



Civic Centre,  
Arnot Hill Park,  
Arnold,  
Nottinghamshire,  
NG5 6LU

# Agenda

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 29 September 2014**

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Time: **5.30 pm**

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Place: **Reception Room**

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For any further information please contact:

**Jane Ansell**

Members' Services

0115 901 3627

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## Membership

**Chair** Councillor Mike Hope

**Vice-Chair** Councillor Gary Gregory

Councillor Patricia Andrews  
Councillor Sandra Barnes  
Councillor Paul Feeney  
Councillor Cheryl Hewlett  
Councillor Paul Hughes  
Councillor Lynda Pearson  
Councillor Stephen Poole  
Councillor Colin Powell  
Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith  
Councillor Nick Quilty  
Councillor John Truscott

## **AGENDA**

**Page**

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions.**
- 2 To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2014.** 1 - 8
- 3 Declaration of Interests.**
- 4 2014/15 Scrutiny Work Programme** 9 - 32  
  
Portfolio Holder, Peter Barnes, will attend and take questions from Members on the maintenance and development of the Public Realms area of the Environment Portfolio.
- 5 Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required under the Constitution or Law** 33 - 34
- 6 Any other item which the Chair considers urgent.**

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## **MINUTES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Monday 14 July 2014**

Councillor Mike Hope (Chair)

Councillor Gary Gregory  
Councillor Sandra Barnes  
Councillor Paul Feeney  
Councillor Cheryl Hewlett  
Councillor Paul Hughes

Councillor Lynda Pearson  
Councillor Stephen Poole  
Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith  
Councillor Nick Quilty  
Councillor John Truscott

Apologies for absence: Councillor Patricia Andrews and Councillor Colin Powell

Officers in Attendance: J Ansell and S Bray

### **47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Andrews and Powell.

### **48 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 2014.**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment: Councillor Poole's attendance at the meeting to be recorded.

### **49 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None received.

### **50 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15**

#### **i) Rolling programme of Portfolio Holder holding to account**

The Chair informed Members that due to the unavailability of the Portfolio Holder, Community Development, to attend this meeting, the item and questions relating to the 'Locality Working' area of Councillor Fox's portfolio would be rescheduled to a later date in the rolling programme of Portfolio Holder holding to account.

## **ii) Council Plan 2013/14: Overview of Year End Performance**

Stephen Bray, Corporate Director, provided Members with the key highlights of year-end performance 2013/14 as follows:

2013/14 had been a very positive year in terms of performance, particularly in the context of the requirement for significant expenditure reductions.

93% of Actions in the Council Plan 2013/14 had either been completed or were on target at year-end, compared to 83% in the previous financial year.

78% of performance indicators had been met (55 out of 70). This compared to 67% in 2012/13.

Furthermore, performance against 17 specific indicators had significantly exceeded targets, all of which were in high priority areas i.e. speed of processing of Housing Benefit claims and the provision of Affordable Housing.

Highlights had included:

1. Refurbishment of Bonington Theatre
2. Commencement of work on Gedling Country Park
3. Co-location arrangements within the Civic Centre and Arnot Hill House
4. Extension of Locality Working to include Killisick
5. Progression of the Gedling Access Road
6. Implementation of the tripartite Collaboration Agreement
7. The Men in Sheds initiative
8. Expansion of CAB services

Of the remaining indicators, a small number had shown red at year – end, however those were showing an improvement.

### **Further information requested from Members**

- a) Members asked whether the footpaths had been completed on the Gedling Country Park, as they are currently closed to public access.
- b) Further information was requested on performance in respect of the processing of minor and major planning applications.
- c) Further information about staff absence levels was also requested.
- d) An explanation of the changes to grass cutting, winter garden bin collection and the timing of street cleansing.

Councillor Barnes, Portfolio Holder for Environment, who was present at the meeting, provided the following further information:

- a) Contractors were still operating on Gedling Country Park up until the week prior to this meeting and the second phase had commenced on the day of this meeting. The Solar Farm will be implemented in September 2014 therefore the site is technically a working unit until then. Official opening of the site will take place in March 2015.
- b) On the matter of grass cutting, Councillor Barnes reported that the Council has implemented a new arrangement for targeted grass cutting of verges and parks in order to achieve cost savings.
- c) On the matter of garden bin collections, Councillor Barnes reported that winter collections had been reduced as a cost saving, particularly as these collections had been under used, due to the winter weather.
- d) On the matter of street cleansing, Councillor Barnes acknowledged that parked cars are an issue which sometimes impacts on the street cleansing timetabled in the early morning, however he reported that an exercise undertaken on Carlton Hill demonstrated that parked cars are an issue all day long, with individuals being unwilling to alter parking habits.

Stephen Bray, Corporate Director, provided the following further information on the matter of staff absence:

Staff absence had been a matter of ongoing concern, however when looked at by service area, the majority of departments were maintaining a very low absence record, with three departments however demonstrating a marked difference in sickness levels. Some targeted work had since been undertaken within those service areas.

Additionally, as sickness absence is reported on a rolling 3 monthly basis, in the event that there is a bad performing month, that would appear on the performance report all year. Work had been undertaken to 'drill down' into the detail in order to provide month to month information. This work had revealed that the performance trend had reversed in the first 3 months of 2014, indicating an average of 0.8 days per staff member per month, a figure far lower than that reported for the same period in the previous year.

The Chair requested that the Senior Members' Services Officer arrange written responses to be circulated to Scrutiny Members on:

- Planning Performance: processing of major and minor planning applications
- The issue of the timing of street cleansing.

**iii) 2014/15 Rolling programme of Portfolio Holder attendance**

The Chair drew Members' attention to the draft programme of Portfolio Holder attendance at Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Appendix 2 of the report, and requested that Members identify the specific areas within each Portfolio that they would like to review at Committee.

Members agreed the following final programme:

<b>2014/15 ROLLING PROGRAMME OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER HOLDING TO ACCOUNT</b>		
<b>Date of Committee</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Subject areas</b>
<b>Monday 29 September 2014  Reception room</b>	<b>Councillor P. Barnes  Portfolio Holder Environment  Dave Wakelin, Corporate Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintenance and development of the public realm, including parks, open spaces, cemeteries and allotments</b></li> <li>- <b>with specific reference to the Gedling Country Park</b></li> </ul>
<b>Monday 15 December 2014  Reception room</b>	<b>Councillor Payne  Portfolio Holder Public Protection and Communications  Dave Wakelin, Corporate Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Crime reduction and community safety</b></li> <li>- <b>with specific reference to PCC Policing Plans and the proposed closure of Carlton Police Station.</b></li> <li>• <b>Customer services, information and communications technology</b></li> <li>- <b>with specific reference to Customer Satisfaction.</b></li> </ul>



<b>Wednesday 11 February</b>  <b>Committee room</b>	<b>Councillor Pulk Portfolio Holder Leisure and Development</b>  <b>Paula                      Darlington, Corporate Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sports development</b></li> <li>- <b>with specific reference to health, youth engagement in sport and links to Leisure Centres Strategy.</b></li> <li>• <b>Review of performance in processing planning applications</b></li> </ul>
<b>Monday 13 April</b>  <b>Reception Room</b>	<b>Councillor Wheeler Portfolio Holder, Health and Housing</b>  <b>Mark                      Kimberley, Corporate Director or Service Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Housing              and council              tax benefits</b></li> <li>- <b>with specific references to changes in the benefit system and the impacts experienced in Gedling</b></li> </ul>

#### **iv) In – depth Scrutiny**

The Senior Members' Services Officer updated Members on progress of current in- depth Scrutiny Working Groups as follows:

#### **Reducing Unemployment in the Borough**

- Work programme completed – report and recommendations pending

#### **Homelessness and Hardship in the Borough**

- Meeting with NCC to take place in Sept to consider the impacts of the Supporting People funding reductions
- Meeting with RCAN in October to consider issues of Rural Poverty

Reports and recommendations of both the above reviews will be tabled at the December Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Transport Links to, and within, the Borough**

- First meeting to be held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July to scope the review

**v) Six month follow up on completed reviews**

The chair informed Members that requests for follow up on the following completed reviews would shortly be made to Portfolio Holders, with the outcomes being reported at the September Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- The Council's engagement with the Voluntary Sector
- Inclusion and Equality
- Taxi Licensing

**RESOLVED to:**

- i) note the Q4 2013/14 performance information
- ii) request further information on the processing of major and minor planning applications and the timing of street cleansing in the Borough
- iii) approve the 2014/15 rolling programme of Portfolio Holder attendance at Committee, and
- iv) note the progress and follow up of in – depth Scrutiny.

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**ITEMS REFERRED TO THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AS REQUIRED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OR LAW**

Members considered the standing report detailing items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny under the Constitution or Law.

This included the following notification received where it had not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000:-

Waiver of Contract Standing Orders in order to enable the Council to enter into a contract for a Facilities Planning Model assessment with Sport England.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the information.

**52 ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting finished at 19.00pm

Signed by Chair:  
Date:

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**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Subject:** Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15

**Date:** 29 September 2014

**Author:** Senior Members' Services Officer

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To consider the Portfolio of Councillor P. Barnes, Portfolio Holder for Environment, as part of the rolling programme of Portfolio Holder holding to account.

To receive updates on Quarter 1 2014/15 Council performance and on progress of the 2014/15 Scrutiny Work Programme.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in August 2013 Members agreed a programme of attendance by Portfolio Holders and relevant Corporate Directors at committee and also identified which areas of performance within each Portfolio they would like to examine. It was further agreed that questions for Portfolio Holders should be submitted in advance of each meeting, however 'ad hoc' questions may be put forward at the meeting itself.

This committee has elected to consider the following elements of the Environment Portfolio:

**Maintenance and Development of the public realm, including parks, open spaces, cemeteries and allotments, with specific reference to the Gedling Country Park.**

A customised 'Covalent' report detailing the performance outcomes of the Environment Portfolio is **attached at Appendix 1 and 1.1.**

### **2.1 Questions in advance from Members**

The following questions have been submitted in advance by Members:

### **Councillor Andrews**

1. Councillor Patricia Andrews requested an overview and update on the Gedling Country Park.

### **Councillor Parr**

My question is tabled on the back of immediate neighbourhood concerns with regard to the Gedling Country Park:

2. What protection/bye laws are to be established to curb such things as: Scrambles and Quad Bikes?
3. Environmentally, what plans are in place to foster and protect the future development of wild life?

### **Councillor Miller**

4. Re: Ley St Field in Netherfield: I understand that the land originally belonged to Notts County Council Education Department however Gedling BC had installed a football pitch and changing facility. There has been a notice on the site stating that, under an agreement, Gedling Borough Council is taking over responsibility for the field. The area is deteriorating and the changing facility is locked and unavailable for general use – could the Portfolio Holder provide an update on future plans for this site?
5. Re: Conway Road Pavilion, tennis courts and golf facility: The tennis courts and golf course are deteriorating and under used – could the Portfolio Holder give details of future intentions for the site?

### **Councillor Ellwood**

6. What criteria are used to determine whether grass is cut or left to grow in parks and open spaces? There has been some concern that grass has been left to grow near to children's play areas thereby encouraging misuse by irresponsible dog owners.
7. Is any consultation undertaken with nearby local residents before grassed areas are left to grow?
8. Have any other options been considered by the Council with regard to saving money on maintaining small pieces of open land in residential areas such as selling of land; offering 'licences to occupy' or undertaking 'informal agreements to cultivate' (as used in recent years by the County Council's Highway Authority)?

### **3. COUNCIL PLAN 2014/15: OVERVIEW OF QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE**

3.1 At the last meeting, Members requested further information on two areas of Q4 2013/14 performance.

**Requests and responses are attached at appendix 2**

3.2 Stephen Bray, Corporate Director will provide an overview of Quarter 1 2014/15 performance and take questions from Members.

### **4. 2014/15 PROGRAMME OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER ATTENDANCE**

Members are reminded of the ongoing programme of Portfolio Holder attendance and are asked to submit questions in advance of each attendance.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Subject areas</b>
Monday 15 December 2014  Reception room	Councillor Payne  Portfolio Holder Public Protection and Communications  Dave Wakelin, Corporate Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Crime reduction and community safety - with specific reference to PCC Policing Plan and the proposed closure of Carlton Police Station.</li><li>• Customer services, information and communications technology - with specific reference to Customer Satisfaction.</li></ul>
Wednesday 11 February  Committee room  (please note change of date and venue)	Councillor Pulk Portfolio Holder Leisure and Development  Paula Darlington, Corporate Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sports development – with specific reference to health, youth engagement in sport and links to Leisure Centres Strategy.</li><li>• Review of performance in processing planning applications</li></ul>
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## **5. IN DEPTH SCRUTINY**

### **5.1 Reducing unemployment in the Borough**

**Working Group Members:** Councillors Bailey (chair), Wheeler, R. Ellis, R. Allan, Gregory P. Andrews, B Andrews, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.

No further meetings held; final report and recommendations pending.

### **5.2 Homelessness and hardship in the Borough**

**Working Group members:** Councillors Lawrence (Chair), Weisz, Blair, Paling, Hope, P. Allan, Bexon, Hewson, Hughes, Parr.

Two meetings were held in September as follows:

- a) Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September with County Councillor Weisz, Chair, Adult Social Care and Health Committee and Lynn Farrow, Nottinghamshire County Council Commissioning Manager to consider the impact of the Supporting People budget reductions upon services in Gedling.
- b) Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September with Jenny Kirkwood of Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire and David Price, Head of Income Management at Gedling Homes, to examine the roles of both organisations in addressing issues relating to hardship and homelessness.

### **5.3 Transport links to, and within Gedling Borough**

**Working Group Members:** Feeney, Paling, Pearson, Truscott, D. Ellis, P. Andrews and G. Clarke.

This group met on 22<sup>nd</sup> July with Stephen Bray, Corporate Director and received an overview of strategic transport initiatives, which has informed the draft scope.

A second meeting was held on 4<sup>th</sup> September, at which young people of the Transport sub group of the Gedling Youth Council presented their views on young peoples' transport needs. Colin West, project coordinator and Gary Smerdon – White, Executive Director of the Sustainable Travel Collective LTD also attended and presented the action plan of the TravelRight sustainable travel initiative.

### **5.5 Follow up on completed reviews**

Six month follow up requests were recently issued to relevant Portfolio Holders on the **accepted** recommendations of the following completed reviews:

- i. Taxi Licensing



- ii. The Council's engagement with the Voluntary Sector
- iii. Inclusion and Equality

Responses to the first two have been received and are attached at **appendices 3 and 4**. (Inclusion and Equality response to follow.)






## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:





- put forward relevant questions to the Portfolio Holder for Environment
- note first quarter performance against the Council Plan 2014/15, and the further information provided on year end performance 2013/14 and;
- note the progress of in depth Scrutiny working groups, and the follow up responses received in respect of completed reviews.

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# Quarter 1 Actions Report

Action Status	
	Cancelled
	Overdue; Neglected
	Unassigned; Check Progress
	Not Started; In Progress; Assigned
	Completed

## Portfolio Owners Environment Portfolio

Title	Managed By	Status	Completion Date	Progress Bar	Notes
Develop and implement the 'Green Gateways' initiative	Melvyn Cryer		30-Sep-2014	<div><div>14%</div></div>	
Continue the 'Love Where You Live' Campaign to educate residents and reduce incidents of environmental crime	Melvyn Cryer		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>67%</div></div>	
Implement Parks and Green Space Strategy	Melvyn Cryer		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>48%</div></div>	
Investigate and implement a planned programme of activities and initiatives to further minimise the amount of waste disposed of either at landfill or by incineration	Caroline McKenzie		31-Mar-2015	<div><div>38%</div></div>	

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## Quarter 1 indicator report

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

### Portfolio Owners Environment Portfolio

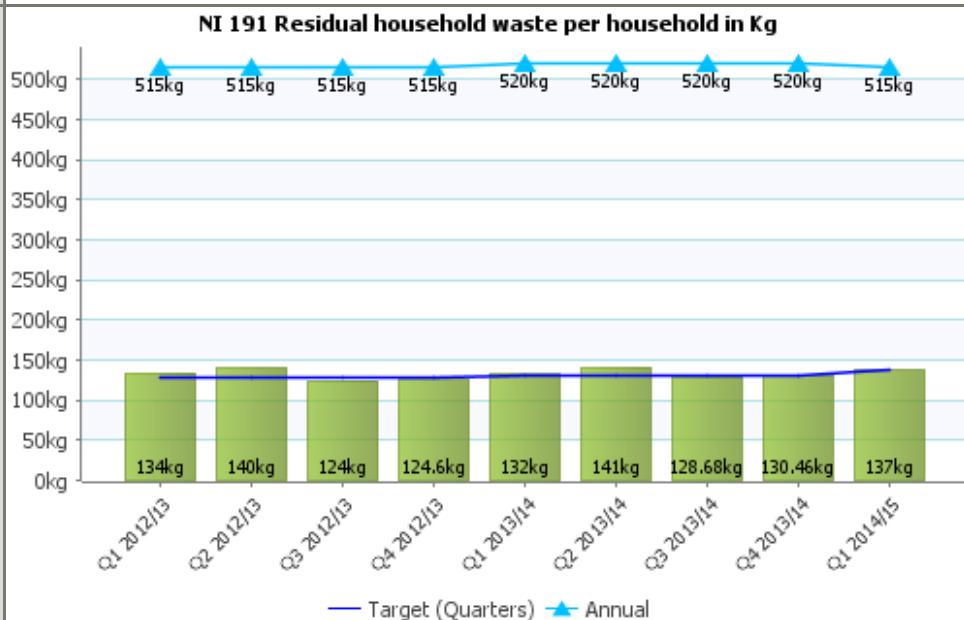
#### NI 191 Residual household waste per household in Kg

<b>Managed By</b>	Caroline McKenzie	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Current Value</b>	<b>Current Target</b>	<b>Trend compared to last period</b>	<b>Trend compared to year ago</b>
137kg	137.5kg		




#### Latest Note

The trend is for the first quarter to be heavier due to the amount of garden waste in residual bin, reprofiling requested. There is also an increase in road sweepings which are no longer deemed as recycled but residual waste now.

#### Performance against target

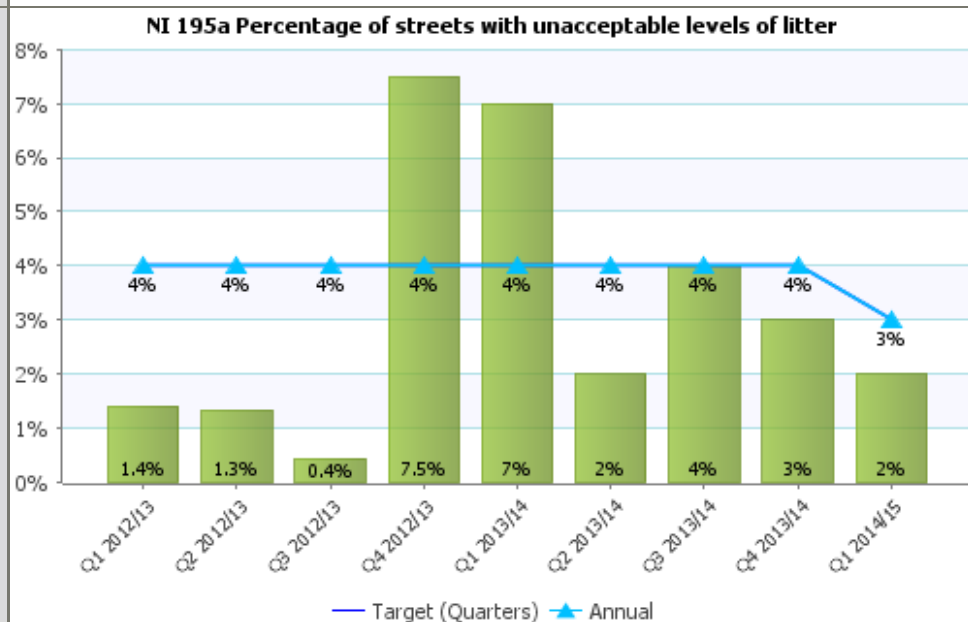





# NI 195a Percentage of streets with unacceptable levels of litter




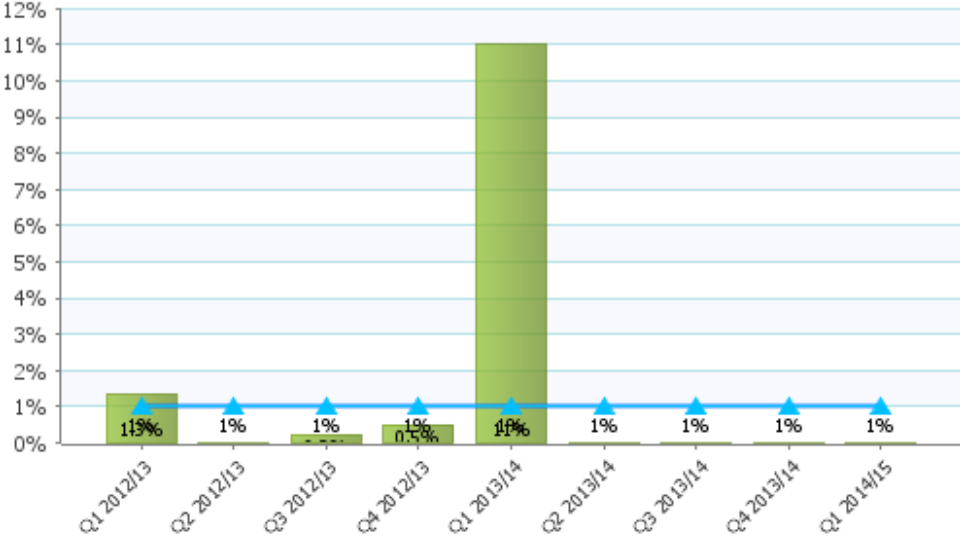
Managed By	Melvyn Cryer	Status	
Current Value	Current Target	Trend compared to last period	Trend compared to year ago
2%	3%		

## Latest Note




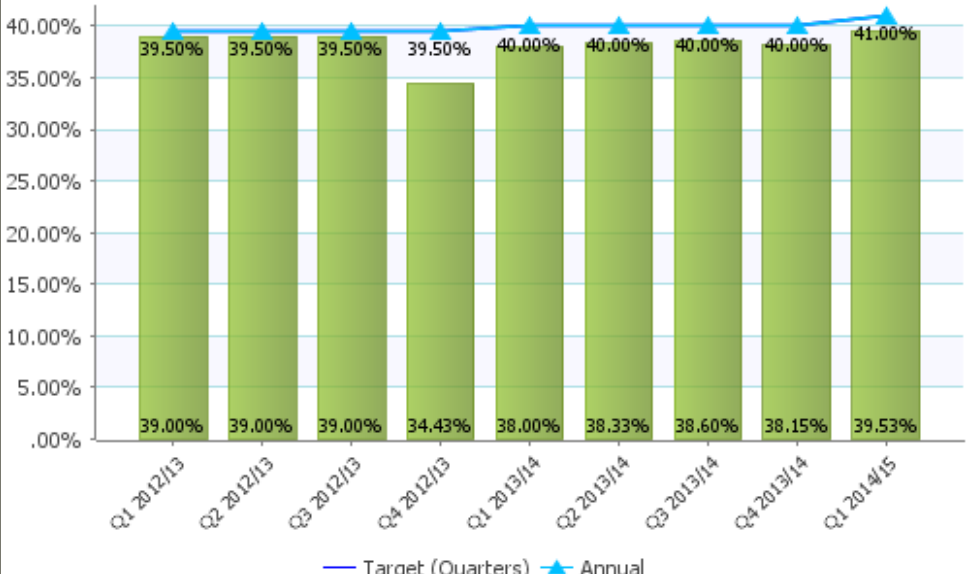
## Performance against target



NI 195b Percentage of streets with unacceptable levels of detritus																																	
Managed By	Melvyn Cryer	Status																															
Current Value	Current Target	Trend compared to last period	Trend compared to year ago																														
7%	11%																																
Latest Note																																	
Performance against target	<div>NI 195b Percentage of streets with unacceptable levels of detritus</div> <table><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Quarterly Value (%)</th><th>Annual Average (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1 2012/13</td><td>10%</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2012/13</td><td>11%</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2012/13</td><td>1%</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2012/13</td><td>14%</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2013/14</td><td>7%</td><td>9%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2013/14</td><td>3%</td><td>9%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2013/14</td><td>5%</td><td>9%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2013/14</td><td>6%</td><td>9%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2014/15</td><td>7%</td><td>11%</td></tr></tbody></table> <div>— Target (Quarters) ▲ Annual</div>			Quarter	Quarterly Value (%)	Annual Average (%)	Q1 2012/13	10%	11%	Q2 2012/13	11%	11%	Q3 2012/13	1%	11%	Q4 2012/13	14%	11%	Q1 2013/14	7%	9%	Q2 2013/14	3%	9%	Q3 2013/14	5%	9%	Q4 2013/14	6%	9%	Q1 2014/15	7%	11%
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NI 195c Percentage of streets with unacceptable levels of graffiti																																	
Managed By	Melvyn Cryer	Status																															
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NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting																																											
Managed By	Caroline McKenzie	Status																																									
Current Value	Current Target	Trend compared to last period	Trend compared to year ago																																								
39.53%	41.00%																																										
Latest Note	A slight increase on last year and with new schemes for kerbside small electrical and wood starting in June, it is hoped this will increase.																																										
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Q3 2012/13	39.50%	39.00%	39.50%																																								
Q4 2012/13	34.43%	39.00%	39.50%																																								
Q1 2013/14	38.00%	40.00%	40.00%																																								
Q2 2013/14	38.33%	40.00%	40.00%																																								
Q3 2013/14	38.60%	40.00%	40.00%																																								
Q4 2013/14	38.15%	40.00%	40.00%																																								
Q1 2014/15	39.53%	41.00%	41.00%																																								

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### **Requests for further information on Q4 2013/14 performance**

- a) Further information was requested on performance in respect of the processing of minor and major planning applications.**

**Performance regarding the processing of both major and minor planning applications was significantly below target at end of year. Could an explanation please be provided?**

Major applications, including significant new buildings and housing sites of over 10 new dwellings, are often complicated and may need longer than the target 13 weeks to determine. This is reflected in the national target of determining 60% within that time scale. Where major applications are likely to go out of time, officers are now able to negotiate extensions of time, which effectively remove them from the national target performance monitoring and remove the threat of an applicant appealing on the grounds of non-determination.

Minor applications are for smaller scale development but can still include contentious proposals which require resolution through negotiation before an application is determined. A number of these applications have also been referred to Planning Committee for determination, which has an impact on performance.

Senior officers are aware of the current levels of performance and the Borough Councils targets. In order to meet these, and in response to a significant increase in the number of all types of applications currently being received, the service has been re-structured and resources allocated to the areas of greatest demand.

- a) An explanation of the rationale for the timing of street cleansing.**

**Members had observed that street cleansing in their wards appears to be scheduled in the early morning when the optimum number of cars is parked, as people have not yet left for work. If this is the case, what is the rationale for the timing and could it be moved to a time of day when there are fewer cars parked?**

Gedling Borough Council has a scheduled programme for cleaning the streets of the Borough. This includes:

- mechanical street sweeping
- litter picking of streets and highways verges
- emptying litter bins
- removing dog fouling from streets and pavements.

Our aim is to regularly sweep and clear away litter from the Borough's towns and villages and hundreds of kilometres of roads and streets

Cleaning frequencies vary, with areas of higher footfall and main routes into the Borough being cleaned more often.

The town centres are cleaned every day from 6am-8pm, as are the Borough's 'Hot Spot' areas which receive heavy pedestrian usage, such as school entrances and shopping precincts. They are thoroughly swept and litter picked early in the morning

when pedestrian footfall is at its lightest and before the school drop off and rush hour traffic build up occurs.

Other areas follow this and are cleansed on a weekly basis, such as secondary retail areas and gateways to the Borough.

After that Street Cleansing then moves to residential streets, usually the day after waste collection when possible, and after 8.00am when most residents have departed for work and the street is more accessible because of the reduction in parked vehicles.

Parked cars are an obstacle for street cleaning, so where possible, on the day of a scheduled clean we ask residents to ensure their vehicles are parked elsewhere to allow for a more thorough clean. Occasionally we may put notices up and post leaflets in the immediate area to alert people that we wish to carry out a 'deep clean' of their area. E.g. where there is high density housing and high car ownership such as at Netherfield and Killisick.

Sweeping and litter picks of all other roads and footways are carried out on a needs basis. Regular inspections are carried out by our Supervisors who alert the teams to particular areas if they become aware of any deterioration in standards.

Any graffiti or flyposting in the area is removed daily, and litter bins are emptied at least weekly. Grass verges are litter picked as the streets are cleaned and as the grassed areas are mown. But we are not able to control highways verge mowing which is undertaken by another contractor on behalf of Nottinghamshire County council.

We also run a 24-hour emergency service to deal promptly with debris from road accidents and remove dead animals from roads and pavements.

As you will observe the general rule is we do not start in residential areas until after 8.00am in order to avoid parked vehicles. We have to start early at 6.00am in order to get into the town centres and to cleanse the hot spots after the night time economy, before they become congested.

There are occasions when we do have to clean slightly earlier in a residential area, e.g. outside of a Doctors Surgery or a school. But generally we are able to ensure that as many vehicles have departed from the area as possible.

## **Progress of Scrutiny Review Recommendations**

### **Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Title of the review: **Hackney Carriage Licensing Scrutiny Review**

Initial response to Overview received: **7 September 2013**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor M Payne**

Chair of the review group: **Councillor M Paling**

Officer supporting the review: **Jane Ansell**

#### **Guidance**

Monitoring of the progress of recommendations to scrutiny reviews is requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approximately six months after the initial response.

Updates are requested regarding those recommendations that were **accepted** or **partially accepted**. The update section should be completed identifying progress or new developments that have taken place.

If you need any further assistance in completing this response please contact the Officer that supported the review

#### **Recommendation 1**

That the planned benchmarking exercise and further standardisation of Gedling Borough Council's Licensing Policy against those of neighbouring authorities is progressed in consultation with the Licensing Committee as stated in the officer responses at **appendix 1**.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

The service is committed to standardisation of processes, fees and policies. Work to achieve this in Nottinghamshire is led through the Notts' Authorities Licensing Group (NALG), Gedling is an active member of this group, policies have previously been developed together and further work will be carried out and reported on.

### **Update on progress of the recommendation**

Priority has been the introduction of the Knowledge test. The planned review of the policy cannot commence before this process has been completed as the introduction has fundamentally changed how we process applications. Officers will commence the review in consultation with colleagues in other authorities after the planned 6 month review of the introduction of the test.

### **Recommendation 2 (of 7)**

That subject to rigorous Equalities Impact Assessment the Council and Environment and Licensing Team progress the implementation of a topography test as part of the taxi licensing process with immediate effect.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

I fully accept that the introduction of a topography test for licensees will make a positive contribution to the quality of the service and help ensure public safety; this approach is consistent with surrounding authorities. I intend to pursue the introduction of the test through the budget discussions this year, for introduction in 2014/15.

### **Update on progress of the recommendation**

The knowledge (topography) test was introduced successfully in June this year. A 6 month review is planned for November

### **Recommendation 3**

That the Council and Licensing Team seek to encourage and promote amongst fleet operators the introduction of an NVQ for taxi drivers, to incorporate customer care and communication skills, health and safety and awareness when assisting people with disabilities.

#### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

The service will publicise and encourage the adoption of the NVQ. This will be done in the service's new newsletter, on the website, correspondence etc. It should be noted that there are a limited number of providers of the course in the market place and this will be kept under review.

### **Update on progress of the recommendation**

At the time of writing the first edition of Private Hire and Taxi Talk is being printed. It is planned that an article in the next edition to encourage uptake of the NVQ will be included.

#### **Recommendation 4**

That the Environment and Licensing Team seeks to include taxi fleets in the DEFRA Transport Plan as part of the 'Eco Stars' initiative, giving consideration to the use of the 'fleet age' procedures as an opportunity to influence fleet operators to participate in the scheme.

##### **Recommendation Accepted**

##### **Initial Response to Overview**

The ECOSTARS scheme pioneered with DEFRA funding has now rolled out to cover the conurbation. Brendan Cox from the Public Protection Service will look to drive this forward with agreement from the other authorities to ensure consistency.

##### **Update on progress of the recommendation**

The ECOSTARS scheme is without funding and may fold, according it is unwise to pursue this at the moment. Efforts are being made to secure further funding for the conurbation, if this is successful then this recommendation will be actioned.

#### **Recommendation 5**

That a cost comparison exercise on the licensing fees is carried out with those of other authorities, to establish whether this is a contributing factor to the increased demand experienced at Gedling Borough Council.

##### **Recommendation Accepted**

##### **Initial Response to Overview**

Please see my answer to recommendation 1. The service is currently involved in a fee setting exercise for 2014/15 where the cost basis for the fees is being compared.

##### **Update on progress of the recommendation**

This was carried out. GBC costs are lower than of neighbouring authorities. Licence fees have been increased and are planned to be increased further for 2015/16. There are other cost factors such as driver's insurance that are more of an incentive as well as the lack of a knowledge test requirement (now resolved)

## **Recommendation 6**

That the September 2013 Environment and Licencing Committee takes the opportunity to reflect upon and review the level of positive impact of the new application process and improved forms and guidance.

### **Recommendation Partly Accepted**

#### **Initial Response to Overview**

The forms, processes, fees and procedures are constantly under review. There is considerable work being undertaken currently to prepare for 2014/15, particularly for the possible introduction of the topography test and the transfer of roles from service support to customer services. Given all this change and potential change it may be more appropriate that this is done in the early part of the next financial year.

#### **Update on progress of the recommendation**

The forms and application process has changed and been met positively. These changes are closely linked to the introduction of the knowledge test, and will be included in November's review.



## **Progress of Scrutiny Review Recommendations**

### **Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Title of the review: **The Council's Engagement with the Voluntary Sector**

Initial response to Overview received: **7 October 2013**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor K Fox**

Chair of the review group: **Councillor P Allan**

Officer supporting the review: **Helen Lee**

#### **Guidance**

Monitoring of the progress of recommendations to scrutiny reviews is requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approximately six months after the initial response.

The Committee requests further information regarding the recommendations that were **accepted** or **partially accepted**. The update section should be completed identifying progress or new developments that have taken place.

If you need any further assistance in completing this response please contact the Officer that supported the review

#### **Recommendation**

Service Level Agreements should be replaced by contract arrangements for specified services increasing transparency of what the funding is used for and what it achieves.

When designing the contract it should:

- identify a set of objectives and what actions are required
- define what outcomes/outputs the contract should deliver
- establish targets that are SMART, specific, achievable, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely
- include a formalised set of monitoring arrangements to ensure the objectives and targets are met

- ensure value for money
- be phased in to avoid destabilising the finances of the recipient organisations.

### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial response to Overview**

I agree that, where there are SLA's in place, then performance management arrangements should be robust and should be implicit within all agreements.. As Scrutiny is aware the existing SLAs with the voluntary sector organisations have been in place for several years and do not have effective, explicit or measurable targets in place. Over the past year the managers within the Council who now have responsibility for monitoring SLA's have been in discussions with the voluntary sector to make current SLA's more outcome focused and these are being managed more closely. However future SLA's should have measurable targets which can be monitored.

#### **Update on progress of recommendation**

The Service Level agreement with CAB has been renewed on a contract basis and is being performance managed in line with contract requirements.

Funding for CVS and RCAN is under review, should grant funding continue then new contracts will replace previous service level agreements and have clear objectives which will be performance managed.

### **Recommendation**

Define the purpose and role of Members who are appointed as representatives on outside bodies. (Referred to Elections and Members' Services)

### **Recommendation Accepted**

#### **Initial response to Overview**

The Elections and Members Services Team is presently undertaking a review of current outside body representation. Details have been requested both from Elected Members and outside bodies of expectations, roles and issues of conflict of interest arising, with a view to producing a protocol to be adopted in time for re – nominations at next year's annual council.

#### **Update on progress of recommendation**

A cross party reference group met prior to the end of the municipal year and agreed a draft set of criteria and protocol for representation on Outside Bodies. The group then applied the criteria to the current Outside Bodies list and proposed the removal of a number of organisations as a result. This was approved by Group Leaders and Senior Officers, and those groups were not appointed to at the Annual meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May. The protocol and guidance to Members regarding representation on Outside

Bodies will be finalised over this year.

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## **Reports and Notices received by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required under the Constitution or Law.**

- 1. Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Contract Standing orders and Standing orders for dealing with Land**
  - i. Notifications received where it has not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000.**
    - Entry into a contract with Heineken UK for the provision of Bar Supplies for the supplies of Beer, Cider and Soft drinks for those Leisure Centres within the Borough that have bars, on the same terms as the previous contract, from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 31<sup>st</sup> January, with the option to extend for a maximum of one further month.
  - ii. Notification of decision to dispose of land or property other than the sale of council houses to sitting tenants pursuant to the right to buy.**
    - Entry into an option agreement for the future sale of land at Florence Road, Gedling (the Land) to Maximus Projects Limited without using the tender process as defined in the Standing Orders for Dealings with Land.
- 2. Items referred to Scrutiny under the Budget and Policy Framework**
  - Addition of an item to the Forward Plan. The item related to the “Response to the Inspector’s report on the Aligned Core Strategy” and would be tabled for discussion at an additional meeting of Cabinet on Thursday 28 August 2014.
- 3. Items where the Executive proposes to take a key decision without it being published (on the Forward Plan) for at least 28 days. (New Local Authorities Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.**
  - None received

Please note that the above list may not be exhaustive; items may be referred at short notice to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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