

<b>Mayor &amp; Cabinet</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	Reduce sweeping frequency to residential roads to fortnightly.	
<b>Key Decision</b>		Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Customer Services. Executive Director for Resources. Head of Law.	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date 21 November 2018

## **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 To explain proposals to reduce spend on Street Cleansing Services by £823,000 PA through reduced sweeping of residential roads.

## **2 Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget. Following several years of significant cuts in funding from Central Government, the authority needs to consider ever more unpalatable choices on how to fund services and deliver a balanced budget.
- 2.2 This proposal aims to deliver an annual budget reduction for Street Cleansing services of £823,000.
- 2.3 The proposal involves the reduction in the frequency of residential street sweeping from the current once a week, to once a fortnight. This will be achieved through a major restructuring of the service that will lead the loss of around 30 staff.
- 2.4 It will be necessary to review each sweeper's workload (beat) and, in most cases, increase the geographical area covered. It will also be necessary to alter or delete other street sweeping posts to provide the additional mobile services to respond to cleansing problems that will arise from less frequent sweeping.

## **3 Recommendations**

- 3.1 To agree the proposals outlined in this report.

## **4 Policy Context**

- 4.1 The Council's strategy and priorities drive the Budget with changes in resource allocation determined in accordance with policies and strategy. The Council's vision "together, we will make Lewisham the best place in London to live, work and learn" was adopted by the Lewisham Strategic Partnership as part of the Sustainable Community Strategy, along with six over-arching priorities, ten priorities and six core values as detailed in the covering Budget Cuts Report.

## **5 Background**

### **Summary of Cleansing Cuts 2011 – 2018**

- 5.1 Since 2011, the Cleansing Service has managed to maintain a reasonable standard of street sweeping, despite budget reductions of nearly 30%. The cumulative impact of these changes, however, have put significant strains on our barrow-based, beat street sweeping service. A more substantial restructuring will be required to deliver the savings outlined in this report. Some additional posts will need to be deleted to fund the hire of extra street cleaning equipment. It will become increasingly difficult to maintain standards with planned street sweeping services and more mobile resources will be required to respond to complaints and local issues.
- 5.2 The current proposals need to be understood in the context of the cuts absorbed by the service in the years since 2010;

#### **11/12**

- Reduction in management posts by 20% .1 x PO5 and 2 x PO2 posts = £144,000 Reduce Johnson 600 Mechanical Brooms to only one and delete one drivers post = £95,000
- Delete Night Broom Service Operatives Post = £65,000
- Delete Scarab Drivers post and do not operate this mechanical sweeping service = £43,000
- Cease weed spraying on streets and pavements in borough = £50,000
- Total 11/12 = £ 397,000

#### **12/13**

- Stop street recycling service = £168,000
- No provision of sweeping services to designated secondary streets on a Sunday. Loss of 20 Sweepers Posts and to reduce frequency of sweeping to residential street to minimum once per week - Monday to Friday = £511,000
- Total 12/13 = £ 679,000

#### **13/14**

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- Cease provision of sweeping services to designated secondary streets / shopping areas on a Saturday and on Bank Holidays. - £81,075.00
- Cease provision of sweeping to all the boroughs traffic islands and central reservations – £36,200.00
- Cease provision of mechanical sweeping enhancements to the boroughs primary and secondary streets on Sundays - £14,485
- Total 13/14 = £131.760

### 14/15

- £250,000 was agreed by the mayor to be taken from the Cleansing budget.
- Total 14/ 15 = £250,000

### 15/16

- Reduction of 14 street sweeper posts - £350.000
- Reduction of 2 manager posts - £104,848
- Total 15/16 = £454,848
- In total, the Cleansing budget was reduced by £1,930,608 during this five year period. This equates to 28% of the Cleansing budget since 2011.

5.3 The current proposal to reduce the frequency of sweeping further would generate a saving of £823k. This equates to 39.96% of the cleansing budget since 2011.

## 6 Risks and Mitigations

- 6.1 With less frequent visits from Street Sweepers, it is likely that fly-tipping and other detritus issues will go unreported for longer, leading to further accumulations of waste and litter. There is likely to be an increase in casework and complaints and further pressure on the resources required to deal with them.
- 6.2 Some of the detrimental effects of the proposed reduction in sweeping frequencies will be mitigated through a continued focus on Enforcement activity, particularly challenging residents and businesses that put waste out for collection at inappropriate times.
- 6.3 Addition small mechanical sweeping machines would be leased to help mitigate the reduction in regular manual street sweeping.

## 7 Financial implications

- 7.1 The proposal aims to deliver a budget reduction of £823,000 for street cleansing services, through a reduction in the frequency of residential street sweeping from a weekly to a fortnightly basis.

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- 7.2 The current expenditure budget for the service is £5.84m, of which £5.39m is staffing related. The net budget is £5.50m, after income of £0.34m from internal recharges. A reduction of £823,000 is a budget cut of 14% of the current expenditure budget.
- 7.3 It is expected that reductions in the number of street cleansing staff cannot be made from the removal of agency staff alone. It is expected that 18 agency staff and 12 permanent staff would be need to be lost, which may result in redundancy costs for the organisation.
- 7.4 The cost of leasing additional street sweeping machines, to mitigate the reduction in the work of manual street sweepers, would be funded from the reduction in staff costs.

## 8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Legal Implications Under Section 89(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that open land under its direct control and to which the public have access is, so far as practicable, kept clear of litter and refuse. Under Section 89(2), the Council is also under a statutory duty, so far as is practicable, to ensure that public highways within its area are kept clean. In deciding what standard is required, the Council must have regard to the character and use of the land or highway, as well as the measures which are practicable in the circumstances.
- 8.2 Under Section 89(10), the Council is also required to have regard to the code of practice published by the Secretary of State from time to time. In particular, the code requires the Council to allocate its land into different types or "zones" which must be publicised. The code then sets out cleanliness standards for the different types of land and maximum response times for cleaning an area which has been littered. The duty applies seven days a week.
- 8.3 Members of the public may complain to the Magistrates Court where they consider that there is a breach of Section 89. The code of practice is admissible in evidence and the court may take into account any relevant provision in the code of practice.
- 8.4 The guidance is provided as a practical guide to the discharge of the duty, but it remains the case that what is appropriate in a particular instance is for the Court to agree. If the complaint is successful, a litter abatement order will be made, failure to comply with which is an offence. The court may also award costs if it is satisfied that there were reasonable grounds for bring the complaint, even if by the time the complaint is heard, the litter has been cleared away or the lack of cleanliness rectified. In considering any savings

proposals in relation to these matters, the Mayor must therefore be satisfied that the Council will still be able to comply with its duties under Section 89 and the requirements contained in the code of practice.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 8.5 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

### **9 Equalities Implications**

- 9.1 Staff: The proposed cuts is likely to have the greatest impact on lower paid, older male employees. The following table gives a breakdown of the current permanently employed workforce.
- 9.2 Community: In 2009, the Rowntree Foundation presented a report “A Clean Sweep” which compared extensive data from Lewisham street cleansing and two other councils explore “*why affluent neighbourhoods tend to have higher levels of street cleanliness than deprived neighbourhoods and what local authorities can do to narrow this gap.*” Their findings showed that Lewisham had been remarkably successful in reducing inequality in street cleaning standards between affluent and deprived neighbourhoods; *Lewisham has secured improvements by reducing the proportions below standard in deprived areas as fast as in other areas while Leeds has focused improvements almost exclusively on the most deprived neighbourhoods... This suggests that the three case studies may be making different policy choices in terms of how they balance effectiveness and equality. In particular, Lewisham appears to place more emphasis on outcome equality than the other two authorities.*
- 9.3 The Rowntree Report outlined the pre-austerity cleansing service; “*For the majority of its streets, Lewisham provides the following services:*

*Programmed manual street sweeping. All streets in residential areas are swept a minimum of twice weekly, and some three times a week. Areas around shops, schools etc. tend to receive daily and even twice-daily servicing. The sweepers work to beat cards on which the designated frequency of service for each segment of street is identified.*

*Responsive mobile teams collect fly-tipping and do extra litter-picking and other cleaning in response to complaints and requests. Mechanised sweepers clean arterial routes.”*

The report concludes: “*The outcomes achieved overall in Lewisham, as well as in the more deprived parts, are at least in part due to the emphasis placed on programmed rather than responsive service provision*”.

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9.4 Further moves away from programmed manual street sweeping, therefore, are likely to have a more negative impact on our more deprived neighbourhoods.

<b>Ages</b>	No. of officers	% of Cleansing workforce	
21-25	1	0.75	
26-30	1	0.75	
31-35	12	9.1	
36-40	14	10.6	
41-45	12	9.1	
46-50	21	16	
51-55	26	19.7	
55+	45	34	
<b>Total</b>	132	100	

<b>Gender</b>	No. of officers	% of Cleansing workforce	
Female	5	3.8	
Male	127	96.2	
<b>Total</b>	132	100	

<b>Disability</b>	No. of officers	% of Cleansing workforce	
Disabled employees	6	4.5	
Non-disabled employees	109	82.5	
Not known	17	13	
<b>Total</b>	132	100	

<b>Ethnicity</b>	No. of officers	% of Cleansing workforce	
<i>Asian Bangladeshi</i>			
<i>Asian Chinese</i>			
<i>Asian Indian</i>			
<i>Asian other</i>			
<i>Black African</i>	9	6.8	
<i>Black Caribbean</i>	21	16	
<i>Black other</i>	3	2.2	
<i>Mixed other</i>	1	0.75	
<i>Mixed white &amp; black African</i>	1	0.75	
<i>Mixed white &amp; black Caribbean</i>	1	0.75	
<i>Mixed White and Asian</i>	1	0.75	
<i>Not known</i>	3	2.2	
<i>Other Arab</i>	2	1.5	
<i>Other ethnic group</i>	1	0.75	

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<i>Prefer not to say</i>	5	3.8	
<i>White British/English/Welsh/Scot/N-Irish</i>	57	43.2	
<i>White Irish</i>	1	0.75	
<i>White other</i>	26	19.8	
<b>Total</b>	132	100	

<b>Grade bands</b>	No. of officers	% of Cleansing workforce	
<i>Sc1/2</i>	101	76.5	
<i>Sc6/SO2</i>	12	9.1	
<i>PO1-5</i>	17	12.9	
<i>PO6-PO8</i>	1	0.75	
<i>SMG1-SMG3</i>	1	0.75	
<b>Total</b>	132	100	

### 10 Background documents and originator

For further information on this report, please contact:  
Nigel Tyrell, Head of Environment on 020 8314 6041

- Background documents;

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/street-cleanliness-deprived-and-better-neighbourhoods-clean-sweep>