

BUDGET CUT ASSESSMENT FORM

W13

Budget Cut Assessment Form STREET CLEANING & ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME	Ref No W13	Responsible AD	Responsible Finance Manager	Responsible HR Manager	Responsible Lawyer	Responsible EIA Officer
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Description of Proposal:

To reduce the amount of street cleaning carried out across the Borough to what is the statutory minimum. The Council has a duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to ensure so far as reasonably practicable “footpaths and the highway are free from litter”. The proposals to reduce the service below are a judgement of what is believed to be the minimum level of resource to meet the Council’s duty. The reduction in street cleaning is Borough-wide however the town centre and arterial roads into town will continue to be prioritised. The main reason for this being there is a risk of lost revenue from rents and business rates if the standard of the town centre affects the occupancy of the buildings.

The details of the reductions are set out below, which will have the overall impact of increasing the amount of litter and the speed of the Council’s response to litter, fly tipping and back lanes (litter and fly tipping). Services for street cleaning will be reduced as follows:

- **Reduce Large Mechanical Sweepers to one from two**
Impact: Frequency of mechanical sweeping would half, which would have an impact on litter and detritus within the road channels. Also potentially impacting on blocked gullies.
Existing frequency: Main roads into town and the town centre are all swept at least weekly. The rest of the road network is swept on a five-weekly programme.
Frequency following cuts: Main roads into town and the town centre are swept fortnightly. The rest of the road network is swept on a ten-weekly programme.
- **Town Centre Cleansing – reduce from two staff to one**
Impact: Reducing the resource in the town centre from two members of staff to one will have significant impact on litter throughout the town centre and town centre fringe.
Existing frequency: Town centre and fringes maintained by two members of staff throughout the day.
Frequency following cuts: Town centre will be maintained by one member of staff only throughout the day.
- **Stop the operation of the Town Centre Water Feature, which currently operates May to October**
Impact: During summer the water feature enhances the town centre.
- **Mechanical Path Sweepers – reduce from the current four to two**
Impact: Small mechanical path sweepers focus on the town centre, back lanes and general pavement sweeping across the Borough. They have recently been reduced from six to four; a further reduction to two machines would see a significant reduction of standards across the town.
Existing frequency: Currently one sweeper is dedicated to back lanes cleansing on a weekly basis, a second to the town centre and response work, the third sweeping front streets on a fortnightly basis in more heavily littered areas of town such as some of the terraced property areas, some of the social housing areas and generally others that are more heavily littered, and the fourth sweeper on a two-monthly programme visits the less littered areas across the Borough.
Frequency following cuts: With only two path sweepers, back lane sweep and cleanse would be carried out on a fortnightly basis and the more littered front street areas on a monthly basis. The town centre would continue to be swept daily with response work being carried out when resources available and no mechanical path sweeping in less littered areas of town.
- **Litter Response/Litter and Dog Bin Emptying/Back Lane Cleanse – reduce from 11 staff to 6**
Impact: Currently there are three litter response crews carrying out a number of planned and responsive work, three dedicated staff to litter bin empty across the Borough and one back lane cleansing crew, which follows refuse collection. This service would be significantly reduced to a team of six, two staff focusing on litter bin emptying therefore the number of litter bins across the Borough would need to be reduced and/or the frequency of emptying also reduced. There would then be two crews to deal with all response work as well as back lane cleansing. These changes, alongside other proposals, will have a major impact on the cleanliness of the Borough.
Existing frequency: Litter/dog bins are currently emptied anywhere from daily (bins around the town centre) to weekly, with the majority being emptied twice per week. Back lanes are currently cleansed weekly and fly tips removed within two days. Response crews also have a significant number of weekly jobs supplementing other services.
Frequency following cuts: With only two members of staff for litter bin emptying, frequency will be reduced to weekly for all bins other than town centre alongside, where possible, reducing the number of bins. Back lane cleanse will reduce from weekly to fortnightly, fly tipping response work will only be able to be carried out when resources are available.
- **Manual Street Cleansing – reduce from six Street Scene Orderlies to three, reducing cleansing across the Borough**
Impact: There are currently six street orderly litter rounds across the Borough where areas are attended to between weekly and fortnightly, this would change to between fortnightly and monthly, depending on the area and resources available.
Existing frequency: There are currently six dedicated litter rounds with the majority of areas being visited once per week and the more heavily littered twice per week. The six rounds in the following areas:
 - Eastbourne including Firthmoor, Lascelles and some of Bank Top
 - Skerne Park, Park East and some of Bank Top
 - Cockerton, some of Brinkburn & Faverdale and some of Pierremont
 - Northgate, College and some of Pierremont
 - Red Hall, Lingfield and some of Haughton & Springfield
 - North Road, Harrowgate Hill, some of Stephenson and some of Park East
In addition to the above, on an ad-hoc basis as resources are available, Park West, some of Haughton & Springfield, some of Brinkburn & Faverdale, Mowden and Hummersknott as required.
Frequency following cuts: Each litter round will be cleansed on a fortnightly basis with the ad-hoc round getting minimal attention, only when resources are available.
- **Environmental Crime Enforcement**
The Environmental Crime Enforcement Team will be reduced by one FTE leaving 1.5 FTEs to carry out investigations into environmental crime. The main focus of this team will be dealing with fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, refuse placed out too early and littering in back lanes. The team will also support Members and the community in addressing fly tipping and littering within back lanes across the Borough.
- **Community Engagement**
Support for Street Champions and volunteers will be through a Member-led approach supported by one FTE post that will work with Street Champions, voluntary groups and Members. The overall coordination and support will be within Street Scene with both Brian Graham, Head of Environmental Services and Sandra Innes, Street Scene & Building Cleaning Manager taking on overall responsibility for the development and coordination of partnership work with the community.

The cumulative impact of reducing street cleaning resources will have a significant impact on the overall appearance of the environment across the Borough.

This significant reduction in resources for street cleaning from currently 29 staff to 17, a reduction of 12 employees, 41% of the resource, would take out any resilience for sickness or holidays therefore for a significant proportion of the year standards would be worse and the absolute minimum. In addition, currently the emptying of litter bins and street cleansing takes place on a weekend across the Borough as street cleansing is a seven-day service, this significant reduction in resource would impact on the ability to carry out this work with only limited resource being available to litter pick in the town centre on a weekend.

The Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse within the EPA 1990 Section 89 places a duty on local authorities to ensure that “so far as reasonably practical, footpaths and highways are free from litter and clean”. Individuals or legal persons have the right to take action via the Magistrate’s Court against those not complying with the duty to keep land clear of litter or refuse or highway clean. If the Magistrate’s Court finds against the Council, it can then order that the land is cleaned. Failure to comply is a criminal offence punishable by a maximum fine of £2,500.

Human Resources Impacts		Asset Management Impacts	Decommissioning Costs	Cost Shunting
No. of posts to be deleted	13	Detail any released buildings/building space Identify disposal or requisition issues	In addition to HR and Asset costs identify any others e.g. early contract termination costs	Is there any known or potential to increase costs elsewhere within Council budgets
No. of potential redundancies	13	There will be a number of vehicles to sell as a result of the reduction in service.	Decommissioning costs would be incurred depending on the value of vehicles to be sold v outstanding loan value.	A reduction in service standards will increase the calls to the Customer Contact Centre and potentially increase complaints. Action will be taken to deal with such complaints and calls that reduce the increase in costs.
Estimated Redundancy & pension costs	£298,432			

Financial Summary					
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Estimated reduction to budget	187,000	420,000	455,000	478,000	478,000
Redundancy Costs	298,432	0	0	0	0
Asset Implication					
Decommissioning Costs					
Known Cost Shunting					
Overheads	7,133	13,426	14,497	14,880	14,880
NET Budget Reduction	(104,299)	433,426	469,497	492,880	492,880

Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the proposal's relevance to Darlington Borough Council's Public Sector Equality Duty. Councillors should note that an initial equalities impact assessment screening was conducted and determined that this proposal has no or negligible impacts on protected characteristics and therefore a full EIA was not undertaken.