated a Resort Task Force as part of the Safer Towns review. This is focussed on identifying and remedying place based street scene issues to improve the resident and visitor experience. We have employed an additional two street cleansing operatives to undertake sand clearance, bin cleaning and jet washing including the maintenance of street furniture and additional planters.

2.2 That the use of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders be explored to assist in situations where access is required to carry out street cleansing.

Dialogue and coordination between former Equans services and the Council to better utilise existing road closures has improved. Where possible we also coordinate with National Highways to deliver street cleaning and grounds maintenance operations.

Operation Clean and Green implemented in 2025 also has a focus on deep cleaning of streets which are heavily parked. The initiative runs for a period of six months. Feedback from the service is that we are currently achieving the desired outcomes for cleanliness without the need for temporary TRO's with much of the work being conducted manually.

Temporary TRO's provide additional enforcement powers to have all the vehicles moved and this would therefore place an obligation for us to have access to vehicles that can tow and also have areas for the secure storage of vehicles towed away.

The use of temporary TROs will also incur additional expenditure as although there is no internal charge for delivering TROs there are costs of approximately £300 to advertise each TRO as a public notice in a local newspaper. Whilst this can cover multiple dates and times this would require the service to maintain the scheduled dates and lead to potential reputational damage if for any reason the planned works did not align with the proposed dates.

TROs also require a minimum of 4-6 weeks' notice to process the Order and place the advertisement. Experience suggests that it is still recommended that residents are prewarned directly through a letter drop of site notice, as not all will see the TRO.

At the current time the recommendation would be that the service continues to deliver this work on a good will basis with residents to avoid any unintended consequences from enforcement action.

2.3 That the Council engage with shop owners to encourage them to keep their frontage clean and tidy; and to implement enforcement to this effect.

The Environmental Health and Housing team is responsible for dealing with litter associated with shops. In advance of the ongoing transformation the team continues to respond on a reactive basis to any complaints from residents or from our street cleansing team.

Councils can issue community protection notices (CPNs) which replaced street litter control notices to require businesses or individuals to:

- clear litter from around their premises
- take steps to prevent future littering

Failure to comply with a CPN is an offence.

For a CPN to be valid for littering, the evidence must demonstrate that the behaviour meets the three key criteria:

- **Detrimental effect:** The littering behaviour must be negatively impacting the local community's quality of life.
- **Persistent or continuing nature:** The behaviour must be ongoing, not a one-off incident.
- **Unreasonable:** The activity must be considered unreasonable in the circumstances

2.4 That the recommendations within the Litter Bin Review report be endorsed.

The litter bin replacement programme was implemented following approval of capital money allocation. This is working well now that smaller capacity bins have been replaced with modern 240L bins. These are easier to empty, improve manual handling for the workforce and are also less likely to overflow. The replacement programme is complete with the number of bins in situ remaining relatively static. Some bins are removed if subject to repeated vandalism and arson, and some new bins have been installed if there is a strong case to support. Litter bins outside of zone 1 and 2 are emptied weekly with the Waste Collection Service and Street Cleansing sharing this responsibility on alternate weeks.

2.5 That the recommendations of the Review of the Street Cleansing Service be endorsed, subject to consideration of long term financial viability.

A review of the street cleansing service was completed in early 2019, with the aim of achieving a more modern and flexible 7 day service. Following extensive consultation with staff and Trade Unions, the new organisational structure, and service work patterns commenced on the 2nd September 2019. The current work pattern is to operate a two shift system, working 4 days on and 4 days off, starting at 06:00 and finishing at 17:30. This arrangement works well and maintains environmental and cleanliness standards all week, including weekends when the zone 1 areas are likely to see the greatest footfall.

2.6 That options for the maintenance or ownership on the 80 un-adopted walk ways within the borough be explored.

Establishing ownership of unadopted walkways was challenging and time consuming, but we now have a good understanding of where the areas are located. Some unadopted walkways have been handed over to LHP in line with their maintenance obligations.

Whilst in a contractual relationship with Equans it was difficult to negotiate an enhanced arrangement that would have included some of the identified unadopted walkways. Grounds Maintenance continue to maintain the remaining unadopted walkways and have carried out maintenance as required.

Now that the former Equans services are integrated back into the Council we are working jointly with the Assistant Director Infrastructure to determine how we can collectively address this issue.

In anticipation of this service change the Environment service mapped all relevant areas to enable us to identify the links between unadopted footways and adopted footways and bridges. This will enable us to look strategically at our network and connectivity so that we can identify priority walking and cycling routes for investment should external funds become available. By looking more strategically at the unadopted paths and connectivity it may be possible to identify alternative funding streams to improve the current standard. We are also working collectively to ensure we have a good understanding of the risks and opportunities so that any repair and maintenance can be prioritised.

In the interim we continue to maintain as necessary using either revenue or backlog maintenance budget.

2.7 That the use of wild flowers in parks, open spaces and grass verges, in consultation with Ward Councillors and communities, be supported.

Initially the Council created a number of wild flower areas. Some areas created dissatisfaction amongst residents and we are mindful that such schemes can be divisive. The implementation and maintenance of wild flower schemes also impacts on the resources of the Grounds Maintenance service, with maintenance of wild flower verges requiring significantly more resource than a standard verge. It also requires specialist equipment as there is a need to cut and collect. The lack of access to specialist equipment has hampered our ability to roll out this scheme further.

2.8 To note the petition requesting improvements to grass cutting in Cleethorpes had been addressed within the review of the grounds maintenance service.

Grass cutting activity is largely weather dependent and impacted by resource availability, however, the service is mindful of the reputational implications of maintaining the required standards. The service will therefore deploy staff as required to try, wherever possible to deliver on this element of the service.

During the growing season we aim to carry out grass cutting in our destination parks on a 2-3 weekly cycle. Highway sightlines (turns and roundabouts) are attended twice per season. Urban areas located in built up and densely populated areas that include ornamental/amenity verges are cut every 10 to 14 days.

Village locations, with ornamental or amenity grass verges are also cut every 10 to 14 days.

Rural areas categorised as having no ornamental or amenity verges or defined kerbs that have only banks and hedgerows are maintained annually.

It is worth noting that following a recent Cabinet decision we are reviewing our approach to weed control. Weed spraying currently takes place 2 – 3 times per year. We intend to contact Ward Councillors to seek nominations for different areas across their wards to trial new approaches to weed control. We are currently engaging with Pesticide Action Network UK and Highways prior to starting the trials in the next season in April 2026.

Pesticide Action Network UK state there are two key issues that impact on the success of phasing out Glyphosate as a method of weed control. They therefore encourage councils to engage in effective planning recognising that there is the need for greater acceptance of weeds by residents. If there is not strong local public support to adopt a new approach, there may be a risk of dissatisfaction within our local communities about the extent of weed growth and the impact this is having on our infrastructure and aesthetically.

The recommendations of earlier reviews and the current aspiration to look at alternative methods of weed control have the potential to conflict with resident expectations.

2.9 That the positive feedback on the Skip It Campaign be noted, and the scheme be reviewed following evaluation of the pilot. That a community led pilot scheme for alleyway clearances be developed by exploring options for support from the council.

A Report was shared with Communities Scrutiny for noting on 13 December 2018. The paper reviewed the Skip It programme for 2018 and provided an opportunity for panel members to consider the evolution of the scheme to a stage 2 programme for 2019 and onwards. The report proposed some key amendments.

Whilst the original Skip it project was very successful in achieving community engagement, analysis showed no measurable difference in reported fly tipping in the Borough or any reduction in waste brought to the regular Community Recycling Centres during the time period of the project. To use the success of the project to deliver better outcomes in local communities, it was proposed to amend the concept of the event to encourage further community group participation and link in closer with local community priorities.

A revised proposal was to put together for a 'Skip It' support package that local community group(s) and Ward Councillors could bid for/express an interest in during 2019 to facilitate future events with a more focused community input.

The Council also set out the need for dedicated commitment from any community group(s) and Ward Councillors that wish to take part, to deliver a local event which

would benefit local environmental quality, in return for the Council supporting and supplementing this event by also delivering a Skip It project in partnership with the community.

The scheme was also rebranded to 'Clear it' to ensure the focus was about clearing waste and recognising that the support provided by the service was not skip based but operatives removing waste placed at the site boundary and removed in vehicles.

The Service is currently working up a proposal for the current year which will hopefully commence in November. We have been unable to implement the scheme so far due to the management time required to deliver other initiatives including the Clean and Green scheme.

2.10 That the offer of support towards any future Skip It! events be noted, and that officers engage with Lincolnshire Housing Partnership when making future arrangements.

The Council continues to support LHP where possible on events and community engagement activities.

2.11 That communications to the public and Members on guidance about service areas be reviewed and improved.

We continue to explore opportunities to raise the profile of services with the public and elected members. An All Member briefing took place in February 2025 which set out the extent of service provision for members.

The implementation of Alloy software is well underway and is transforming communication methods by enabling two-way interaction between refuse crews, customer services, residents, and the depot. Crews will receive real-time updates and report issues directly from in-cab devices, while customer service teams can instantly relay service changes or missed collections to residents. This integrated approach reduces delays, improves service transparency, and enhances resident satisfaction, all while streamlining operational efficiency.

Following recent Member enquiries and an internal review, the Council has also reaffirmed its preference to use our own reporting portal rather than the third-party platform FixMyStreet. We are exploring the free integration option with FixMyStreet which would potentially enable reports made on the FixMyStreet platform to feed into the Council's own reporting platform.

There are several key reasons for the preference to use our own Portal. These are outlined below:

- **Data Quality and Completeness:** FixMyStreet allows anonymous reporting and does not enforce mandatory fields, which often results in incomplete submissions. This limits our ability to act on reports effectively and undermines service delivery

- **Customer Experience and Transparency:** Reports submitted via FixMyStreet are not integrated with our systems and currently do not reach the Council for action. This creates confusion and reputational risk, as residents may believe their issues are being addressed when they are not. As noted above we are exploring the benefits of using the free integration to our Council system.
- **GDPR and Data Protection:** Our portal ensures that customer data is handled securely and in compliance with GDPR. In contrast, FixMyStreet publishes all report details openly, and personal data is sometimes inadvertently shared by users.
- **Cost and Integration Barriers:** To purchase FixMyStreet as a cloud hosted system carries a significant cost, ranging from £15K for basic services up to 56K with system integrations.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Using our own portal allows us to collect custom information tailored to service needs and ensures updates can be provided to residents throughout the resolution process. This supports better internal workflows and accountability.

The Council is actively working to improve the usability and functionality of our Customer Services Management Platform (CSMP), including addressing feedback from Members and enhancing back-office processes.

4. Actions in Progress

- Deliver the Clean and Green initiative and assess impact.
- Recruit a new Head of Street Scene.
- Develop and implement trials for weed control.
- Develop digital maturity within service and workforce.
- Integrate Waste Services into Doughty Road depot.
- Workforce succession planning.
- Consider changes to the bulky collection service that enable coordination of collections.

5. Contact Officers

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