

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	8 JULY 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	LOVE CLEAN READING - UPDATE REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR LIZ TERRY	PORTFOLIO:	NEIGHBOURHOODS
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION AND STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	DAVID MOORE	TEL:	(0118) 937 2676
JOB TITLE:	ASSET MANAGER, HIGHWAYS	E-MAIL:	david.moore2@reading.gov.uk

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the Love Clean Reading initiative.
- 1.2 To update Members on how the results and feedback of the Love Clean Reading initiative will inform the reshaping of the Transportation and Streetcare service.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the progress report is noted.
- 2.2 That the Head of Transportation and Streetcare in discussion with the Lead Councillor for Neighbourhoods, is authorised to make changes to the Love Clean Reading initiative programme as required.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan states as an objective: to 'Protect and manage the cleanliness and safety of the streets, open spaces and the green environment'.

3.2 A key Council priority is 'To keep Reading clean with a crack down on fly tipping and graffiti'.

3.3 The Administration has identified the following key priorities:

- 'Enhance the vision for Reading which takes account of the needs and aspirations of all residents'
- 'Continue to invest in front line street care services but work smarter and more efficiently by harnessing new technology'.
- 'Review and enhance the grass cutting regime and find ways to improve the service, particularly during the spring and early summer'.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The Lead Member for Neighbourhoods identified and prioritised the need to carry out a deep cleaning and vegetation clearance programme for certain areas of highway and housing land, in response to concerns raised by residents and the wider community. A total of 134 streets and areas of open space were included on the list as shown in Appendix A.

4.2 The Love Clean Reading programme has 4 stages:

- Pre-inspection.
- Preparation of the works schedule.
- Works.
- Post works inspection.

4.3 Progress and current position.

102 of the 134 streets on the main list have been completed to date and the team has set itself the target of completing the remainder by the end of July. The original project dates were amended in March as it became clear that some areas required a more thorough deep clean than anticipated. The team has taken great pride in their work, seeing it as a real contribution to improving the look and feel of an area, and to their credit they have adopted a thorough approach to delivering a high quality outcome.

4.4 There have been a number of contributory factors which have affected the LCR programme:

- works have been hampered by the strong vegetation growth experienced this spring and early summer.
- verge siding works have been extensive, particularly in Whitley ward.
- some tree works have had to be suspended until the autumn due to overlap with the bird nesting season
- other priorities have taken resources away from the team.

4.5 Community Feedback

Around 300 pre-paid feedback cards have been returned, the majority of which contain positive comments and support the introduction of an annual deep clean in all areas. 94% of those who responded rated the overall impression of the work as good or above with 26% giving an excellent rating. 92% thought the standard of cleanliness after the work was good or above with 18% giving an excellent rating.

The responses also contain a number of comments about further improvements that are required, for example the need for road and footway resurfacing, to cut grass verges more often and to move parked cars.

4.6 Love Clean Reading and Reshaping

A detailed report is being compiled which will analyse the works in detail and make recommendations for possible ways of reshaping the Streetcare service to include a dedicated Love Clean Reading operation based on Neighbourhood working. This will focus on the need to design a more robust evaluation methodology to identify and prioritise areas of concern and to evaluate the resource required to carry it out within the budgets that we have. The themes that will be explored will include:

- timing of works.
- evaluation methodology
- resource required
- extent of works to private/non-Council owned land.
- Coordination with grass cutting and sweeping schedules.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 On street signs and the Council web site are being used to inform residents of the Clean and Tidy works.
- 6.2 Residents feedback surveys are being carried out as part of the Love Clean Reading.
- 6.3 Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council has powers under Section 151 of the Highways Act 1980 to require property owners to cut vegetation back to their boundary and to a height of 2.75m over a footway and 5.5m over a carriageway.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 An equality impact assessment has not been carried out at this stage.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Love Clean Reading programme will be funded from existing budgets and the identified additional funding.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 HNL Presentation April 2014.