

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD

The following decision was taken on 10 October 2017 by the Leader of the Council.

Date notified to all members: Tuesday 10 October 2017

The end of the call-in period is 4:00 pm on Monday 16 October 2017

Unless called-in, the decision can be implemented from Tuesday 17 October 2017

1. **TITLE**

Changes to Environmental Maintenance Services

2. **DECISION TAKEN**

(i) the proposed changes to the street cleaning and grounds maintenance elements of the environmental maintenance service detailed in section 1.3 and Appendix A of the report are implemented in full subject to:

- a. the capital costs associated with implementing the proposed changes do not exceed the costs listed in Closed Appendix A of this report; and
- b. the associated changes to the Contract are commercially acceptable to the Council; and

(ii) the Leader delegates authority to the Interim Director of Finance and Commercial Services in consultation with the Executive Director, Place and the Director of Legal and Governance to vary the Streets Ahead contract following the finalisation of the capital costs required to fund the contract change and finalisation of the associated commercial changes required to the Streets Ahead contract.

3. **Reasons For Decision**

The street cleaning and grounds maintenance regimes delivered under the Streets Ahead contract have been reviewed in order to:

(1) identify where operational savings can be identified using lean thinking to address the increasing budgetary pressures in the Council, and specifically the Streets Ahead Contract and;

(ii) explore the latest industry innovations to determine where new technology and techniques can be implemented to drive out operational and financial efficiencies.

The proposals in this Report are the product of that review. More specifically, the reasons for the recommendations are: -

General

- Most importantly the cost savings need to be achieved in order to help balance the Council's budget;
- Cost savings not achieved in this service will put pressure on other Council services
- The service changes are proportionate and during trials the public did not notice the difference;
- The Council wishes to introduce innovation by utilising Amey's expertise
- 90% of all other Councils are cutting budgets in this area

Street Cleaning

- The current higher and in many respects gold plated street cleaning standards are not affordable when the Council's budgets are under such pressure;
- Even if all proposed changes are implemented our Street Cleaning standards will still be higher than all other local authorities in the UK.
- Some mitigation will be provided through the Councils Cleaner Sheffield campaign which aligns to the government drive for greater community involvement in keeping streets clean.
- Further mitigation is from a Keep Britain Tidy employee funded and seconded into the Council's Streets Ahead team for a year to deliver the campaign and work with local businesses and organisations to encourage them to exercise their corporate social responsibility on or around shop/work sites. This is fully funded until August 2017, at which point we will review the post.

Grounds Maintenance

- Outdated shrub beds will be replaced increasing public safety and improving the street scene
- Most grass areas will receive the same treatment

4. **Alternatives Considered And Rejected**

Do Nothing

The significance of the cuts to the Council's budget require all services to identify efficiency savings including outsourced services such as highway maintenance. The Council continuously strives for improvement in the services delivered by the Council and the Council's best value duty means that doing nothing is not an option.

Councils' are constantly challenged to be innovative. Services cannot remain unaffected by budgetary constraints but where possible, technological innovations are being introduced. Some of the proposed changes have been generated by joint working with other local authorities, some who work with Amey. Doing nothing in the current budgetary climate is not a viable option.

Significantly reduce standards

The street cleaning service could not have further standards reductions without significantly increasing the risk of legal challenge. Public opinion would in our opinion soon grow against the changes.

Consideration was given to implementing more significant changes such as

identifying areas where a purely reactive service could be introduced or reduce the number of grass cuts further by allowing the grass to grow longer. However, such changes would alter the streetscene environment in a manner that would not be accepted by the public. The trials detailed in section 4 of this report have shown that there is a public tolerance of the proposals. The Wildlife Trust has offered full support for the naturalisation elements of the proposals. Other maintenance regimes have been considered such as growth retardants which are too expensive and ineffective in the long term.

5. **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

6. **Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Executive Director, Place

7. **Relevant Scrutiny Committee If Decision Called In**

Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee