

Decision Maker: Environment PDS Committee

Date: 17 March 2015

Decision Type: Non - Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: STREET ENVIRONMENT CONTRACT REVIEW 2014/15

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Ward: ALL

1. Reason for report

This annual report outlines the performance of the Street Environment Contracts delivering day-to-day cleaning operations for the third year of the contract (January 2014 to February 2015). The PDS Committee has received annual reports following the retendering of street cleaning, graffiti removal, cleaning of public conveniences, and highway drainage cleaning contracts to review any issues arising from service changes which provided a combined revenue saving of £1.1m against the cost of the previous contracts. The quality of the local environment is one of the main barometers the public uses to judge how well an area is being managed. This report reviews the factors affecting the standards of cleanliness achieved by contractors, examines trends in performance and public feedback/satisfaction levels over the last three years, proposes improvements and provides a clear focus for the strategy and direction of street environment services.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That Members note and comment on this report, in particular:

- 2.1 **The positive results of an independent resident satisfaction survey of street cleansing standards, and examines the main concerns of survey respondents;**
- 2.2 **The increasing numbers of enquiries from the public regarding street care operations since the last report (ES14005 – Jan 2014) to Environment PDS Committee; and**
- 2.3 **The Council adopts a robust policy to enforce, educate and deter littering and fly tipping activity.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost: Further Details
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Street Environment Contract
 4. Total current budget for this head: £3.937m
 5. Source of funding: Existing Revenue Budget 2014/15
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 8fte
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: n/a
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement None: Environmental Protection Act 1990
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Borough wide impact on residents, businesses and visitors
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: n/a

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Street Environment Contract includes street cleaning, graffiti removal, cleansing public conveniences and cleaning highway drainage assets. The contract was let for an initial five year period (29/03/12 – 28/03/17), with the option to extend for a further two years if the Council is satisfied with the contractors' performance. The contract was awarded as four lots to the following contractors:
- Kier Environmental Services: street cleaning;
 - Community Clean: graffiti removal;
 - Kier Environmental Services: cleaning public conveniences; and
 - Veolia Environmental Services: cleaning highway drainage assets.
- 3.2 The contract specifications made changes to cleaning frequencies which resulted in an annual revenue saving, for the four lots, of £1.1m. The revised street cleaning schedule was based upon a reduction of cleaning frequency for the majority of the borough's streets to achieve the required saving. The changes mainly involved altering frequencies of cleaning residential streets to alternate weekly for pavements and four weekly for carriageways.
- 3.3 The new contract offered other opportunities to increase efficiency. For instance, the contractor's depot was relocated to a more central position in the borough to eliminate operatives' 'downtime', ensuring their working day is spent cleaning rather than unnecessarily travelling between locations. Better co-ordination with other street care functions was another improvement: for instance, aligning cleaning with waste and recycling schedules to minimise litter left after waste collections.

Aims of the Service – Street Cleaning

- 3.4 Bromley Council is a 'principal litter authority' with a statutory duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to ensure that 'relevant land' in its area is, so far as is practicable, kept clear of litter and refuse. In broad terms relevant land is defined as all '*open land to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access with or without payment*'. This includes cleaning responsibilities for adopted highways, but not private land.
- 3.5 The '*Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse*' published by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs gives guidance to responsible bodies such as the Council on how these duties should be discharged. In determining what standard of cleanliness can be achieved, the Council is required to have regard to the character and use of the land, as well as the control measures and cleaning regime that is practical in the circumstances. The Council is expected to set and implement cleaning regimes which meets these standards and provide adequate resources to restore areas falling below standard to an acceptable level.
- 3.6 All public roads in the borough are subject to a routine frequency-based schedule of cleaning to achieve the required standard.. Depending on a variety of factors, these are cleaned on one of a number of set frequencies which were reviewed and implemented at the commencement of the current contract, 29 March 2012. The contractor, Kier Environmental Services, delivers the routine street cleaning operations through a combination of mechanical and manual work, supported by seasonal staff for removal of autumn leaf fall (e.g. between October and December) and operating a weed control programme (e.g. during the months of March, July and September). The timing of routine cleaning also has to be taken into account by the contractor to avoid contributing to traffic congestion with certain activities programmed at night-time (e.g. road sweeping the boroughs main arterial roads).
- 3.7 Cleaning standards are based on a system which uses street and land use to identify the frequency of cleaning that is needed to provide an acceptable level of cleanliness. This enables

the Council to have greater control over standards. Additionally, the contractor did not need to price in a performance-based risk into the contract when acceptable levels of cleanliness could be achieved through the delivery of routine service frequencies. The contractor is not paid for re-visits to a location between routine scheduled cleaning following service requests made by the public concerning the level of cleanliness (e.g. overflowing litter bins, dumped waste bags or accumulations of litter). This aspect of the service has been examined in detail due to the growing trend of on-line reporting and managing the public's expectations of the service and discussed within this report.

- 3.8 Additional programmes were introduced and funded from the contract contingency £200k p.a. held in the Street Scene revenue budget, as agreed by the Executive Committee on 14th December 2011 (ES11123). Works included deep-cleaning of certain streets, and weekend road cleaning where there was high levels of commuter parking during week days.
- 3.9 Previous reports to the PDS Committee have outlined the changes in contract requirements, illustrating trend information regarding volumes of customer contacts since the contract started, and reporting an analysis of a public satisfaction survey relating to street cleanliness, conducted in August 2013. The reports have also provided a review of the operational performance of the contractors highlighting factors which were related to the changes in the retendered service requirements and the actions taken to mitigate the negative impact upon the cleanliness of the street scene. Such issues have included overflowing litter bins, cleaning in tightly parked streets, clearing of leaf fall, and excessive weed growth.

Public Perception of Street Cleaning

- 3.10 The scope and magnitude of the work involved in caring for the borough's streets is significant and the current economic and social circumstances are particularly challenging. Funding constraints and the continued demand for cost savings limits opportunities to increase frequencies of cleaning or deal with additional customer demands.
- 3.11 The cost of street cleaning in 2014/15 was £3.15m generating an estimated 8,600 tonnes of material at a cost of over £8,500 per day – excluding the cost of disposal.. The latest estimates indicate that English local authorities are annually collecting over 2.3 million pieces of litter.. This trend is increasing disproportionately, apparently fuelled by factors such as an increased consumption of take-away food and declining social responsibility. The increase in littering is a significant concern as evidenced by the growing number of on-line service requests from the public.
- 3.12 Based upon the results of independent surveys, smoking-related materials are the most prevalent item of litter on streets (and after chewing gum the most difficult to remove), whilst confectionery wrappers and small pieces of paper are the most commonly discarded items of non-cigarette based litter. Drinks-related litter has become more prevalent with the increasing growth of the café culture, with soft drinks accounting for over half of such material dropped.
- 3.13 Whilst litter has always been a social problem and an eyesore, public opinion regarding the appearance of their local area has seen litter become a higher priority over the last twelve months, with graffiti and fly-posting being lower priorities. Reports of littering tend to be particularly prominent in residential areas where it presents real challenges, in terms of the cleaning and removal due to the obstructions of heavily parked vehicles. In such situations the disproportionately high level of resources/cost required to undertake such deep-cleaning limits the number of streets which can be accommodated.

Current Position – Performance Standards and Key Findings

- 3.14 There are four key performance areas measuring the standards and effectiveness of the street cleaning contract:

- Regular inspections to measure street and environmental cleanliness in terms of the level of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting present (formerly National Indicator 195);
- Monitoring the performance of the contractor following routine scheduled street cleaning operations;
- Measuring public satisfaction with street cleanliness;
- Analysis of customer feedback/reports and trend information.

3.15 Detailed analysis of the trend information, gathered between January 2012 and January 2015, focusing on the street cleaning service has been undertaken across a broad range of performance indicators.

3.16 Table 1 shows how the latest performance data compares with 2013/14 data, illustrating where there is an increase and impact upon the service.

Table 1. Key Performance Results

Key Performance Indicator	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual (to Dec 2014)
Ni195 Percentage of streets assessed below the level of acceptable cleanliness:				
Litter	6.0%	5.8%	6.0%	6.0% (Prov.)
Detritus	8.0%	7.5%	8.0%	3.6% (Prov.)
Percentage of streets meeting the acceptable standard of cleanliness for routine scheduled cleaning activities	95%	96.90%	95%	97.60%
No. of Defect Correction Notices issued to Contractor		609		730
Percentage of respondents satisfied with the cleanliness of:				
their street		79%		71%
their neighbourhood		84%		88%
their town centre		91%		90%
Total No. of enquiries/reports/complaints of all street care services (%age change)		33,257		39,300 (↑ 18%)
No. of FixMyStreet (FMS) reports (%age change)		10,064		17,127 (↑ 70%)
Total No. of street cleaning issues raised (%age change)		11,350		16,350 (↑ 44%)

3.17 The levels of cleanliness measured from the regular surveys, fall within acceptable defined standards indicating the contractor's performance is satisfactory. However, it should be noted that the Council have issued 730 default correction notices during 2014 totalling £36,550 for works failing to meet the required standards.

3.18 Although public satisfaction levels have dropped, 'satisfaction with cleansing' and 'perception of cleanliness' are generally very high..

3.19 However, there continues to be a significant increase in the number of customer contacts from the public (e.g. an increase of 1000 reports per month since January 2012). Whilst there is a

general increase in customer enquiries for all street environment services, the most significant increase relates to street cleaning and the use of the internet in contacting the Council.

- 3.20 In comparison with data from 2013, the 2014 FixMyStreet (FMS) enquiry volumes for street cleaning has seen a 70% increase, however this sizable growth has not been matched by a decline of the same magnitude in other forms of contact with the Council. Rather than 'channel shift' the authority is undergoing 'channel add' by which a new demographic of customer are reporting issues.
- 3.21 The challenge of managing the public's expectations of the service is recognised as an important factor; as it has an impact on the reputation of the Council and the public perception of the local area. However, it should be noted that there is a trend involving individual residents raising multiple issues on a daily basis. The growth of such reports is significant over a twelve month period with 9% (1,600) of all enquiries relating to three individual residents.
- 3.22 The contractor is not paid for acting upon additional requests between routine scheduled cleaning and the emerging trend of on-line reporting is placing an additional demand upon the contractor.
- 3.23 Details of the performance indicators, along with further analysis of trends in customer reports, are shown in a summary report detailed in Appendix A.

Scope for Improvement

- 3.24 A number of possible opportunities to enhance street cleansing services have been identified, from satisfaction surveys, enquiries and contract monitoring. Key issues to be addressed include:
- In consultation with members, development of a 'street care plan', describing the Council's approach to delivering street environment services, and acting as a point of reference and confirming service standards, acting as a catalyst to encourage local communities and 'Friends' to take greater responsibility for cleanliness in their area. This will be published on the Council's website;
 - Review the current enforcement policy in respect of littering, enabling the Council to make greater use of its powers, improving education and awareness raising and ensuring action is strategically planned and adequately resourced;
 - Reviewing street cleaning schedules to ensure the 'optimal modelling' of the best time to clean streets is taken;
 - Ensuring that special regard is given to removal of dog fouling in residential areas.
 - Reviewing working methods for removing autumn leaf-fall and programming work to align with priority areas; and
 - Reviewing the range of operations delivered by the street cleaning contractor to sure that the methodology of the operation is effective and appropriate for other service areas (e.g. seasonal grass cutting, collection of waste etc).

Performance of other Street Environment Contracts

- 3.25 The focus of this report has related to the street cleaning contract operated by Kier. The performance of other street environment contracts (e.g. cleaning public conveniences, graffiti removal and cleaning highway drainage assets), has remained good during the period of

analysis and regular monitoring of the services continues with performance standards raised with the relevant contractors as necessary.

Public Conveniences

3.26 At the Executive Committee meeting on the 11th February 2015, a decision was taken to agree the closure of the remaining town centre public conveniences as part of the savings proposals presented. Therefore, the provision of the contract for the cleansing of public conveniences will end on 31st March 2015.

Graffiti Removal

3.27 The graffiti removal service is based upon two elements: 'reactive' reports (those received from the public), and provision for 'proactive' removal of unreported graffiti. The records of completed reactive reports indicate a very high level of achievement within the target timescale, with the majority being removed within the first 24 hours of receipt of report.

Cleaning Highway Drainage

3.28 The Council's road drainage cleaning contract comprises of a routine programme of works. All roadside gullies have been cleaned in accordance with a two yearly cycle.. The contractor is performing satisfactorily, however, responding to flooding of the highway due to unseasonal wet weather conditions can impact upon the completion of routine programmed works.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The street environment contract supports a number of ambitions expressed in Building a Better Bromley, in particular the commitment to "provide a clean, green and tidy environment, meeting and maintaining standards of quality, which reflect service levels agreed between local communities and their elected Members".

4.2 Improved street cleanliness is a key outcome set out in the Environment Portfolio Plan 2013-16, and supports the Council's Building a Better Bromley aims to provide a quality environment, vibrant thriving town centres, and safer communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The 2014/15 budget for the street environment contract is £3.937m. The table below sets out the budget and projected spend for the service areas within the contracts:-

Street Environment Contract	2014/15	2014/15	2014/15
	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Street Cleaning	3,153	3,153	0
Graffiti Removal	244	244	0
Cleansing of Public Conveniences	47	47	0
Cleaning of Highway Drainage	293	293	0
Cleaning Contingency	200	200	0
Total	3,937	3,937	0

- 5.2 The additional non-scheduled programmes of work (such as deep cleaning, weekend carriageway cleaning, litter picking, etc.) have improved street cleanliness. These activities have been funded from the £200k contract contingency sum held within the Street Scene and Street Cleansing revenue budget.
- 5.3 The provision of a sum of £200k was set aside in the Central Contingency to manage the potential risks to service changes, agreed by the Executive Committee 14th December 2011. No requests have been made to the Executive to draw down any of the £200k set aside in the 2014/15 Central Contingency. This sum has been reduced to £60k for 2015/16, as part of the Council's savings options.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal and Personnel
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Street Environment Contract 2012-2017/19; Street Cleansing; Graffiti Removal; Public Conveniences; & Highway Drainage Cleaning Report No. ES11123 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment PDS (15/11/12); • E&R PDS (06/12/11); • Executive (14/12/11).

Performance of the Street Cleaning Contract – Summary of Findings

Street & Environmental Cleanliness (NI195)

Throughout the year the cleanliness of the borough is monitored through sample inspections of streets by client officers. Every four months officer's conduct a series of random inspections based upon the methodology of what used to be a nationally reported performance indicator for street cleanliness (NI 195). This information is used to provide an overview of the condition of cleanliness of the borough which is measured against targets set by Bromley. The data for the last three years is shown in Table 2, including two tranches (of three) for 2014/15 survey, indicating the percentage of streets assessed below the level of acceptable cleanliness. The averages of these values fall within the targets of satisfactory performance.

Table 2 – Results of Street Cleaning Survey (NI195)

	<u>2012/13 Target</u>	<u>2012/13 Actual</u>	<u>2013/14 Target</u>	<u>2013/14 Actual</u>	<u>2014/15 Tranche 1 Actual</u>	<u>2014/15 Tranche 2 Actual</u>	<u>2014/15 Target</u>
NI195 a (litter)	6.0%	5.69%	6.0%	5.8%	7.2%	5.0%	6.0%
NI 195 b (detritus)	8.0%	9.93%	8.0%	7.5%	3.2%	4.0%	8.0%

Monitoring the Performance of the Street Cleaning Contractor

Monitoring the effectiveness of the routine cleaning frequency of streets is undertaken by Bromley's officers to measure the quality of cleaning as part of the contractor's service delivery arrangements. Information from inspections is used to generate management reports and record all unsatisfactory work, monitor routine scheduled activities, and investigate service requests and complaints. During 2014, approximately 30,400 service inspections were undertaken by officers identifying a failure rate of 3.1% for unacceptable work, measured upon completion of the routine task. The results of monitoring are analysed to provide management information relating to the performance of the contract and determining financial penalties for quality issues.

Public Satisfaction Survey Results – Street Cleanliness

Understanding people's perceptions is a very important factor in maintaining public spaces. Therefore, identifying residents' priorities and how important they feel problems are, is a key element when determining and redirecting resources as required. In August 2013 and September 2014, the street cleaning contractor, Kier, arranged for an independent consultant to undertake a postal and on-street survey. Questions were adapted for the type of survey. to gauge opinion of visitors to the borough. The response rate to the postal survey was very good for both years (25.2% and 22.3% respectively). The results of this survey are illustrated in Table 3.

Public Satisfaction Survey Results - Table 3.

Combined Responses to Postal and On-street Surveys: 2014 Compared with 2013

Percentage Satisfied/Clean/Not a Problem

RESPONDENTS STREET	2013	Difference	2014
1. Satisfied	79%	-8%	71%
2. Clean	80%	-8%	72%
3a. General Litter	73%	-5%	68%
3b. Graffiti	98%	0%	98%
3c. Chewing Gum	96%	-2%	94%
3d. Cigarette Ends	82%	-2%	80%
3e. Dog Fouling	73%	-5%	68%
3f. Autumn Leaf Fall	62%	5%	67%
3g. Fly-Tipping	88%	-6%	82%
3h. Fly-Posting	99%	-1%	98%
3i. Weeds	83%	-6%	77%
3j. Overflowing Litter Bins	77%	-1%	76%
3k. Mud, dust or Dirt	85%	1%	86%

LOCAL AREA/NEIGHBOURHOOD	2013	Difference	2014
5. Clean	84%	4%	88%

TOWN CENTRE	2013	Difference	2014
7. Satisfied	91%	-1%	90%
8. Clean	91%	-1%	90%
9a. General Litter	80%	0%	80%
9b. Graffiti	93%	1%	94%
9c. Chewing Gum	57%	14%	71%
9d. Cigarette Ends	65%	8%	73%
9e. Dog Fouling	92%	0%	92%
9f. Autumn Leaf Fall	89%	5%	94%
9g. Fly-Tipping	93%	2%	95%
9h. Fly-Posting	94%	3%	97%
9i. Weeds	96%	0%	96%
9j. Overflowing Litter Bins	82%	2%	84%
9k. Mud, dust or Dirt	93%	1%	94%

Public Satisfaction with Cleanliness Results
 Surveys conducted by WYG Consultancy

Key points worth noting are:

All of the responses to the questions had favourable response rates of over 67% satisfaction.

- In general, favourable responses to questions about the cleanliness of the residents' streets decreased between 2013 and 2014, except for leaves in autumn, which improved by 5%; responses to this issue in both the postal and on-street surveys improved.
- Favourable responses to questions about the cleanliness of the town centre improved between 2013 and 2014, except for overall satisfaction with and perception of cleanliness, which both decreased by 1%, although this is not statistically significant.
- Favourable responses to chewing gum in the town centre increased by 14% in satisfaction, a significant and large improvement.
- The lowest favourable response rates in 2014 are: –
 - residents' own streets;
 - the issues of leaves in autumn;
 - general litter and dog fouling and
 - in the town centre – chewing gum and cigarette ends.

These are potential areas of focus in order to improve the overall perception of and satisfaction with cleanliness.

Customer Reporting Trends

All service requests and complaints regarding the service are logged and entered in the departmental statistics. A comparison of the volume of customer reports relating to the street environment contracts, and specifically the street cleaning contract have been measured in detail during the period January to December 2014. This information is provided in the charts No. 1 – 5..

A review of customer service requests of the street environment service reveals the following trends and key issues:

- The volume trend of enquires since January 2012, relating to all street care services (incl. highways, enforcement, street lighting, grounds maintenance and street environment) has increased over a three year period by approx. 1,000 reports per month, with current levels reaching 3,500 per month. This excludes all matters relating to recycling and waste collection services. (Charts 1 and 2)
- Since our on-line reporting facility FMS (FixMyStreet accessed via the Council's website) was introduced in May 2012, 44% currently accounts for all of the reports received (as opposed to 39% through the Customer Contact Centre).
- In comparison to 2013, 2014 FMS enquiry volumes has seen a 70% increase, however this sizable growth has not been matched by a decline of the same magnitude in other forms of contact with the Council. Rather than 'channel shift' the authority is undergoing 'channel add' by which a new demographic of customer are reporting issues.

- The largest portion of enquiries received is regarding street environment services (incl. cleaning, graffiti, toilets and drainage contracts) forming 42% of all enquiries received for 2014 (up from 36% in 2013). (Chart 3)
- Of the street environment reports, 78% of the reports commonly voiced relate to street cleaning, dumped rubbish and litter bins. Reports of graffiti, public conveniences and drainage only account for a combined total of 20%. (Chart 4)
- January 2014 was a key date for all service areas as FMS reports began to increase notably with volumes increasing by 18%. Street cleaning issues rose by 44%. A number of severe weather events of strong winds and significant flooding (e.g. St Judes Storm) occurred at this time which effected the completion of routine cleaning schedules and achieving the required standards, initiating a number of street scene reports (Chart 5)
- When looking in more detail at the FMS enquiry volumes, there is another trend involving individual residents raising multiple issues on a daily basis. The growth of such reports is significant over a twelve month period, however upon examination 9% of all enquiries relate to three individual residents.

CHARTS

Chart 1. Total overall trend in reporting across all street care services (e.g. Highways, Cleansing, Enforcement, Network Management, Rangers, Street Lighting, Streetworks, Trees)

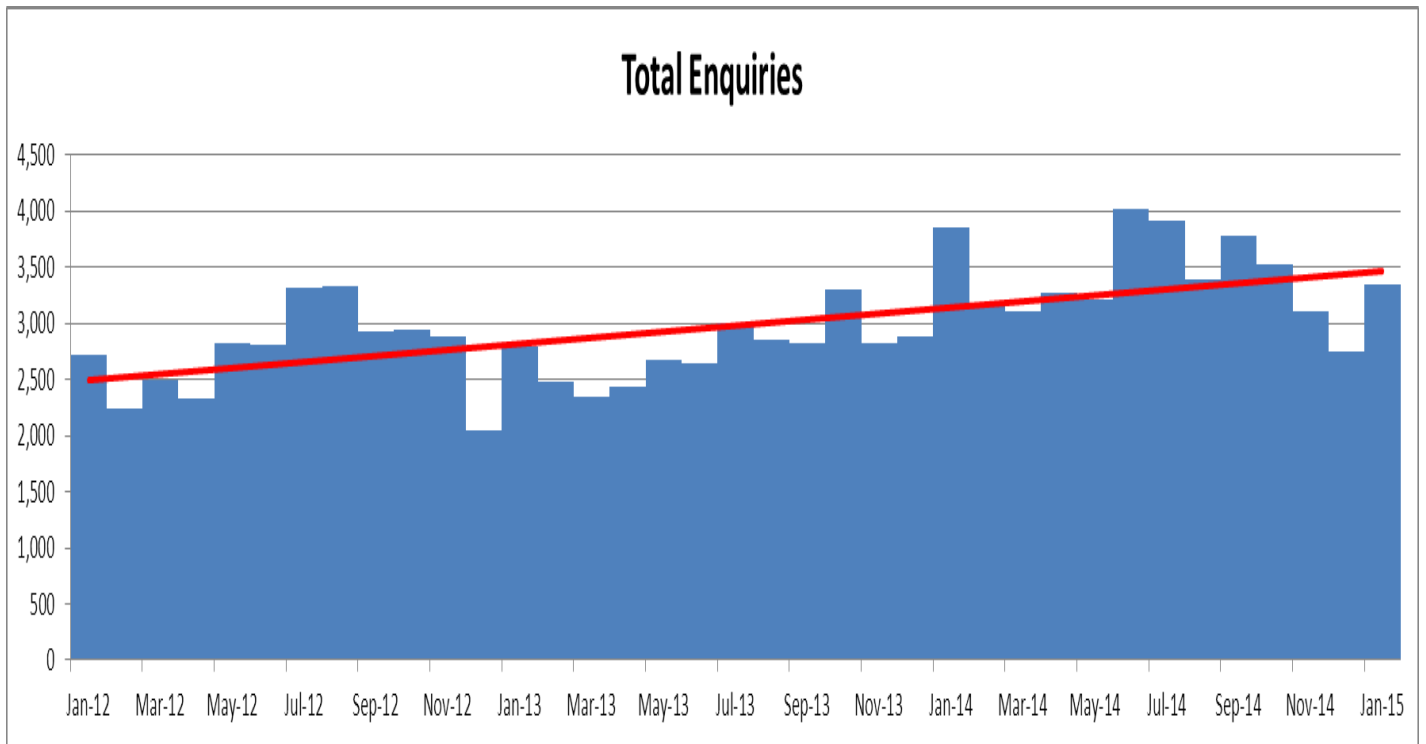


Chart 2. Trend indicating increasing volume of FixMyStreet (FMS) reports

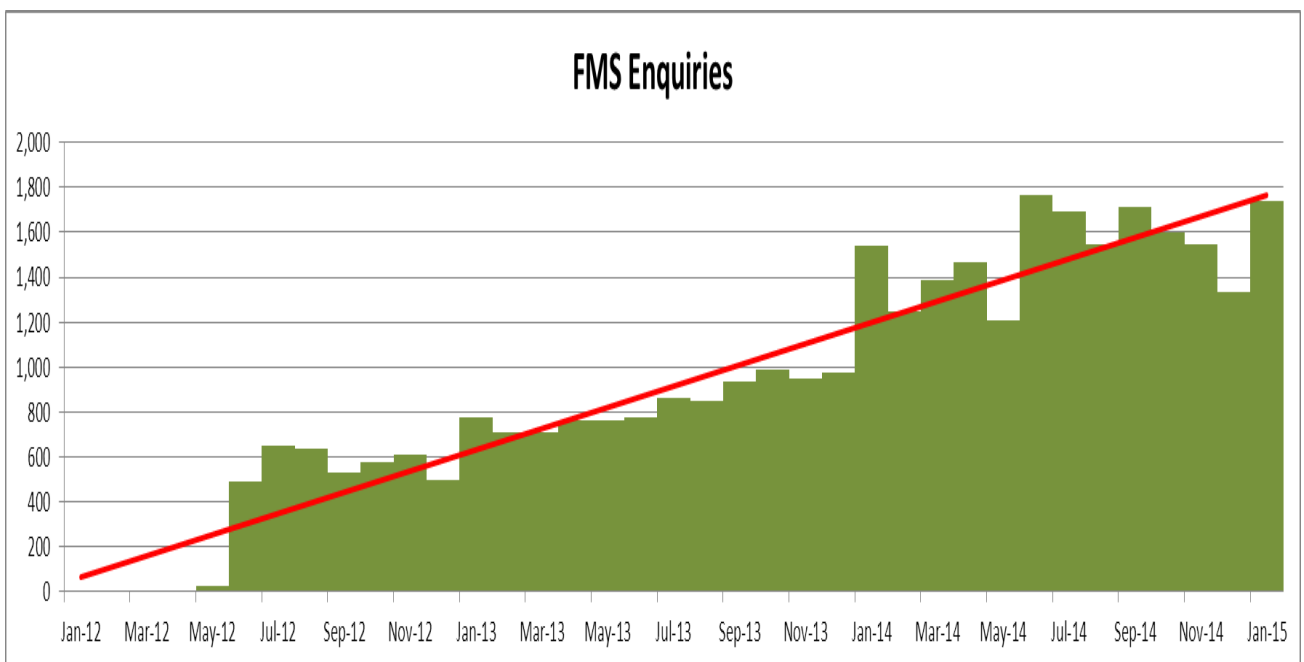


Chart 3. Total overall trend in reporting from FixMyStreet (FMS) alone for Highways, Cleansing, Enforcement, Network Management, Grounds Maintenance, Park Rangers, Street Lighting, Utility Streetworks, Trees.

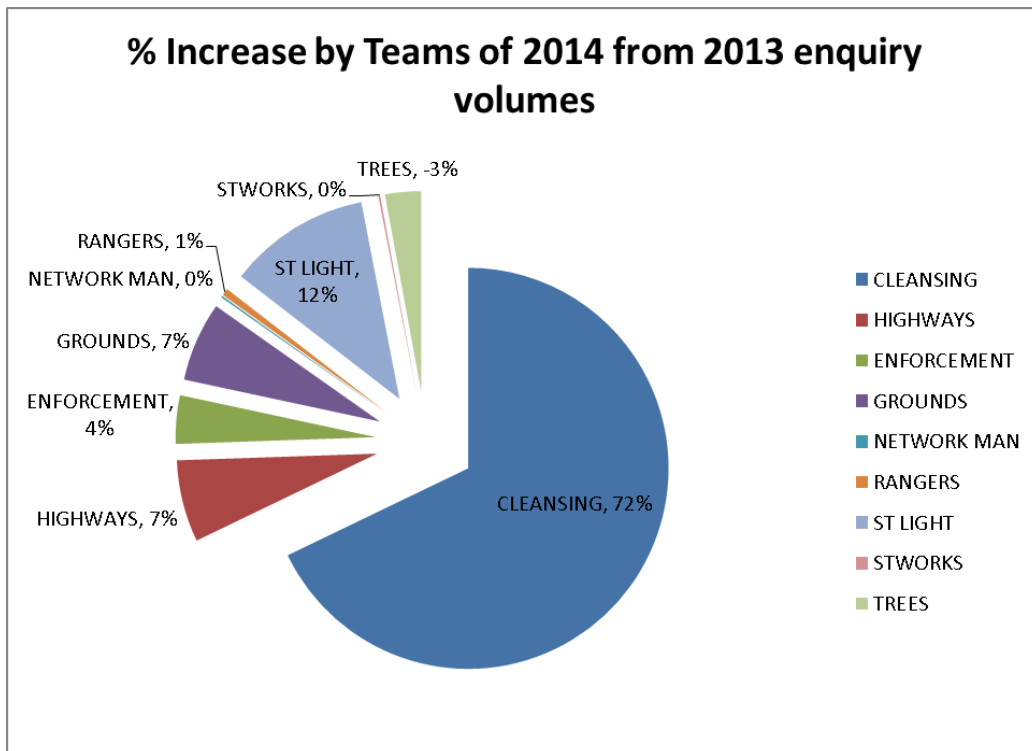


Chart 4. Portion of service requests for Street Environment Contract matters (e.g. street cleaning, graffiti removal, cleaning public conveniences, cleaning highway drainage)

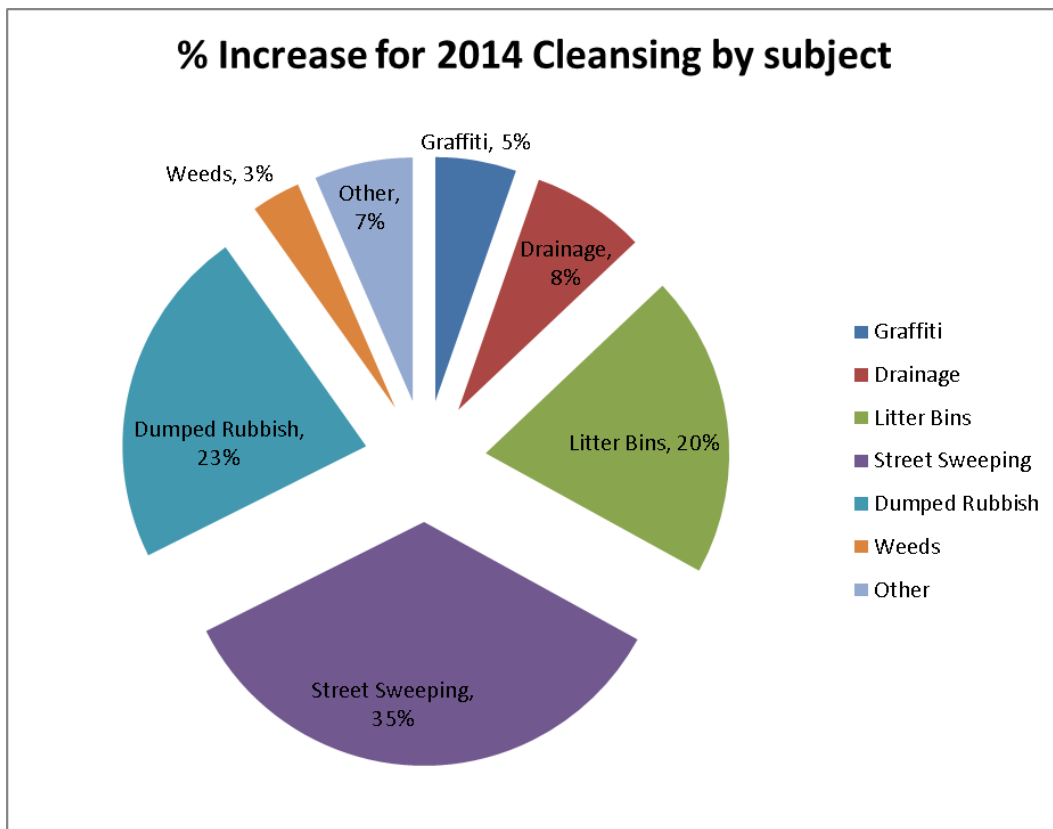


Chart 5. Enquiry volumes for Street Cleaning only with enquiry channel percentage overlaid (e.g. FixMyStreet, Customer Contact Centre or Back Office Staff)

