

NEWCASTLE – UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report To: The Cleaner, Greener and Safety Scrutiny Committee

TITLE: A500 cleansing operations

Submitted by: Operations and Performance Manager Paul Pickerill

Portfolio: Environment and Recycling

Wards Affected: N/A

Purpose of the Report

To report to committee issues regarding cleansing of the A500 avenues taken to address the ongoing problem of litter and cleansing operations.

Recommendations

That the report be received.

Reasons

To keep elected members informed of the issues regarding cleansing of the A500.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 Newcastle Borough Council, being the cleansing authority, has responsibility for litter collection, litter bin servicing inclusive of replacement, repair and emptying and the cleansing of the carriageway.
- 1.2 The highway maintenance is the responsibility of the Highways agency. This includes any road surfacing, repairs, grass cutting, barrier repair/replacement etc.
- 1.3 The stretch of the A500 which is the responsibility of Newcastle Borough Council, runs from the traffic circle (excl) at the bottom of Basford bank [A53] to the traffic circle (east side incl) at junction 16 of the M6.
- 1.4 The numbers of litter bins on this stretch are **West Bound** - 4 double bins & 14 single, **East Bound** - 4 double & 9 single.
- 1.5 Over the last few years your Streetscene operations service area have been replacing the single wheelie bin type with Broxap double bins to help address fly tipping issues. This is an ongoing project being undertaken where budgets can accommodate.
- 1.6 The litter bins are programmed to be emptied three times a week Monday, Wednesday and Friday [excluding bank holidays]. The lay bys and their environs are litter picked at the same time.

- 1.7 Litter collection on the outside of each carriageway is undertaken mainly during the winter season.
- 1.8 Some three years ago contacts were made and a partnership approach was undertaken regarding grass cutting and cleansing operations. These operations were carried out during the night. The partners were Amey on behalf of the highways agency which carried out traffic management and grass cutting, while Stafford Borough Council, Stoke on Trent City Council and Newcastle Borough Council undertook the cleansing operation. This covered the complete length of the A500 from junctions 15 to 16. The cleansing included all partners putting in resources inclusive of Labour, vehicles, plant and equipment
- 1.9 The financial implication for Newcastle Borough Councils was mostly made up of labour a small amount for bags and the fuel cost. The operation carried out was envisaged to take, two to three weeks, but was completed in one week and encompassed all the central area of the carriageway. A total of six employees working nine hour shifts over a five day period were used amounting to 270 hours in total to undertake the operation
- 1.10 Subsequently communications have taken place with Amey to request information regarding intentions of night working where road closures were intended for the purpose of grass cutting operations. This would enable Newcastle Borough Council to piggy back the operation provided by Amey to address any cleansing approaches at the same time as previously carried out in the partnership programme
- 1.11 Earlier this year officers noted that grass cutting works were being undertaken on the A500 without prior knowledge of Newcastle Borough Councils Streetscene operations section. The outcome was that litter was cut up by mowing machinery leaving a huge cleansing operation on either side of the carriageway. This resulted in the time being taken to clear the resulting debris being in total 949.5 hours (Appendix A)
- 1.12 Contact by the Head of Operations as been made expressing our disappointment at this approach and apologies received (Appendix B)

2. Issues

- 2.1 The risk considering the type of road. A complaint was received from the health and safety executive regarding how the operation being undertaken a detailed report accompanied by photographic evidence was supplied to the executive and accepted that control measures were in place.
- 2.2 High volume of litter is a real problem as indicated above the Council supplies waste litter bins along the stretch of carriage way which addresses a substantial amount of litter but the real difficulty is the amount thrown from vehicles as they travel this with the access to the central reservations the requirements for traffic management to be in place to carry out this operation and the limited resources that the Council now as are on going problems your Operations service face.

- 2.3 Night working rates
(There has been need to negotiate night working rates which have now been agreed and will be implemented at the next opportunity when we can work with Amey to access the central reservation).
- 2.4 Communications have been challenging but are ongoing with both the highways agency and their contractors Amey.