

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

Decision Made: 26 March 2010

STREET CLEANSING REVIEW

Issue for Decision

To consider a review of the street cleansing service and proposals to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.

Decision Made

1. That the recommendations listed a. – n. under Section 8 of the Street Cleansing Review, attached as Appendix A to the report of the Assistant Director of Environmental Services, be agreed.
2. That the changes be implemented as part of an overall programme of improvement in the operation of the service and as a result realise savings of £120,000 for 2010/11 in accordance with the budget strategy.
3. That further options regarding the rationalisation of the service be explored during 2010/11.

Reasons for Decision

The Council has always sought to provide services that are lower than average on cost and higher than average in performance. In the case of the street cleansing service there is high performance on the national indicator NI195 (the measure for cleanliness) and it is rated as one of the best in Kent and in the top quartile nationally.

However, when considering the cost of the service, it is average when comparing cost per head nationally but when compared with the CIPFA family group it is third highest and therefore lower quartile.

In addition, customer satisfaction from the Place Survey in 2008 and through satisfaction cards is average with 20% of those completing the Place Survey not satisfied with the service.

Changes to the town centre operation during the past year have proved very effective with much improved cleanliness and satisfaction. Paudits have been received from a number of traders including the town centre manager.

With all these factors in mind, it was considered appropriate to review the service both in operational terms but to also carry out detailed customer consultation to gather the views of the public. The detailed report is attached at Appendix A to the report of the Assistant Director for Environmental Services. This included a number of recommendations to take the service forward and improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Early on in the review it was identified that efficiencies and savings could be made and these were included as part of the budget strategy for 2010/11. A saving of £120,000 from the street cleansing service has been identified. The report shows how these savings can be achieved without adversely impacting on service outcomes.

However, when compared with other authorities in the CIPFA family group, costs will still be above average. Therefore it is proposed to implement the changes and then review further options to improve the Council's position within the family group by reducing costs and maintaining high performance.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

I could decide not to accept the report but as a result the service will not improve and it is likely that resident dissatisfaction will remain at the current levels. There would also be a shortfall in the budget strategy for 2010/11.

Other options could have been chosen but those recommended reflect the best way forward for the service at the present time. Further work will be done during 2010 to identify further opportunities to reduce service costs and to establish how these may impact on the service.

Background Papers

None

Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Head of Change and Scrutiny by: **6 April 2010**