Fundamental Service Review of Street Cleaning

Executive Summary

We have a goal to improve street cleansing. The purpose of the review was to look, in detail, at how we carried out the service. An action plan needed to be developed that resulted in improvements whilst addressing changing factors and to plan for the future.

The review found that the service was operating reasonably well and the financial performance was good. The review found some aspects of the service that needed updating and there were a number of challenges and opportunities going forward. We identified a number of activities through consultation and working with the officer and councillors working groups and carried out changes that brought some immediate improvements. An action plan to continue to develop the service going forward has been agreed by both working groups and the Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee. These actions are set out throughout the report and summarised in a table at Appendix 8.

Recommendation to Executive

(1) That the Executive Head of Environment be authorised to carry out the necessary procurement, staffing changes and service changes, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Environment in order to complete the action plan referred to in this report.

(2) That street cleaning services be excluded from the community right to challenge until April 2017 to allow the service changes from the action plan settle in and allow suitable time to review the services delivered under the two year arrangement with Glade.

Reason for Recommendation:
To allow officers to proceed with the Action Plan.
1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 This report sets out the approach taken to review the service. The reasons for the review were set out in the Project Initiation Document of the Review of Street Cleansing report of the 27 March 2012 Customer and Community Scrutiny committee. This report set out that it had been 11 years since a full review of this service had taken place and that there were a number of factors that had changed and were likely to change in the future that would affect the service. We have also undertaken a review of public toilet provision in this period, which forms part of the street cleaning service. The public toilet review forms part of this report.

2. **Strategic Framework**

2.1 The Council’s Corporate Plan sets out a requirement to complete a Fundamental Service Review of Street Cleaning services.

2.2 This review will ensure that services are updated, relevant to local needs and developed in consultation with residents. This will ensure compliance with Health and Safety requirements, confirm the cost efficiency of the service and improve community involvement.

3. **Background**

3.1 A comprehensive service review of the street cleaning service was agreed by the Customer and Scrutiny Committee in March 2012. This review commenced before the formal implementation of the Fundamental Service Review (FSR) process. This set out a three stage review with a councillor and officer working group supporting the review as we progressed.

3.2 This group also looked at the development and implementation of Recycling More.

3.3 Stage 1 confirmed our current approach to services. A summary is attached at Appendix 1. The service is delivered in line with our Cleaner Borough Strategy. The current strategy is attached at Appendix 2.

3.4 We measure our performance by inspecting and grading several hundred streets or parts of streets at random throughout the year. The street or parts of streets will pass if they achieve a grade A or B as set out in the code of practice for street cleaning. This means there is no litter or detritus (grade A) or very small accumulations of litter or detritus (grade B). If there are accumulations of litter or detritus, to a level of grade C (widespread distribution) or D (heavily affected) under the code of practice, then the street will fail the inspection. Under this arrangement our performance was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Litter pass rate (Target)</th>
<th>Detritus pass rate (Target)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>94% (90%)</td>
<td>82% (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>97% (91%)</td>
<td>93% (87%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>94% (92%)</td>
<td>86% (88%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Stage 2 was to carry out public consultations and compare our service to other authorities. This would identify broad themes and ideas about how to develop our service.

3.6 Stage 3 was to deliver an action plan. This report sets out our activities over the last two years in reviewing the service, highlights the changes we have made to the service in that time and sets out an action plan for further developing the service and deliver stage 3.

3.7 Councillors will be aware that the review has taken some time to get to this stage. This is due to other decisions that have had a direct implication on the service and its management. The primary interruption was the decision to implement Recycling More and introducing new garden waste services in 2013. This had the impact of drawing away extensive resources into Recycling More. We had identified that the introduction of wheeled bins would also have a significant impact on reducing litter generation and therefore potentially render any service review and plans made before this time redundant.

3.8 Councillors will also be aware that a senior management restructure has taken place which has resulted in the Head of Operational Services being promoted to the post of Executive Head of Environment whose responsibilities now encompass Parks and Leisure services. This gives us the opportunity to look at a more integrated “street scene” approach.

Public consultation

3.9 Public consultation and workshops were completed in 2012 under Stage 2 of the project. These were held at four locations, East Horsley, Worplesdon, Ash and at the Green Ark. Attendance was lower than hoped for but there were some good discussions and feedback on the service. This is summarised at Appendix 3.

3.10 The positives from the consultation exercise were:

- The town centre is kept to a good standard of cleanliness
- Graffiti service is good, not much is seen and any that is seen is quickly removed.
- Trunk roads are kept clean
- Staff are friendly

3.11 The areas identified for improvement were:

- We need to look at the times we are servicing shopping parades as shop opening hours have changed over the years.
- More enforcement wanted and publicity of enforcement
- Dog fouling is still a problem in some areas, a particular issue that was raised was dog poo in bags left hanging on trees and posts – communication needed over the fact that bins are dual use
- Leaf fall clearance could be better
- Residential areas were felt to need more attention, in particular sweeping, detritus, weed clearance and going further back e.g. into hedges
• Alleyways and traffic islands are dealt with under the nominations scheme but a long term plan is needed
• Our presence needs to be more visible
• Parish Councils would like to be more involved in reporting issues and have access to schedules so they can monitor what has been done and when.

It should be noted that these findings were from a period prior to Recycling More and the positive impact of the bins for recycling were not seen at this time. We are confident that the perceptions of the service, in relation to litter, would now be better and this needs to be taken into account in future planning.

Comparisons

3.12 The project board and councillors wanted to examine benchmarking data in detail and decided that the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) would carry out this work. APSE carried out a robust near neighbour comparison also as part of stage 2. The summary of the APSE findings and detailed report from APSE is at Appendix 4.

3.13 The key findings were:

• APSE considers that our service is significantly cheaper than the average at around £34 per household compared to around £37 per household. The average is nearly 9% more than our cost.
• Of the money we do spend nearly 70% of this is spent on staff, again more than the average of around 65%. This is positive as more of our budget goes on front line operatives than on other costs such as overheads administration and management than the average.
• Overheads are high, when compared to the best in group, but only slightly higher than the average.
• Litter performance, as set out in 3.4 above is just below average but quite a lot lower than the average for the southern authorities in the network.
• Detritus performance was below average.

Activities carried out and changes already made

3.14 Due to the length of the review and the nature of the service, the board felt that we should act on opportunities that were considered immediately beneficial to the service, rather than waiting to the end of the review process. Service change options were developed and presented to the councillor board in February 2013.

3.15 Evening Trade Waste Collection Service - We identified that there was an opportunity to improve the street scene in the town centre by minimising the amount of waste that is left out overnight. We trialled and then implemented an evening trade waste service in the High Street. We have expanded this to include roads surrounding the High Street. It has been well received by commercial customers and has reduced the amount of litter that needs to be cleared in the mornings.
3.16 New sweepers – The existing fleet was aging and becoming unreliable. This affected the amount of work and our schedules. We obtained new sweepers in 2013 and this has greatly improved service reliability.

3.17 Online form for litter and dog fouling – these were set up in March 2013 and are in use.

3.18 New Parish Programme - a new programme was put together in response to comments received during consultation. Parishes requested more involvement in resourcing decisions. Parishes and Town Centre Wards were advised that we had a two operative crew who would tackle “extra” tasks that would not usually be carried out as part of regular street cleaning. For example clearing an over grown alley, washing down signs or tidying up an area in a housing estate. All parishes and wards that took part were guaranteed a minimum of two days work.

3.19 73 jobs were put forward by 22 Parishes and Town Centre Wards. Seven jobs (eg removal of redundant road sign, road resurfacing) were passed to Surrey County Council, four jobs were unsuitable for the scope or timescale of this project. Two jobs were taken on by our regular area crews. We gave feedback to Parishes or Ward Councillors including comments from Surrey County Council about when work would be undertaken.

3.20 We issued a timetable for work to be undertaken and sent this to Parish Clerks or Ward Councillors. The “Parish and Town Ward crew” spend two days in each area. Six tasks were too large to be completed during the two days, we told the parishes and at the end of the programme the crew have been able to go back to these jobs and continue work. We carried out this work during August, September and October, the work was well received with positive feedback from Ward Councillors and Parish Councils. Examples of the work undertaken are attached as Appendix 5.

3.21 Dog Fouling Campaign - The campaign ran during Summer 2013 based on research carried out by the Tidy Britain Group, which identified dog fouling as causing one of the highest level of offence to the public. The consultation we carried out as part of the Street Cleaning Review found dog fouling was one of the matters of most concern to members of the public in Guildford.

3.22 Keep Britain Tidy’s research highlights the emerging new problem of bagged dog mess being left on trees and posts. We focused our campaign around Keep Britain Tidy’s dog poo fairy material which uses a light hearted and bright image of a fairy to call people to action. The key message is any bin will do and not to just bag it and leave it out on site.

3.23 The campaign included a school competition, with artwork being made into signs for areas around schools. Locations that are popular dog walking areas were chosen to be monitored over a period of weeks, fouling was sprayed pink and trailer days were held at the locations.

3.24 On 7 August, we focused our campaign on Facebook and twitter to encourage discussion around responsible dog ownership and the problems fouling causes. It was well supported by outside organisations including MumsNet.
3.25 The amount of dog fouling reduced at each of the sites monitored. We achieved good media coverage and exposure for the campaign through retweeting.

3.26 **Introduction of the Glutton.** A glutton is a small hand-pulled electric vacuum cleaner which is particularly effective in town centre areas. It works by sucking up litter, leaf fall, blossom and other detritus as well as cigarette butts. It is particularly effective in our town centre as we have the High Street setts where litter can become lodged in between the setts and is difficult and slow to remove using traditional manual techniques. As it is powered it is easier for the operatives to move, especially in the hillier areas of the town and it is in operation all the time whilst walking, whereas staff operating with barrows and brooms have to stop to carry out any sweeping. The effect is that it gives a higher quality of clean at a greater speed than traditional cleaning and is very visible to visitors to the town.

3.27 Three gluttons have been purchased. Two are currently being used in the Town Centre and one, purchased in partnership with Ash Parish Council, is in use in Ash. A picture is included at Appendix 6.

3.28 **Back to Basics Training** was provided by Keep Britain Tidy in January 2014. A bespoke course for all Guildford street cleaning staff which ensured staff carried out tasks efficiently, safely and at the required standard. It also ensured staff understood the importance of their role and looked at how they could proactively be a positive face for Guildford Borough.

3.29 The impact of these changes, primarily from improved mechanical sweepers as well as the introduction of Recycling More, has already seen a marked improvement in the quality of the service. The surveys carried out in Autumn 2013 saw our litter pass rate increase to 98% up from 94% in 2012/13 (against a target of 93%). For detritus, the pass rate was 93% up from a pass rate of 86% in 2012/13 (against a target of 89%).

3.30 **Route Optimisation** - The positive changes we have seen already, especially those resulting from Recycling More, mean that the way we clean residential areas and the frequencies we attend are in need of review. Some roads will need less visits than they currently receive and some roads may need more.

3.31 Redesigning street cleaning schedules is a major task. It can be built either manually or via specialist routing software. The advantage of using specialist software to help design schedules is that this allows a number of different working patterns, resource levels and schedules to be tested theoretically and then sense checked by experienced staff before making significant changes. We have used this approach to great success in designing mechanical sweeper schedules and new refuse and recycling rounds in the past. The councillor board considered proposals from two companies offering this service and the preferred option is for ISL to be appointed on a one off basis to carry out a full range of route optimisation tasks. This includes strategic modelling through to implementation of detailed routes for mechanical sweepers, area crews, beat patrols and litter bin emptying across the borough.
Challenges and opportunities - Impact of Recycling More

3.32 We implemented Recycling More in two phases in 2013, April for Garden Waste and October for recycling. This involved the shift to wheeled bins for garden waste and recycling. We highlighted that the recycling in particular had a high impact on street cleanliness as paper and plastics that were open to the elements were a source of litter.

3.33 The street cleaning service has been set up to follow waste collections as far as resources allow. We have in place a fortnightly “patrol” where residential areas are visited by a crew with the aim of litter picking residential areas frequently.

3.34 It became apparent soon after Recycling More that the wheeled bins for recycling had an immediate impact on the level of litter. As a result, it is clear that to continue with a blanket approach to all residential areas at this level is not the best use of our resources. Some areas are more challenging and need more regular cleaning and some areas will need significantly less visits. The opportunity is there to do less driving and patrolling and more actual cleaning.

3.35 In order to complete this task we need to carry out a review of all of our streets, reset frequencies and then carry out a route optimisation of our resources as set out in 3.30 above to provide new schedules in a way that allows them to be made publically available. This is a major piece of work and intrinsically linked to other work within the action plan, such as Action Plan task 13 – exploring alternate approaches to organising staff.

Action plan task 1 – Review and reset cleansing frequencies and carry out route optimisation work.

Town Centre – Day time

3.36 The town centre is an area where we maintain very high standards and have a continuous presence throughout the day. This is in line with our statutory duty hours of 8am to 6pm. We concentrate our resources into the town centre every morning to ensure that the town is up to standard by 8am every day. The introduction of the Gluttons into the town has had a significant impact on cleanliness. We anticipated that these machines would improve efficiency and this is apparent.

3.37 This provides an opportunity to increase the area of work undertaken by the town centre team into wider areas of the town, which see heavy car and foot traffic and associated litter and detritus generation along with heavily parked areas that are more difficult to clean. Manual sweeping will be expanded into these areas more regularly.

Action Plan task 2 – revise town centre plan and extend manual sweepers and Gluttons into wider area.
Town Centre - Night Time and Purple Flag

3.38 We have no duty to maintain street cleaning standards outside of the statutory duty hours of 8am to 6pm, however the night time economy is an important part of the Guildford experience. The Council along with Experience Guildford are looking to attain a purple flag for the night time economy of Guildford. From a street cleaning and waste management perspective, this considers what we do to ensure Guildford is a clean and welcoming place for visitors in the evening and the night time.

3.39 We operate a 24 hour male and female toilet at Bedford Road as well as a “Urilift” pop up urinal in North Street. We also provide an evening trade waste collection as we recognised that many town centre businesses have difficulties with early morning waste presentation and the service removes bags from the High Street overnight that have in the past been a source of litter and on occasion as fuel for arson attacks.

3.40 From a street cleaning perspective as we are governed by legislation to maintain minimum standards from 8am to 6pm we are resourced to bring the town up to standard by 8am and maintain this standard through to 6pm. As part of the Purple Flag process, we need to assess whether there is benefit and resources to provide additional out of hours cleaning.

Action plan task 3 – Purple flag – work with the purple flag team and review evening and night time services.

Litter bins

3.41 We have litter and recycling bins in the town centre, some of these bins are starting to degrade. We need replacement bins throughout the town centre and this gives us the opportunity to review the type of bins and introduce bins with advertising space to be offered to local businesses.

3.42 Our annual revenue budget for bins is quite small at £6,000 per year. The purchase and installation of bins ranges between £250 and £750 per unit, so this budget is a maintenance budget rather than one that allows significant renewal.

3.43 A provisional capital programme to replace the town centre bins is currently being progressed and, subject to approval, we anticipate changing the majority of the bins in the town centre by April 2015.

3.44 We would like to extend the use of recycling on the go litter bins and this gives us the opportunity to refresh and update our bin stock in shopping areas outside of the town. The current revenue budget does not support this and a capital bid will need to be submitted.

Action plan task 4 – replace town centre litter bins

Action plan task 5 – develop a replacement programme and capital bid for shopping parades throughout the borough
Trunk Roads (A3 A331 and A31)

3.45 These roads are very challenging to clean. They are high speed and dangerous and work on these roads has to comply with strict and evolving Health and Safety precautions. They also see a relatively high level of litter generation from vehicle drivers and passengers discarding food and drink containers and from shed loads, particularly poorly secured loads. These issues are hard to enforce as witnessing littering and gathering evidence at speeds of 70mph is very difficult. Many vehicles speed and it would not be proportionate or lawful to instruct our officers to exceed speed limits in pursuit of evidence, such as a number plate.

3.46 Weather conditions also limit our work in these areas. We suspend cleaning on main carriageways in heavy rain and poor visibility, so winter working is restricted. We are, however, able to attend to higher profile areas with appropriate and easier access, such as lay-bys, at any time.

3.47 Cleaning these roads is expensive as to minimise risks we need to operate with a three person crew that cost around £100,000. We have a budget of £50,000 for traffic management, to cover roads and areas that are unsafe to attend to without traffic management. Finally there is overtime related to overnight working in the region of £10,000 per year. The total of approximately £160,000 per year represents around eight % of the overall budget for street cleaning.

3.48 We are now at a point where the A331 is only cleaned under traffic management. The A31 and A3 are limited in areas covered without traffic management and there are increasing concerns, following recent accidents, that these areas should be under greater control.

3.49 We consider that a better approach to cleaning these roads is a more programmed approach; generally, under traffic management which will see cleans of these roads at appropriate times of year. This will allow us to redeploy the team cleaning these roads into other work. The savings associated with this reduction in staffing will cover the additional costs of traffic management. This will allow a thorough clean of the roads and we will be able to inform concerned residents of the dates of next cleans with more certainty.

3.50 We would therefore expect to set an annual programme of two cleans of the nearside lanes and slip roads and one clean of the central reserve for the A3. The A31 and A331 are maintained by Surrey County Council who carry out twice yearly maintenance and cutting back works on these roads. We have always shared these closures, at no cost to us. These allow us to attend to both the nearside lanes and central reserves. We will programme in two additional nearside lane closures a year at our cost.

3.51 Traffic Management costs between £1,500 and £2,000 per shift. The area covered for this is approximately 4km. Attending to these roads under traffic management as per this programme would cost a total of between £76,000 and £102,000 plus staff costs in the region of £40,000. Allowing for a contingency to deal with unscheduled urgent work of around £20,000 would give an element of responsiveness if required and the overall cost would reduce by around £26,000 in the best case and be cost neutral at worst.
Action plan task 6 – set and arrange a programme of traffic management for these roads

Action plan task 7 – redeploy the A3 crew into other work areas and ensure cover of lay-bys and other areas that we are able to attend to

Action plan task 8 – carry out a tendering exercise for traffic management to cover a number of years, including scheduled and ad hoc traffic management in order to secure a consistent programme at good rates with a high quality contractor.

Street Scene

3.52 James Whiteman was appointed to the post of Executive Head of Environment in November. This allows the council to look at the potential for a “Streetscene” approach, which links parks and countryside management more closely with street cleaning.

3.53 There are a number of existing links that we can strengthen. For example, the Dog Warden carries out his role covering areas in the public highway as well as in parks and countryside areas. This could be to manage dog fouling or stray dog issues. Work often includes liaison with parks rangers. On enforcement Gary Kirk, Waste and Street Scene Officer (enforcement) trains and supports park rangers in relation to littering in parks areas.

3.54 Litter issues are evident where there is high traffic of people and parks are a natural place for people to visit and congregate throughout the year. Litter from dog walkers, park users, people having picnics etc. is evident all year round, therefore any communications campaigns and projects aimed at improving this behaviour will affect these areas as much as the public highway.

3.55 Parks and countryside teams also carry out litter removal and bin emptying, very often in locations adjacent to where street cleaning teams are working. Both parks and countryside and street cleaning services have variable demand for staffing. For parks and countryside there is higher demand in the summer months, whereas in street cleaning the autumn and early winter months are busy due to leaf fall. These areas give opportunities to improve working efficiencies.

3.56 The opportunity is now in place to coordinate and compliment these areas of work by working closer together in areas of operation as well as in areas of education, enforcement and projects.

Action plan task 9 – Investigate opportunities for closer working and develop a plan for greater coordination of work between street cleaning and parks and countryside teams.

Alternative service delivery models

3.57 There are a number of ways street cleaning services are delivered by Councils throughout the country. The two most common are Direct Services Organisations
(DSOs) or outsourced contracted out services. Other models tend to be a variation on these themes such as Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) which are effectively DSOs that have been converted into an external company. There are also an increasing number of social enterprises showing an interest in this type of work.

3.58 Guildford has been delivering in-house DSO services for decades. The delivery format remained successful and efficient in an era of rigorous challenges in the late 1980s and 1990s in the era of Compulsory Competitive Tendering followed by Best Value. It was the successful bid in a number of market testing exercises in this period.

3.59 As a result, our services have been considered to be competitive, responsive and effective throughout this time. In considering whether there was a need to carry out a market test, the Councillor Working Group wished to carry out a benchmarking exercise conducted by APSE. The results of this, set out above at 3.14 and in appendix 4 found that our services remained competitive and effective. The Councillor Working Group therefore recommended that we retain services in house and look to develop these services in house.

3.60 Within the wider Surrey setting, the members of Surrey Waste Partnership that are currently outsourced are looking at jointly procuring waste and street cleaning services going forward. The specification is under development and at this stage, it is likely that all Surrey direct service organisation (DSO) authorities, like ourselves, will be listed as named partners. This does not mean that our work will be subject to a competitive exercise. However, it does mean that we could use the contract if we chose to in the life of the contract. This needs consideration in future years as a possible option for consideration.

3.61 We need to look at the “Streetscene” option in more detail with a view to joining up services and increasing efficiencies and look at other service models, such as Social Enterprise.

3.62 In the light of community right to challenge, we are able to preclude challenges to periods of review. We are setting a significant action plan and developing the services into a “Streetscene” approach. There is a need to develop, settle in and maximise the effectiveness of the services and a challenge to all or part of the current service could severely disrupt the service development. We are also introducing a trial of a social enterprise delivering street cleaning in Westborough and Park Barn this year for two years with Glade. Therefore, it would be prudent to preclude a challenge until April 2017 at the earliest, when our exclusion to challenge waste services ends and we have had time to review the arrangements and effectiveness of the GLADE approach.

Action plan task 10 - Exclude Street Cleaning Services from the community right to challenge until April 2017

Social Enterprise

3.63 We have been working with a local social enterprise, Guildford Learning And Development Enterprise (GLADE), who are interested in developing and
delivering a range of council provided services in the Park Barn and Westborough areas. Glade is a group of charities including Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership, Oakleaf Enterprises (a mental health charity) and Guildford YMCA, who are looking to develop a sustainable community enterprise. Their aims are to build this with community involvement and work with unemployed and disadvantaged adults to provide a vehicle for learning and development, increasing life chances whilst providing valuable community led services.

3.64 This work includes grounds maintenance and street cleaning work. For street cleaning, we have highlighted an area where the money we spend on the current team may well be better used and have better outcomes when delivered via this social enterprise.

3.65 This work is ongoing and we anticipate Glade commencing street cleaning work later in 2014 for a period of two years. This period will allow us to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of this working model and would allow us to take this into consideration as we approach the period of review set out in Action plan task 10.

Review of communication and use of ICT

3.66 The street cleaning service has been delivered in the same way for some time, however the way in which our residents are accessing and finding out about services in their areas is rapidly developing. In particular, there is an increasing ability for residents to use the internet and smartphones to inform us about issues or access information about their services.

3.67 The public consultation exercise was well publicised but interest was low. This leads us to consider whether the methods we used to engage and continue to engage with residents needs further work.

3.68 We have and continue to develop our information systems to deliver more and better information to our residents. As part of this, we have put our large sweeper schedules on line so the public can view the services.

3.69 The Councillor Working Group have highlighted the need to ensure schedules of cleaning for other workgroups, particularly smaller sweepers and litter cleaning teams is more publically available. This work is intrinsically linked to the review and resetting of cleansing frequencies as set out in Action plan task 1. When carrying out this work we will look to specify outputs that are able to be assimilated into our systems that will allow residents to look at cleaning frequencies for areas of interest to them.

3.70 The opportunities to increase digital information flows and reporting alongside low apparent engagement and interest in the service means that we should look to further develop education, information, enforcement and communications campaigns with a dual aim of educating the public as well as encouraging engagement and interest in the service.

Action plan task 11 – set up a councillor and officer subgroup to develop a communications plan
**Graffiti and chewing gum**

3.71 We currently employ a two-person team solely attending to chewing gum and graffiti. Graffiti levels in particular are kept low and are attended to rapidly on report with 96% of reports attended to within one working day in 2012/13.

3.72 Chewing gum is a more difficult task. It requires specialist equipment and higher levels of training. Care needs to be taken when cleaning to avoid pedestrians, avoid creating ice when the weather is cold and minimise disruption to residents who live in North Street and High Street. This limits the amount of time and the windows of opportunity we have to remove chewing gum.

3.73 The cleaning equipment is in need of replacement and we considered, with the councillor and officer working groups whether it would be more beneficial to have a specialist cleaning company come into the borough a few times a year to give concentrated deep cleans, rather than invest in new expensive equipment and carry out this work ourselves.

3.74 We approached two organisations: Gum removal UK and Go-gum Ltd.

3.75 Both these firms provided a professional demonstration and an extensive and high quality clean. Both were able to quote and estimated that the town centre pavements identified (over 12,000 square metres) would take around two weeks to clean. The quotes were both between £50,000 and £60,000 per year.

3.76 Prices for one off cleans from both organisations were in the region of £21,000.

3.77 The costs associated with chewing gum removal alone, three times per year, are actually around the same cost as the entire in house provision of chewing gum removal and all graffiti removal. From previous work on graffiti removal in 2008/9, indicative costs for 3 days of cover were also in the region of £50,000. Therefore, to buy in these services would cost approximately twice what we currently spend to achieve similar standards.

**Action plan task 12 – Replace chewing gum cleaning equipment and implement a new schedule**

**Staffing Options**

3.78 The service has been delivered in pretty much the same way for over two decades with set working patterns and a Monday to Friday focus and with the weekend covered by staff working overtime. The design is based around the legislative requirements of street cleaning and the ability to respond quickly to street cleaning issues that arise in “duty” hours.

3.79 These work patterns can be demanding. Not all staff work overtime but some staff are particularly keen to work overtime to boost their wages. This can and does lead to some staff working 7 days a week. The service has seen high levels of sickness and the long hours and limited rest periods are likely to be a factor affecting this.
3.80 Changes in lifestyle and increased opening hours mean weekends are busier, especially Sundays. We have limited resource cleaning at weekends when most of our fleet is parked up.

3.81 We have also seen changes in the workplace, with an increase in and demand for flexible jobs and part time working. We have seen growth in population and demand for services and expect further growth developing from the Local Plan. There is an opportunity to explore a range of different approaches to the way in which we operate the street cleaning services to ensure that we remain flexible and continue to meet the developing demands of the borough. These options, shown in Table 1 include:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Potential impact on staff</th>
<th>Financial and operational impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduce part time staff to work weekends</td>
<td>Reduce overtime opportunities for full time staff, but ensures a rest period and dedicated well rested staff on duty.</td>
<td>Potential to reduce Saturday costs by 33% and Sunday costs by 50%. Approximately £50,000 in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce a shift pattern in all areas or certain areas, such as four days on and four days off</td>
<td>Increases rest period for staff</td>
<td>Allows fleet to be used 7 days per week, reducing the number of vehicles purchased. Increased pool of staff to provide cover in the event of sickness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek part time staff to carry out evening work, such as locks and unlocks</td>
<td>Reduces overtime opportunities, but ensures rest periods</td>
<td>Reduces costs by around £5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.82 The primary aims are to increase rest periods for our staff, maximise the flexibility and responsiveness of the service to a changing environment and make savings in our service costs. These are radical approaches and need careful consideration and consultation with staff to explore their viability, benefits, issues and acceptability.

Action plan task 13 – explore and consult on alternative methods of organising staff.

Public conveniences

3.83 The council operates 17 public toilets and one urinal. Generally the toilets are in good condition and are generally well used. During the Autumn of 2011 we commissioned a usage survey of 15 sites. This excluded Slyfield industrial estate as this site is primarily used by the industrial units adjacent to the facility, the G
live car park toilets as this was being built and the urinal as this was not possible remotely.

3.84 The numbers of users at each site on each day is detailed within Appendix 7. These surveys rotated between sites for two to four weeks between late summer and late autumn 2011 and counted the number of entries to each site and at what time.

3.85 The toilets with the highest usage were within the town centre, notably Ward Street and Tunsgate with over 4,000 visits to each toilet in the surveyed weeks. The high profile location and visibility of these toilets is likely to be the key reason. The lowest used toilets within the town were Farnham Road car park toilets; particularly the ladies’ toilet. The location in relation to the town means that these toilets are going to be used by car park users and commuters, rather than passing members of the public.

3.86 Outside of the town the highest use was at the Stoke Park toilets adjacent to the play park and paddling pool with over 1000 visits per week in the survey period. This is a popular location, especially in the summer and the mother and child attraction is evident in the much greater use of the ladies’ toilets compared to the gents’. It was noted that all of the toilets in park areas received good use with typically 80 to 200 visits per day.

3.87 The lowest use is The Mount cemetery with just over 100 visits per week in the survey period. This site is isolated and so use would be limited to visitors to the cemetery rather than any passing public.

3.88 Shalford Park gents is also well used. This park has a high level of football and rugby use. Woodbridge Road is well used, especially the gents, possibly due to the presence of the roadside café adjacent to the toilets.

3.89 Resources - In order to lock and unlock the toilets a street cleaning operative is paid to work between 6pm and 8pm to lock all of the toilets and from 5am to 7am to unlock the toilets. This is on a rota. This operative is expected to carry out a final cleanliness check and ensure that no one is present in the toilets.

3.90 We clean each toilet every day and visit throughout the day to ensure they remain clean and stocked with consumables. The frequency and number of visits depends on the likely use of the toilets, so the town centre toilets receive regularly visits through the day, whereas the Mount will generally receive one visit.

3.91 Hours of operation - the majority of the toilets are open from 7am to 6pm seven days a week. The only day the toilets are not opened is Christmas Day. The actual time of opening for each toilet depends on when the operative locking/unlocking arrives.

3.92 The North Street urinal is raised by Parking Services at 10pm and lowered at 5am.

3.93 Night time provision - The Council operated two 24 hour toilets until 2008. These were Ward Street and Bedford Road. Due to high levels of vandalism the decision
was taken to reduce this provision to Bedford Road. Bedford Road continued to receive significant abuse and as a result has been recently refurbished and fitted with more robust fixtures and fittings.

3.94 Bedford Road along with the urinal in North Street is our only current provision.

3.95 We had a persistent complaint about night time provision from a single member of the public. We last heard from this complainant in June 2011 shortly before the Bedford Road toilets were refitted. This complainant feels that there should be more provision in the town at night.

3.96 The analysis of use for Bedford Road does not support the view of high demand. For the gents over a four week period in September 2011 between 11pm and 3am usage averaged 1 person per hour with no use between 3am and 6am. For the ladies’ toilet, there was no use between 10pm and 7am in this survey period.

3.97 It is acknowledged that there is always likely to be some incidences of public urination in a busy town centre environment. It is questionable whether provision of a further toilet in the town (Ward Street or Tunsgate) away from the busy late night environment around Bridge Street and the bottom of North Street would have a significant impact on this issue. This would lead to a higher risk of vandalism and subsequent service disruption to one of our busiest toilets for day time use.

3.98 It is reasonable to assume that the majority of people in the town later in the evening and through the night are likely to be attending a venue of some description. A pub, restaurant, cinema or theatre would all have accessible toilets. In addition there are a number of fast food restaurants and other outlets that the public can gain access too.

3.99 Repairs and maintenance - repairs, maintenance and refurbishment are organised via Asset Development. There are no issues or concerns with this provision.

3.100 Condition - Generally the condition of the toilets are very good. Recent refurbishments include Bedford Road, York Road car park and Ripley High Street and the G live toilets are new. Those that are in a poor condition or aging include Farnham Road car park toilets and Home Farm toilets.

3.101 The outturn for public toilets in 2013-14 was a net expenditure of £289,900. Of this there was income for cleaning toilets in parks and cemeteries of £8,300, £38,750 of capital charges and £27,900 of internal support charges.

3.102 This left a balance of £231,550 on operating costs. This was split as below:

- Employee costs £106,650
- Transport costs £13,300
- Premises related costs £95,000
- Supplies and services £2,600
- Grants (Ash and Shere PCs) £14,000
3.103 The primary costs of the service, excluding grants, relate to employees (49%) and transport (6%). This is 55% of the overall costs. The primary resources are 2 cleaning staff followed by locks and unlocks. As such should the Council look to draw savings in this area it would need to close a number of toilets or alter its locking and unlocking arrangements to enable a significant cost saving.

3.104 There are options for reducing net expenditure that include:

- Closing 40% of the public toilets – this would allow the reduction of cleaning staff by one and may remove the requirement for a separate lock and unlock team
- Transferring some toilets to relevant parishes with a grant – this is similar to Shere and Ash toilets that are some distance from our town provision. The driving time associated with cleaning and locking/unlocking could be released and be a key to revising operating methods and resulting costs savings.
- Close a small number of less well used toilets, such as one of the Stoke Park toilets or Wilderness Road
- Introduce charges for some toilets, primarily the high use town centre toilets.

3.105 We continue to invest in and expand its toilet provision services. The addition of the G live toilets shows an ongoing commitment to public toilet provision. We have a wide stock of toilets that are in generally good condition and are well used.

3.106 The overnight provision is limited; however demand, measured by usage, is low and would not justify additional provision.

3.107 In the absence of strong financial drivers the status quo does not present significant risks of high additional future expenditure. In any case in order to drive out significant savings there would need to be a large reduction in service provision which is contrary to the recent trend within Guildford.

Action plan task 14 – confirm the continuation of existing provision

Action plan task 15 – carry out a further usage survey in 2015

Action plan task 16 – carry out a condition review and develop a refurbishment programme

3.108 The report above sets out a number on action plan tasks. The action plan is attached at Appendix 8.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The current actions set out some expenditure on route optimisation that will be met from existing budgets.

4.2 The action plan sets out a number of actions and further reviews. There is potential to generate savings from route optimisation work that may result in
reduced staffing levels or from organising staff in different ways. We will carry out
detailed financial assessments as we progress reviews in these areas

4.3 Litter bin replacement in the town centre and in shopping parades will need a
large capital outlay. The town centre bins are subject to a provisional bid that is in
the final stages of approval. We will develop a plan for shopping parades with an
associated capital bid by the end of 2014.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The review of the service will ensure our street cleaning services continues to
comply with the latest Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse.

6. Human Resource Implications

6.1 A number of the actions will have or are likely to have impacts on current staff.
This includes the potential to change working areas or working patterns. We will
consult fully and openly with staff and Human Resources throughout the process.

7. Key Risks

7.1 We have a statutory requirement to meet standards of cleanliness for set periods.
A redesign of the service must ensure the basic statutory requirements are met.

7.2 We are also looking at changing frequencies of attendance and whilst we
will look
to set timings that we feel are correct for areas, there is likely to be some issues
with public perception and knowledge of the service. Any changes must be made
openly and set out clearly and accessibly to the public.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The service is performing well financially but outside changes and a need for
modernisation and increased flexibility mean that performance is not achieving as
high a level as desirable. We have made some changes in the service that have
had positive impacts. There remains a great deal of work to do. This is set out in
the action plan.

9. Background Papers

Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2007

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Existing street cleaning service
Appendix 2 - Current Cleaner Borough Strategy
Appendix 3 - Public Consultation Summary
Appendix 4 - APSE report
Appendix 5 - Parish and Town Centre Ward Programme 2013 Report
Appendix 6 - Picture of Glutton
Appendix 7 - Toilet usage survey results
Appendix 8 - Action plan