

Neighbourhood Services

Service Plan 2017 – 18

April 2017 update

Neighbourhood Services

Purpose:

The primary purpose of Neighbourhood Services is to work with local communities and other key stakeholder organisations to improve the physical appearance and quality of life within our communities, making them more sustainable, self-sufficient and safer places.

Primary functions:

- Refuse collection and recycling service
- Bulky waste, hazardous household waste, garden and commercial waste collection services
- Household Waste Recovery Centres (HWRCs)
- Abandoned vehicles
- PFI Contract
- Waste Management
- Closed landfill sites aftercare
- Waste education and awareness raising
- Winter Maintenance (Support)
- Flooding and extreme weather response
- Street Cleansing
- Grounds Maintenance
- Parks & Urban Open Spaces
- Countryside and Public Rights of Way Maintenance, Management and Enforcement
- Cemeteries and Crematoria
- Markets
- Public Conveniences
- Fleet Management
- Security and postal courier service

Key Service Facts and Figures

Each year we:

- Cut 8.5 million m² of grass.
- Sweep 12,500 miles of road and empty 7,500 litter bins.
- Sweep-up around 377 tonnes of litter and detritus and clear 1,400 fly tips.
- Empty over 7.5 million household waste and recycling bins
- Provide 12 Household Waste Recovery Centres and a network of over 130 'bring' recycling sites
- Reuse, recycle and compost around 40% of our household waste
- Recover energy from waste that can't be recycled and use this to generate electricity for supply to the National Grid, leaving only around 8% of waste to be disposed of at landfill sites.
- Look after 3,000 miles of public rights of way including 637 footbridges.
- Maintain 21 urban and 8 country parks and manage 13 miles of the county's coastline between Seaton Sluice and Amble, and at Beadnell and Berwick
- Maintain 44 playing fields
- Operate 20 cemeteries and 1 crematorium.
- Run 9 markets
- Maintain over 660 vehicles and 500 items of plant, ranging from refuse collection vehicles and gritters right through to lawn mowers and strimmers.

Summary of Service Resources at 1 April 2017

	Number of FTE posts	Staffing Expenditure	Non Staffing Expenditure	Income	Capital Investment
NEAT Teams	230.75	5,994,170	5,536,610	-4,309,070	
Waste Management	167.36	4,332,920	27,673,530	-6,402,840	1,534,340
Fleet	40.27	1,363,860	9,503,660	-10,391,580	3,134,180
Countryside	39.50	1,329,470	1,078,670	-309,690	1,868,630
Total for Service	477.89	13,020,420	43,792,470	-21,413,180	6,537,150

External Validation

Inspections

In 2016/17 we have:

- Secured the prestigious 'Green Flag' awards for 10 of our parks.
- Supported our communities to secure a range of awards in the celebrated 'Northumbria in Bloom' competition with towns and villages in Northumberland achieving 5 Gold awards, 8 Silver Gilt awards, 5 Silver awards and 1 Bronze award.
- Achieved 'Northumbria in Bloom' Gold awards and joint best park award for the Council's parks at Castle Vale in Berwick and Ridley Park in Blyth, while also receiving a Gold award for Hexham park and a Silver Gilt award for Carlisle Park in Morpeth.
- Won at the finals of the national Keep Britain Tidy network awards, taking the national award for our partnership work with Town and Parish Councils.

Customer perception

A Resident Perception Survey was undertaken on behalf of the Council by Ipsos MORI in 2015. Three quarters of residents (77%) were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, an increase in two percentage points since the last survey.

Each year a range of waste service customer satisfaction surveys are undertaken, in June the survey results for 2016/17 will be available. The results for 2015/16 show satisfaction levels as follows:

- 83% satisfaction with overall waste collection service
- 89% satisfaction with Household Waste Recovery Centres
- 80% satisfaction with the garden waste service
- 96% satisfaction with the hazardous waste collection service

Last year we handled 313 stage one complaints about our services and received 210 compliments. No complaints were made to the LGO regarding the service.

Benchmarking

All statutory Waste Disposal Authorities are required to submit returns on their performance, the 'Waste Data Flow' statistics for all unitary waste disposal authorities in England, this information is currently being collated and will be reported in late March

From APSE data we also benchmark how we are performing in regards to the numbers of missed bins in our waste collection service. This information is currently being collated but our own performance has worsened this year as a result of an aging fleet of vehicles and service growth leading to capacity issues.

Tidy Britain Group benchmarking for Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) assessments has not been possible this year due to issues with planning and recording inspections in a different way leading to incomparable data, a review of inspection methodology is being undertaken.

Over the past 5 years, the Fleet Management Service has implemented a successful transformation programme and secured over £1.9m in cashable efficiency savings to continually provide a value for money service. The Service has processes in place to continually assess the cost of hire rates for vehicles and plant against the external market ensuring the internal provision of vehicles remains the best option for the council. Appraisals are also undertaken on a quarterly basis to compare the cost of annual financial rates when purchasing assets against the option to rent the vehicles on an Operating Lease. Further action to improve the service is outlined in the service plan and consideration is being given to participate in APSE for 18/19.

Priorities for 2017 – 18

Priority Area	Key Milestones
1. Work with communities and other partners to improve their local environment and quality of life.	Work with partner organisations and communities to identify and develop initiatives and projects to improve the environment and quality of life in their local areas
	Deliver the capital programmes for the redevelopment of sports pavilions & enhancement of parks.
	Support the Council's litter prevention and enforcement campaign for 2017.
	Undertake a waste minimisation, education and awareness raising programme to help reduce waste generation levels and increase recycling performance.
	Continue the review of public toilet provision and implement the action plan in order to improve accessibility and service standards, integrating the You're Welcome Scheme into the wider tourism offer. Promote social inclusion for elderly, infirm and disabled residents and deliver efficiency savings.
	Increase the numbers of volunteer and parish groups involved in community clean up events, 'Friends of' groups and the maintenance of community assets such as parks and the Rights of Way network. Engage further with Community Pay Back teams to assist in supporting the frontline services Countywide.
	In collaboration with Active Northumberland develop and implement an annual programme of public events and educational activities at the Council's urban and Country Parks.
	Develop and implement plans to ensure that major events such as the Tour of Britain show the county and the council in the best possible light.
2. Promote safer and stronger communities	Review and improve our plans for responding effectively to winter and severe weather events.
	Actively support the roll-out of a joined up approach to enforcement across Local Services and the council.
	Work with the Public Protection service to ensure that licensed taxis undergo robust and independent safety/compliance checks in order to ensure public safety.

	Undertake routine health and safety compliance spot checks with staff whilst they are undertaking their duties; plus annually review and update the suite of health and safety operational procedures, risk assessments and staff handbooks and reissue to staff if changes are required.
	Deliver the HAVs Action Plan
	Monitor and review staff compliance with Fleet/Transport legislation and the Council's policies and procedures ensuring appropriate action is taken to address any issues identified.
	Promote and support staff health improvement activities as part of the Council's wider 'Healthier Together' workforce programme and ensure sickness absence is effectively managed.
	Undertake an annual review of monitoring results from NCC closed landfill sites to identify any remedial works required or changes to pollution control and aftercare programmes.
	Undertake an inspection programme for NCC trees and ensure that any works required to ensure health and safety are undertaken within agreed service standards and timescales.
	Undertake the rolling programme of NCC headstones and memorials and ensure that any works required to ensure health and safety are undertaken within agreed service standards and timescales.
3. Maximise opportunities to work in partnership to support achievement of our priorities	Develop existing and implement new service enhancement partnerships with Town & Parish Councils.
	Secure the development and growth of our markets, to include: review the Markets Strategy and implement the updated action plan.
	Increase income from undertaking grounds maintenance, tree work and cleansing services for 3rd party organisations.
	Increase the market share of the trade waste service
	Increase take up of the garden waste collection service and actively promote to residents
	Increase waste collection capacity to accommodate housing growth

	Increase the amount of income generated by the fleet management service through increased MOT testing and provision of fleet and vehicle maintenance services to 3rd parties.
	Maintain the existing contractual arrangements and seek new income generation opportunities with social housing providers and other organisations for grounds maintenance and cleansing services, where this will help to improve the overall environmental standard and visual appearance of the county.
4. Develop the organisation through the modernisation of Local Services	Implement budget savings proposals for 2017/18 and develop MTFP proposal for period leading up to 2020.
	Undertake the fleet replacement programme to deliver modern vehicles, plant and equipment that meet future service needs.
	Embed Northumberland 2020. 'built to serve' ethos into all improvement projects and service reviews focusing on technology, the places that we work, our services and the way that we deliver them
	Maximise opportunity with Google and Total Mobile as catalysts to change ways of working. .
	Complete cemetery capacity study, identify long term burial strategy and progress the agreed action plan.
	Invest in our workforce to ensure staff have the opportunity to develop their capabilities and can fully contribute to the delivery of our goals and ambitions, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual staff performance appraisals & 6 monthly review • Individual staff training plans • Succession planning arrangements • Apprenticeship programme
	Modernise services and adopt new ways of working to improve service standards, levels of effectiveness, customer satisfaction and to deliver efficiencies, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Google and Total Mobile digitisation programme • Implement new electronic payments system for markets • Improve fleet utilisation, driver performance and compliance through further investment in IT and better use of management information.

Performance Framework

Measure	Outturn		Target	
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Proportion of sites falling below grade B- (some minor instances) Litter	N/A*	N/A*	8%	8%
Proportion of sites falling below grade B- Dog Fouling	N/A*	N/A*	6%	6%
Proportion of sites falling below grade B- Detritus	N/A*	N/A*	6%	6%
Number of parks achieving 'green flag' status across the county	9	10	10	10
Proportion of fly-tips removed from public areas within 3 days	91.02%	87.93%	85%	85%
Number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste	95	49	50	40
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	38.3%	N/A**	39%	39%
Percentage of municipal waste land filled	14.80%	N/A**	10%	10%
Kilograms of household waste generated per household	1015	N/A**	1002	1002
% of bulky waste collections undertaken on the agreed day of collection	99.3%	98.5%	99%	99%
% recycling and composting at HWRCs	72.0%	68.4%	70%	70%
Number of accidents reported (NCC employees)	73	65	45	40

* Changes in LEQ Inspection methodology mean that comparators can not be drawn between the last 2 years performance, a review of this indicator and how data is collected is required.

**16/17 outturns not yet available.