

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE –
26TH APRIL 2006**

SUBJECT: CLEANSING OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LIFELONG LEARNING AND LEISURE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report has been requested and follows previous reports at this sub committee on the 21st July 2004, 17th September 2003, and 27th March 2003.
- 1.2 The report provides information on the current situation in parks and open spaces concerning the collection of litter, emptying of litterbins and sweeping of footpaths etc.

2. THE REPORT

- 2.1 During the winter of 2004/05 a full evaluation exercise was undertaken by Parks Officers concerning the different modes of cleansing activities per location as undertaken by Parks Operation staff.
- 2.2 Arising out of the findings and the detailed discussions during the evaluation involving supervisors, ground staff and some parks users the present approach was developed adopting the use of specialised teams of personnel using dedicated vehicles.
- 2.3 Three mobile rounds were established throughout the County Borough having 2 personnel in each for the 28 week summer period and dropping to one member of staff for the autumn/winter period per team.
- 2.4 These mobile teams are supplemented at main parks locations by existing grounds staff, in addition a specialist sweeping vehicle is used to a predetermined round for the sweeping of all roads, car park areas and footpaths located in parks and open spaces.
- 2.5 The levels of litter collected per team and per location are recorded (number of bags) for weekly monitoring of all sites and trends, where levels increase at any one location officers can amend the schedule and try to establish the background for the increase in litter generation. Increasingly we are now seeing a level of illicit dumping usually from vehicles in parks and open spaces, these items often include domestic fridges, freezers and television sets, these are recovered and transferred at a cost of £60 each for disposal, this cost is incurred by the parks section.
- 2.6 During the summer period at 18 park locations seasonal Ranger staff are employed to cover sports activities, issuing of tickets and receipt of monies from the public. Incorporated into the duties of these members of staff at all locations are the collection of litter and emptying of litterbins as a daily activity.
- 2.7 This results in locations where a ranger and static grounds staff are based having litter-clearing activities completed twice per day, during weekdays and once per Saturday and Sunday.

- 2.8 In addition at specific main locations, Parks operations staff also undertake a cleansing operation throughout the year on a Saturday and Sunday.
- 2.9 This additional weekend frequency has been provided following evaluation of levels of litter generated during the weekends and complaints from the public, during the autumn winter period the weekend cleansing operations are undertaken only on a Sunday due to the cost of provision.
- 2.10 For efficiency of operation all mobile rounds have locations group geographically together per day in order to cut down the travelling between sites, this allows the parks staff the maximum time on each site for cleansing.
- 2.11 The revised parks cleansing schedules are outlined in Appendix A attached.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Funding for the revised cleansing schedule has been arrived at via the top slicing of the existing parks and playgrounds revenue budgets.
- 3.2 This has resulted in a reduction of work on some activities, but without the development of the new schedules litter levels would not improve to a level we feel is appropriate and within reasonable standards.

Funding was generated from: -

Parks Grounds maintenance Budget	165K
Playgrounds maintenance Budget	33K
Grounds Maintenance DSO surplus	39K
Total	237K

- 3.3 From 2005/06 these figures will increase due to the growth of new youth facilities from community first areas together with inflation as permitted on contract charges.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Consultation on the content of this report has been undertaken with the Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure together with Parks managers

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members of the sub committee are asked to note the contents of this report concerning the parks cleansing operations as per the 2006/2007 financial year.

Author: Derek Price, Principal Parks & Open Spaces Officer
 Consultees: Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure
 Parks Operations Managers
 Senior Parks Officers