



CABINET

Report of: Councillor Dr. Peter Moseley
Cabinet Member for the Environment

Report to:	Cabinet
Date:	1st June 2017
Subject:	Big Clean (report no. ENV660)

Decision Proposal:	Key Decision and Budget Framework Proposal
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Cllr Dr Peter Moseley Cabinet Member for the Environment
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SUMMARY

This report considers the benefits of investing in improving the attractiveness of the street scene in South Kesteven. Taking into account where we are now and where we would want to be, it identifies how a step change can be best achieved and what is required to maintain the higher standards going forward. It details the additional capital and revenue financial investments required. This report will be considered by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and their recommendations will be presented at this meeting of the Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet supports the following recommendations in order to achieve a step change in the attractiveness of the street scene throughout South Kesteven:

1. That Cabinet recommends to Council that the 2017/18 budget framework is amended to include the investment of £661,000 revenue and £226,500 capital to deliver the “big clean” project.

Subject to Council approval to 1 above:

2. That a Big Clean initiative is undertaken over a 3 month period
3. That the work specification is set to achieve a higher street standard i.e. removal of all weeds, washing of street furniture, removal of graffiti as detailed in the report
4. That Members and officers develop a South Kesteven “street scene standard”
5. That following a review of the outcomes from the project ongoing investment in the service is considered as growth during the 2018/19 budget process which will ensure the higher street standard is maintained
6. That volunteers are actively encouraged and supported to contribute to the improvements
7. As part of the big clean project funding, £15,000 is allocated to the community cleaner grant scheme to further promote locally resourced cleansing within district.
8. That a communications strategy is developed and implemented to support the changes

1. BACKGROUND TO REPORT

1.1 The Council’s overriding objective is to encourage economic growth. A key element of this aim is the attractiveness of the District. As we are in competition with other towns and locations, we need to ensure we attain a higher standard of cleansing which appeals to investors, residents and visitors. It is inevitable that it will require investment to achieve our goal, but that investment should, in turn, be rewarded by growth.

1.2 Where are we now?

The level of attractiveness across the District varies. Whilst litter is not a major problem (our scores against the national standard are good), the overall appearance of our streets could be described as “average” as the levels of weed growth and associated detritus have increased. Many pavements, road signs and items of street furniture are unclean and we have had some complaints describing our town centres as becoming “grubby”. Attractiveness is valued by our residents, with the public regularly ranking clean streets in their top 5 issues of importance.

1.3 Where do we want to be?

If we are to compete, and attract investment, we need to deliver and maintain a significant improvement in the appearance of the District. To achieve this we need to engage with our communities, the general public and local businesses to harness the volunteer network. We should develop our own District standard to measure our performance against rather than defaulting to lower national standards. Local authorities are now starting to market themselves as having town centres that provide a very high standard of visitor experience: the appearance and cleanliness is just one key element of this. This is about the basics of having a clean environment into which people will take pride and invest. A simple measure of success will be introduced if the project goes ahead.

1.4 The challenge/key issues

In delivering an improved standard, the key cost driver is the size of the District, with 365 square miles to be treated, and the reality that our existing operational service is not designed to deliver the full scope of the new standard to which we aspire. Whilst lower national standards are achieved, to improve on this value for money investment will be a top priority ensuring our resources are utilised to maximum effect and efficiency. Opportunities for utilising volunteers and Town and Parish Councils will need to be taken. In such a large area the local knowledge of these organisations, residents and our Ward Members will be key to targeting our resources wisely. Working jointly with partner organisations who have their own responsibilities such as Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Highways is required.

1.5 What do we need to do?

In order to deliver the required improvements a number of options have been developed and evaluated by the Street Care Services Team. The starting point is an agreed works specification includes:

- removal of weed growth
- removal of litter and detritus
- removal of fly tipping
- removal of graffiti in the public realm
- cleansing of road signs and street furniture
- removal of graffiti/repainting of utility cabinets as required
- washing of pavements i.e. moss and bird faeces
- cutting back overhanging vegetation to keep footpaths clear
- cutting back path overgrowth as a long term objective

1.6 Preferred and Recommended Option

Taking into account the evaluation options detailed in paragraph 2 below, the preferred option is a hybrid (option 2 with an ongoing commitment to the higher standard) delivering investment in both the short term and longer term. The proposal is for:

- A £661,000 investment in both short term and longer term teams (5 in total) during 2017/18 consisting of:

- An initial revenue investment of £450,000 providing 4 teams, targeting identified areas over a 3 month period, bringing the District to a high standard of appearance.
- A further revenue in year investment of £211,000 funding an additional team to support the delivery of the higher standard on an ongoing basis. Alongside the introduction of permanent cleansing operatives based in the Deepings and Bourne.
- A further capital investment in year of £226,000 for the purchase of the necessary equipment and vehicles to support the additional deployment (the annualised equivalent cost of this initial outlay is approximately £39,300 per year based upon the life of the vehicles and plant).
- An ongoing additional annual investment beyond the current year of £439,000 in revenue, and £101,500 in capital in order to maintain the new higher standards and introduce additional support in the Southern area of the district (the annualised equivalent cost of this capital outlay is equivalent to £21,100 per year based upon the life of the vehicles and plant).
- Review the ongoing operation to ensure the best value in terms of investment in mechanical equipment.
- Development of a local higher standard specification for rating our streets ready for implementation after the initial 3 months initiative.

1.7 Mechanical Plant

The project will utilise a significant level of mechanical plant together with additional staffing resources. This will be highly visible and help raise awareness of the project with the public and highlight the levels of investment being made on their behalf. The benefits of using mechanical plant are the improved efficiencies and far higher levels of final finish. It is envisaged that the initial 3 month cleanse will utilise:

- 4 large mechanical road sweepers
- 8 small mechanical pavement sweepers
- 8 mechanical weed rippers
- 4 vehicles with tow behind pressure washers
- 8 caged vehicles

Products available in the market will be evaluated to ensure that we equip ourselves to maintain our streets as cost effectively as possible.

1.8 Communications and Volunteers

The success of the project will, in part, rely on the communications with the general public, other local bodies and business sector. Information will be gathered from Ward Members, Parish and Town Councils, residents and local businesses to allow our resources to be targeted in the most effective way. Raising awareness of the project and the reasons for it are key in promoting the

District and achieving essential levels of public and business sector support. Input from community volunteers will be sought to supplement the Councils service offer. The Community Cleaner Grant Scheme could also be reviewed to evaluate the potential impact of more widespread up-take by local parish councils.

1.9 Project Timeline

If the proposals contained in this report are supported by the Cabinet this initiative could commence during the summer months of this year. The following table details the potential milestones that could be incorporated into the project.

Stage	Date
Environment - Overview and Scrutiny	23rd May 2017
Tender specifications prepared and issued	24 th May 2017
Communications plan drafted	26 th May 2017
Cabinet (budget and project proposal)	1st June 2017
Tenders received	2 nd June 2017
Council (for budget approval)	15th June 2017
Comms plan initiated	16 th June 2017
Tenders evaluated	19 th June 2017
Contracts awarded	30 th June 2017
Project Start – induction/training	31 st July 2017
Operations commence	9th August 2017
Ends	27th October 2017

2. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 The main variables influencing the options are the time taken to deliver the one off project, the locations, the number of streets to be treated and the ability to maintain the higher standard on an ongoing basis. Each option has been evaluated against the level of impact, the levels of risk and the perceived value for money against the level of investment. The key options considered were:

Option 1 - Undertake a big clean of entire district within a 6 week period

Option 2 - An intelligence based, targeted approach

Option 3 – General increase in the ongoing level of service provision

2.2 The evaluation of the above options is detailed in Appendix 1. This demonstrates that Option 1 requires large scale investment for a one off return and Option 3 provides minimal immediate step change, leaving Option 2 providing the best balance in terms of value for money and impact but no ongoing solution.

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The project will be subject to the Council's accepted rules in respect of budget approvals and relevant procurement rules. Lincolnshire Procurement will assist with the preparatory work to support the procurement of equipment and other resources once the Council is clear about its preferred option and the local standard it wishes to deliver. Framework agreements may be utilised.

3.2 The financial assessments have been based on quotations provided through soft market testing and are subject to the final tender prices. The initial estimated costs are as shown below:

3.3 Revenue Estimates

	2017/18 (additional funding)	Projected 2018/19 costs
One off Short Term Big Clean	£450,000	0
Additional ongoing investment	£211,000	£439,000
Total Additional Budget Requirement (in comparison with 2017/18 approved budget)	£661,000	£439,000

3.4 Capital Estimates

	2017/18 (additional funding)	Projected 2018/19 costs
One off Short Term Big Clean		
Additional ongoing investment	£226,500	£101,500
Total Additional Budget Requirement	£226,500	£101,500
Equivalent annualised costs	£39,000	£21,100

4. RISK AND MITIGATION

4.1 Delivery of the recommended option will utilise project management methodologies. It is intended that project management and supervision will be supported from within the Council's existing resources; back filling as required. The normal cleansing routines will continue to be delivered in accordance with the existing plans. There are risks and issues associated with the recommendations which will need to be managed and mitigated wherever possible. For example the project is highly dependent on the availability of labour from local employment agencies and equipment from specialist rental

companies. Whilst every endeavour has been made to assess availability it is only on the placing of orders that any clarity can be gained on delivery dates.

- 4.2** One key limiting factor is the speed at which weeds can be removed. Research has been undertaken which has identified the best mechanical weed ripper equipment readily available. These have been used to assist in the evaluation as to the levels of overall resources required. Some time and motion studies alongside random sampling to measure the levels of weed growth have allowed assessments to be made, which have then been applied to the overall 3 million plus metres of kerb lines. Weed spraying is now less and less effective due to the reduction in frequency of treatments carried out by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and the reduced concentrations of some chemicals. LCC Highways have agreed to align their weed spraying operations with the Districts mechanical removal programme to offer the most enduring solution. Similarly road gullies that are identified as needing attention will be addressed by LCC. It may also be necessary to utilise road closure orders to assist in freeing up streets ready for a deep cleanse in heavily parked areas.

Category Risk	Action / Controls
Medium for preferred option	These are detailed in Appendix 2 of this report

5. ISSUES ARISING FROM IMPACT ANALYSIS (EQUALITY & DIVERSITY)

If any part of the proposals require the consideration of road closure or other action which may impact individuals, an equality analysis will be carried out to determine the impact on those with protected characteristics and how any negative impact can be mitigated.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

Clean attractive environments can encourage positive behaviours particularly in respect of fly-tipping and littering.

7. COMMENTS OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

The financial implications of this proposal are significant and require careful consideration. The costings in the report will constitute a significant variation to the current budget framework agreed 2017/18 in terms of both capital and revenue. As a balanced budget has been achieved for the current year, the only short term option to fund the proposed in year investment is to utilise existing reserves.

As stated, utilising reserves is not sustainable going forward. Therefore, based on the current Council approved Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the future investment must be considered against other already established budgets, future growth in income and further savings and efficiencies. Additional

pressures would also need to be considered against these proposals when constructing a revised budget strategy for 2018/19 and beyond. At this stage the additional future years funding has not been included within the MTFS. If funding for future years is to be considered, then options will need to be developed alongside other budgetary growth and pressures, to determine how the additional costs can be accommodated. These options will include consideration of future Council Tax levels, identifying opportunities to generate income to offset costs and reducing costs elsewhere in the budget framework.

However it is recognised that investing in the district as, detailed in the proposal, should have a positive impact on the economic viability and therefore create overall wealth and prosperity. Therefore the investment could potentially offer income generation opportunities in the future.

There is a financial risk that the costs incurred in 2017/18 could be aborted if future funding is not secured. These will include plant equipment and staffing, and would require disposal of purchased assets and reducing the workforce back to original levels.

It is recommended that the Cabinet review the outcomes of the initiative, in order to inform the 2018/19 budget process.

8. COMMENTS OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Section 89(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on certain authorities, including District Councils, to ensure that their land (or land for which they are responsible) is, so far as is practicable, kept clear of litter and refuse. The Council should, have regard to the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse that acts as a practical guide to the discharge of these duties

9. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICES

None

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Option appraisal
Appendix 2 – Risk log

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221087/pb11577b-cop-litter.pdf

Options Appraisal - APPENDIX 1

Option appraisal	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
	Significant 6 week clean up covering all areas	Intelligence based targeted clean over 3 months	Investment in ongoing service
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39 teams fully equipped • Equipment hired in • 160 agency staff • Project managed internally • Backfilling for normal service operation • Significant volunteer comms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 teams over 12 weeks • Ability to size according to priorities • 40 agency staff • Project managed internally • Backfilling as required • Significant volunteer comms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 teams permanently recruited • Cover whole area over 52 weeks • 24 full time employees
Cost v value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1.1m one off cost (minimum) • High risk in terms of delivery within budget • High cost v value achieved • Public perception impact significant • No ongoing investment to maintain standards • Comms impact significant with high volunteer take up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £450k one off cost • Medium risk in terms of delivering within budget • Medium cost v value achieved • Public perception significant • No ongoing investment to maintain standards • Comms impact significant with high volunteer take up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £600k annual cost • Low risk in terms of delivering within budget • Medium cost v higher value achieved • Public perception less significant • Ongoing investment to maintain standards • Comms impact and volunteer take up less.
Cost v perception (vfm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High costs • High visibility • High comms demand • Value for money questionable • High risk if areas missed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower cost • Medium to high visibility • Extended demand on comms • Higher value for money (less wasteful) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium cost • Lower visibility • Long term demand on comms • Lower perception of value

Risk Log - APPENDIX 2

Risk	Reason	Mitigation	Impact	Remarks	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Health and safety	Operational environment within the public realm	Full risk assessments for each task and comprehensive training through induction period	Injury or damage to persons/property Negative PR Increased costs	Ensuring the welfare of our employees/operatives and the public is paramount.	Low	Low	Low
Insufficient Budgeted Funding	Initial data was flawed. Council do not approve funding	Sampling took place over the 365 square miles and that data was used as basis for calculation. Allow for a financial contingency of 10%	Insufficient funding to complete the whole task	Contingency fund to be considered	High	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low
Initial data was flawed	Times did not allow for a comprehensive survey of the area. Sampling and knowledge of processes has been used but also relies on estimations	Sampling took place over the 365 square miles and that data was used as basis for calculation	All the areas not covered in the timescale	Could impact on all aspects of the scheme: insufficient funds, equipment, staff and time.	High	Medium	Medium
Agencies unable to provide sufficient staffing	Local agencies have a finite list of casual workers	Agencies have been alerted as to the requirements but we are unable to provide orders until such time as appropriate budgets are in place	Insufficient numbers of staff will restrict the numbers of teams that can be deployed into the field, this will either, extend the period of the exercise or will stop it entirely	Consider extending time to allow for reduced staffing levels	High	Medium	N/A
Agency prices are underestimated	Budget insufficient	3 estimates obtained	Need additional funding or reduce the scope.		Low	Low	N/A

Risk	Reason	Mitigation	Impact	Remarks	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Agency Staff fail to attend work as required	Local agencies have been asked to manage their staff attendance and to replace any who do not turn up	If staff do not turn up, teams will have to be rearranged so the maximum of full teams can be deployed	As above		High	Medium/High	N/A
Agency do not provide the same staff on a daily basis	Although same people will be requested, it is possible that they do not attend each day	This will mean that additional training will have to be carried out	This will delay the service due to staff not being available for work		High	Medium/High	N/A
Suppliers unable to provide sufficient vehicles, plant and machinery for hire	Initial contact with various suppliers has been relatively positive but all stated that until orders are placed they cannot guarantee.	Options for cancellation, extended period of works or changing method would need consideration	Insufficient numbers of Vehicles / Plant / Machinery will restrict the numbers of teams that can be deployed into the field, this will either, extend the period of the exercise or will stop it entirely		High	Medium/Low	N/A
Weed growth	Whilst we will remove all weeds at the time of passing, additional weed growth may be visible some time afterwards	Work with LCC to weed spray 4 – 6 weeks afterwards or to fund the weed spraying ourselves. Regular cleansing teams to ensure weeds maintained in town centres etc	Too many weeds will detract from the street scene	Weeds are the province of LCC but too much additional weed growth will undo all of the good work on the streets. Or we undertake the weed spray rather than LCC	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low

Risk	Reason	Mitigation	Impact	Remarks	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Insufficient Supervision / Management	Without supervision teams may not work quickly enough, may not work thoroughly enough	Additional supervision funded through project	Jobs not being done correctly or taking too long to complete		Medium	Low	Low
Lack of communications	Contact needs to be maintained with each team	Each team leader to be issued with a council (basic) phone	Jobs not being done correctly or taking too long to complete		Medium	Low	Low
Insufficient small plant available to purchase	Suppliers may have to send for additional units from manufacturers, which may take time	Use different suppliers to provide equipment	Insufficient numbers will result in a delayed start		Medium	Low	Low
Levels of spend require time consuming procurement processes	Required to adhere to competition rules and VFM procurement	Use of Framework Agreements	Delayed start		High	Low	Low
Ongoing funding for future years is not secured.	The MTFS does not include the significant financial investment being proposed and cannot be accommodated without significant reductions in costs elsewhere in the Council's budgets or significant income generation.	Council to consider options to secure funding	Financial risk to the 17/18 investment		Low	High	High

Step change not made	Without a one off initial investment the change across 365 square miles may not be achieved in a short time period	Look to an option which provides enough resource to make the change	Areas remain at a lower standard for long periods of time		Low	Low	High
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