

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.