

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

(THIS DRAFT FINAL REPORT IS DUE TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 27TH SEPTEMBER 2001 AND THE COMMUNITY SERVICES ON 4TH OCTOBER 2001)

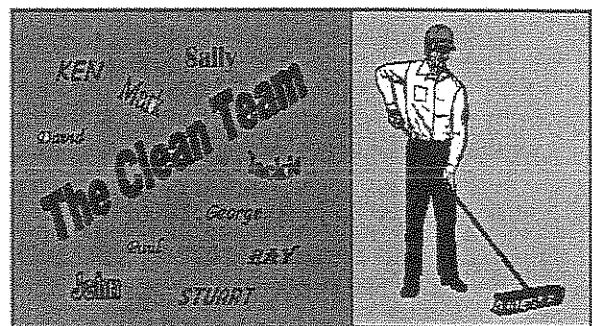
BEST VALUE REVIEW – CLEANSING THE ENVIRONMENT

FINAL REPORT

This Review was undertaken by a group of officers who adopted the name – “The Clean Team”. During the progress of the review the team included:-

Mark Alfiat, Stuart Batchelor, Ray Bateman, Sally Cope, Melanie Ellwood, Paul Evans, John Gilhooly, John Hansed, Sally Knight, Eileen Matthey, Rita McGoldrick, David Rensler, Ken Roxburgh, George Sanders, David Walters and Jackie Young.

The Clean Team liaised with a Members Review Team which included John Bladen, Kevin Richards and Alan Sherratt.



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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with the Government's Best Value regime the Council has undertaken to review all of its Services over a period of five years and to draw up improvement plans with the aim of placing it in the top 25% of local authority performers.
- 1.2 The services included in this Review were included in Year 1 because of the high importance of the environment to the District's residents, the relatively large expenditure incurred on these services and the background of having received no private sector bids for when a large element of the services were last tendered.
- 1.3 The Review has included progression through a number of stages as follows: -
1. Form and develop a Review Team
 2. Liaise with Members via a Members Review Team and through Committee
 3. Agree on Scope of Review
 4. Agree Stakeholders
 5. Prepare a Baseline Assessment
 6. Identify the Key Issues
 7. Consider Options to Address the Key Issues
 8. Analyse the Options
 9. Prepare an Action Plan to Deliver Continuous Improvement
 10. Apply the 4 C's Throughout the Process
- 1.4 The Review was undertaken by "The Clean Team" during the period June 1999 to September 2001, which progressed from a single team to a more operationally effective Steering Group and sub group basis. The team have liaised with a Members Review Team and have made regular reports to Committee.
- 1.5 The Baseline Assessment was carried out in the Autumn of 2000 and was recently updated to reflect the most current situation.
- 1.6 Throughout 2000 Stakeholder views were sought which confirmed the chosen scope of the Review and identified their key areas of concern. In addition many similar (Family Group) local authorities were consulted to obtain information on how they carry out their services.

- 1.7 In early 2001 further independent information was obtained from the Tidy Britain Group (a survey on the cleanliness of the District) and a private consultant called Techman (considering the competitiveness of the operational services).
- 1.8 The information available from these sources was analysed and used to identify the key issues needing action if the services were to improve. These issues were further developed into required outcomes as follows: -
1. To reduce the amount of waste produced per household
 2. Reduce the cost per household of refuse collection
 3. Improve response time to fly tipping and reduce incidence
 4. Improve level of cleansing to areas of known concern
 5. Meet National Waste Targets
 6. Improve performance on emptying litter bins
 7. Improve the quality of grass cutting to highway verges and public open space
 8. Reduce amount of dog fouling in public places and address cost effectiveness of dog service
 9. Develop existing and new partnerships that assist in delivering required outcomes
 10. Improve service delivery by changes to organisational arrangements and Member reporting systems
 11. Prepare an education/communication plan
 12. To adopt measures which monitor and improve quality of service provision and set improvement targets
- 1.9 In undertaking the Review due consideration has been given to the 4C's and detail follows in Sections 5 to 8 of this report.
- 1.10 The report concludes with a Action Plan, to deliver the required outcomes listed above for approval by Committee, prior to inspection in October.
- 1.11 The Review Documents can be summarised as follows.
- Baseline Assessment (and Annexes)
 - Consultation Summary (and Annexes)
 - Independent Competitvity Report (Techman)
 - Final Report and Action Plan
- 1.12 The Action Plan is a detailed working document resulting from a systematic and thorough process of analysis of options. An Improvement Plan, which summarises the main proposals in the Action Plan, is included overleaf.

CLEANSING THE ENVIRONMENT

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The intention of the Action Plan is to produce improvement in the services provided to our customers by the Council in five key areas.

1. The Achievement of National Waste Targets.
2. A cleaner and more attractive environment for the residents of the District.
3. Improved efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.
4. Improved service quality.
5. Better communication with all stakeholders.

The primary measures to be employed in securing the necessary improvement will be as follows: -

1. **The Achievement of National Waste Targets**
 - To develop and implement a Waste Minimisation Plan and a revised Recycling Plan.
 - Increase central composting, home composting and kerbside recycling.
 - Ensure the operational success of the Brightstar Contract.
 - Maximise available resources for waste initiatives.

2. A cleaner and more attractive environment for the residents of the District

- Establish a rapid response hit squad to deal with fly tipping, dog fouling and litter.
- Increase grass cutting frequency.
- Work with others to improve the cleanliness of the local environment (including Parishes, Fast Food Outlets, Schools etc.)
- Develop and implement action plans with stakeholders.
- Take a tougher stance on legal enforcement.

3. Improved efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery

- Reduce the costs of refuse collection.
- Appraise competitiveness on a regular basis.
- Maximise partnership working.
- Rationalise management arrangements to strengthen service delivery.

4. Improved service quality

- Improve performance management systems.
- Improve access to waste and recycling facilities.
- Participate in externally accredited quality schemes (e.g. Tidy Britain Group, EFQM etc.)
- Support the training and development of all employees.

5. Better communication with all stakeholders

- Increase awareness of residents of the need to reduce waste.
- Improve dialogue with partners in Public, Private and Voluntary Sectors.
- Involve employees fully in service development.
- Consult with Stakeholders regularly.

(Details on the delivery of this Improvement Plan, including resource implications, performance measures and timetable are included in the Action Plan at Section 9.0 of the Final Report).

2.0 National Context

2.1 In carrying out this Best Value Review the Council has had due regard to paragraph 6 of the Local Government (Best Value) Performance Plans and Reviews Order 1999, which sets out the contents of Best Value Reviews and these are set out below: -

2.2 Content of Best Value Reviews

6. -(1) in conducting a best value review, a best value authority shall: -
- (a) consider whether it should be exercising the function:
 - (b) consider the level at which, and the way in which, it should be exercising the function;
 - (c) consider its objectives in relation to the exercise of the function;
 - (d) assess its performance in exercising the function by reference to any best value performance indicator specified for the function;
 - (e) assess the competitiveness of its performance in exercising the function by reference to the exercise of the same function, or similar functions, by other best value authorities and by the commercial and other businesses, including organisations in the voluntary sector:
 - (f) consult other best value authorities, commercial and other businesses, including organisations in the voluntary sector, about the exercise of the function;
 - (g) assess its success in meeting any best value performance standard which applies in relation to the function;
 - (h) assess its progress towards meeting any relevant best value performance standard which has been specified but which does not yet apply;
 - (i) assess its progress towards meeting any relevant best value performance target.

3.0 Reasons for Undertaking the Review

3.1 There were three main reasons for these service areas to be reviewed at an early stage in the Council's Best Value five-year review programme. These were: -

- The importance of the environment, and its care, to the public.
- The relatively large proportion of Council expenditure incurred on the Services.
- The failure to attract any private sector bids when the refuse and cleansing services were last retendered.

3.2 The Importance of the Environment, and its Care, to the Public

In 1996, the "Better South Derbyshire Group" (a multi-agency group which seeks to address issues relating to poverty and social exclusion) conducted a residents survey as part of work in developing a community profile of the district. Approximately, 300 questionnaires were returned providing around 1,200 ideas. The quality and cleanliness of the environment was mentioned on about 650 occasions. Further consultation has confirmed this level of concern and the public's wish to see action taken to maintain the cleanliness of the environment. (See also the Consultation Summary and Section 7.0 - Consult).

3.3 The relatively large proportion of Council expenditure incurred on the Services

The total value of the services covered by the Review (2000/01 Actuals) is in excess of £1.5 million p.a. This represents approximately 23% of General Fund budget and shows the relative importance of the services which are received by and affect all the District's residents.

3.4 The failure to attract any private sector bids when the refuse and cleansing services were last retendered

In 1998 the Council received a Section 14 notice (Local Government Act 1988) from the then Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) in respect of its Refuse and other cleaning operations. This required the Council to retender these services (an activity it was already engaged in doing). Subsequently no private sector bids were received and DETR agreed to the work being awarded to the DSO. However at that stage the Council committed to making these service areas the subject of an early best value review and to making 2% annual efficiency savings on service costs. (See also Section 13.3.2 of the Baseline Assessment).

4.0 Methodology

4.1 The Review commenced in June 1999 as one of the Council's initial pilot's. The stages in undertaking the Review were as follows:

- Form and Develop a Review Team
- Liaise with Members via a Members Review Team and through Committee
- Agree on Scope of Review
- Agree Stakeholders
- Prepare a Baseline Assessment
- Identify the key issues
- Consider Options to address the key issues
- Analyse the Options
- Prepare an Action Plan to deliver continuous improvement
- Apply the 4 C's throughout the process

4.2 Form and Develop a Review Team

The following were members of the original Review Team.

John Hansed	* Head of Engineering and Design (Team Leader)
Paul Evans	* Head of Direct Services
Mark Alflat	* Environmental Health Manager (Pollution)
David Walters	Engineering Manager
Jackie Young	Customer Services Assistant
Ray Bateman	Refuse and Cleansing Foreman
George Sanders	Refuse Driver, also Union Representative
Melanie Ellwood	¹ Team Secretary
John Gilhooly	Environment Agency
Sally Knight	² Corporate Best Value Officers' Group Representative

Team changes during the Review: -

- * *During the review John Hansed became Technical Services Manager, Paul Evans became Direct Services Manager and Mark Alflat became Environmental Health Manager.*
- ¹ *During the review Sally Cope replaced Melanie Ellwood as Team Secretary.*
- ² *During the review Corporate Best Value Officers' Group representatives have changed to include Eileen Matthey, Ken Roxburgh and David Rensler.*

During 2000 Stuart Batchelor (Leisure Development Manager) also joined the Review Team

At an early stage training was undertaken in team building and subsequently the team adopted the name "The Clean Team".

During the early stages of the Review the team met as a single unit. However in 2000 it developed into operational sub groups to pursue specific issues, including a consultation sub group and a performance and benchmarking sub group. From Summer 2000 onwards the teams', activities were controlled by a Steering Group who met each fortnight and who liaised with the Members Review Team at approximately two monthly intervals.

On three occasions in 2000 the Steering Group held away days, attended also by Ian Reid (Deputy Chief Executive) and Sally Knight (Policy and Best Value Manager) to consider the key issues arising out of the Review, options for improvement and preparation of the resulting Action Plan.

4.3 Liaise with Members via a Members Review Team and through Committee

The Clean Team has worked with Members Review Team throughout the Review. The Members on this team were: -

Councillor K. Richards
Councillor A. Sherratt
Councillor J. Bladen

Meetings between the Clean Team and the Members Review Team have been held throughout the Review and on four occasions joint reports submitted to the then controlling Committee (Housing and Environment). A final committee report, including this report an Action Plan, will be submitted to the Development Services Committee on 27th September, although issues relating to Dog Control Service will be submitted to the Community Services Committee on 4th October.

4.4 Agree on Scope of Review

An initial consideration by the Clean Team led to the following issues being put forward to Committee in August 1999 for inclusion in the scope of the Review.

- Dog dirt
- Litter
- Graffiti
- Fly tipping
- Pollutions
- Leaves
- Glass etc.
- Weeds
- Grass cutting
- Silt
- Abandoned Cars
- Refuse bins
- Recycling sites
- Blue bags (kerbside paper collections)

- Trolleys
- Sharps
- Oil
- Dead animals

However it was the team's view that the issues of most concern to the public were: -

- Dog Dirt
- Litter
- Flytipping
- Grass Cutting

Committee agreed these issues should be addressed first, at least as part of the initial pilot review exercise and until the results of public consultation were known to confirm these four choices.

The results of the subsequent consultation have confirmed these are the areas of most concern to the stakeholders who use the Council's Services (See also Section 7.0 Consult and the Consultation Summary).

4.5 Agree Stakeholders

One of the early actions of the Consultation Sub Group was to define the list of Stakeholders for the service areas covered by the Review. The list that has subsequently been used for consultation purposes is as follows: -

Service Providers

Members
Staff
Recyclers

Potential Service Providers

Qualified Contractors and trade associations

Service Users

Public
Staff
Parish Councils
Trade Refuse Customers
Chamber of Trade
Young People
Members

Potential Service Users

Trade Waste Customers

Other Specialist Organisation

Environment Agency
DCC / Waste Recycling Ltd
Other (neighbouring) District Councils

Voluntary Groups / Charities

Tidy Britain Group

Other Interested Parties

Schools

4.6 Prepare a Baseline Assessment

A Baseline Assessment was carried out, commencing in Summer 2000, to set out the current position for all the reviewed Services. (It is anticipated the Best Value Inspectors will ask for this information so they can more easily assess the current services to assist them in deciding how effective they are). The assessment contains nineteen sections, as follows: -

- Profile of District
- Scope of Review
- Democratic Process
- Corporate Vision and Objectives
- Legal Framework
- Current Resources
- Service Costs
- Organisational and Management Structures
- Current Specification, Performance Indicators and Standards
- Working Practices and Methods of Service Delivery
- Service Providers
- Profile of Service
- Performance
- Relationship to Other Services
- User and Employee Involvement
- Cultural Values
- Implementation of Corporate Policies
- Stakeholders
- Local, Regional and National Context of Service

4.7 Identify the key issues

By late 2000 the Baseline Assessment was completed and information was available from the Stakeholder Consultations undertaken. In addition staff directly involved in the services had attended a half day staff workshop (November 2000) giving their views on how service provision could and should be improved. All this information was considered at an away day in February 2001 (Clean Team Steering Group plus Deputy Chief Executive and Policy and Best Value Manager) and the following considered to be the key issues that needed addressing to give the required service improvements asked for by the stakeholders and to meet national targets and upper quartile aspirations.

1. High Tonnage of Waste
2. Expensive Refuse Cost
3. Slow Response to Fly Tipping
4. Street Cleansing – Low Cost Compared to Performance
5. National Waste Targets
6. Emptying Litter Bins
7. Grass Cutting Frequencies
8. Dog Service Cost and Public Concern Re: Cleansing
9. Partnerships
10. Service Delivery – Soft Split/No Split Financial Management Systems
Member Systems

At the meeting of the Housing and Environment Committee, in April 2001, this list of key issues was agreed. In addition this meeting also agreed a Vision Statement and list of proposed service objectives for the service areas, based on the Council's Corporate Vision Statement (see also Baseline Assessment page 15).

4.8 Consider Options to address the key issues

Having identified and agreed the key issues two further away days were held. The first sought to identify options the Council could employ to make the necessary improvements in the key issue areas.

4.9 Analyse the Options

At the subsequent away day the options were analysed using additional information gathered since the previous meeting.

4.10 Prepare an Action Plan to deliver continuous improvement

Having chosen the most suitable options these were used to develop an Action Plan, which follows this report. In addition to the actions being listed, arising from the options analysis, the plan includes target dates, performance measures, costs, officers responsible for delivery and supplementary comments.

The Action Plan has been circulated to key stakeholders to get their views on the proposals and their support on those issues where joint actions are proposed.

4.11 Apply the 4 C's throughout the process

Throughout these processes the Clean Team has sought to apply the four C's to the Review process and more is said about each "C" in Sections 5.0 to 8.0.

4.12 Future Actions

Upon completion of the Review, agreement of the Action Plan and subject to comments of the Best Value Inspectorate it is the intention of the Clean Team Steering Group to continue to meet on a quarterly basis to monitor the implementation of the plan and to report the same to Members twice a year.
(See Action Plan 10.2)

4.13 Effects on the Review Process of the Council's Financial Crisis in 1999

In late 1999 it was established that the Council had a severe financial shortfall. As a result of this services and staff numbers had to be reduced. This resulted in changes that had a very substantial impact on the members of the Clean Team and in particular.

- The urgent need to reduce the cost of services covered in the scope of the Review
- Dealing with the resulting complaints received
- Restructuring the staffing structure (for the third time in three years)
- Loss of the Highways Agency and the associated negotiations and operational changes
- The effective net loss of three members of staff within the service areas under review

As a direct result the Review process was effectively halted for several months, as was reported, with reasons, to the Housing and Environment Committee in August 2000. The ongoing effects of these changes have additionally made it difficult to maintain the necessary input to the review process and this explains the long timescale for its completion which, nevertheless, has satisfied the Best Value Inspectorate's requirements.

5.0 Challenge

In undertaking the review the Clean Team has addressed the following questions.

5.1 Should the Council be exercising these functions and would use of other discretionary functions lead to improvements?

5.1.1 The legal provisions relating to the reviewed Services are set out in Section 5.0 of the Baseline Assessment. It will be seen that the majority of the services provided are statutory.

5.1.2 The Council has some discretion in regard to its refuse service. One of the key issues identified, (see 4.7) is the relatively high cost of this service and challenge has been applied to discretionary elements. In 2000 a charge was applied to bulky refuse collections. This has reduced the number of service requests and yielded additional income. The incidence of fly tipping has not increased, so far.

The provision of a clinical waste collection service is a statutory requirement but the Council can make a charge. So far it has not done so. As part of service benchmarking the number of collections in neighbouring counties were found to be relatively low and this is being investigated with the Community Health Services Trust and in conjunction with the Derbyshire Integrated Waste Management Group. The Intention is to reduce the number of clinical collections made and maximise the amount of waste landfilled. Both should lead to reduced costs but Members will be advised of the outcome and, if unsuccessful, may wish to introduce a service charge (See Action Plan 2.2)

5.1.3 The trade waste service is provided on request and is therefore statutory. The income received subsidises the domestic refuse collection costs and any expansion of the service within current operational resources will thus reduce domestic costs. (See Action Plan 2.3)

5.1.4 Within the cleansing function the Council has discretionary powers available to

- Issue fixed penalty notices for littering
- Designating land as a litter control area
- Issue Street Litter Control notices

Currently it does not exercise any of these powers. Consultation from Stakeholders suggests a strong view that the Council should take enforcement action to maintain the cleanliness of the environment (and prevent or tackle fly tipping) and it is intended this should be investigated further with the Member and Legal Services Division and other parties. (See Action Plan 3.2 and 4.3)

- 5.1.5 There are several areas of the Dog Warden Service that are discretionary and outlined within Section 5.0 of the Baseline Assessment.

The Authority has undertaken the designation of areas of land within the District, which makes it an offence to allow a dog to foul on that land and not pick it up after.

The consultation exercise has shown that the stakeholders still perceive dog fouling to be a problem and that there is a lack of visible enforcement activity.

The intention is to address these concerns by a revision of the Dog Fouling Strategy, including the introduction of fixed penalty notices and risk based enforcement. This is reported to the Community Services Committee. (See Action Plan 8.2)

The aim to reduce the amount of dog fouling in the area will, if successful, reduce the requirement for cleaning up.

- 5.1.6 Micro-chipping of dogs is also a discretionary activity undertaken by the dog warden and is outlined within Section 10.4g of the Baseline Assessment.

The intention is to bring about an improvement of the service by making the pick up of strays more efficient. Any income generated could be identified and used for promotional activities.

5.2 Are there up to date and challenging visions and aims for the Services?

- 5.2.1 In undertaking the Review the Clean Team established that they weren't any clearly defined service aims and objectives. As a consequence these were developed in line with the Corporate Vision Statement and Objectives and agreed by the Housing and Environment Committee in April 2001. (See Baseline Assessment Section 4.0). Upon completion of the first Action Plan this was cross-referenced to the Vision and Objectives to ensure that improvements would meet the objectives set out. As a result it was decided that due regard needed to be given, in implementing the Action Plan, to developing appropriate quality standards. (See Action Plan 12.1)

5.3 Does the Council have an up to date strategy, consistent with National Waste Targets and the National Waste Strategy?

- 5.3.1 In conjunction with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act the Council produced its first Recycling Plan in 1992 and this was subsequently updated each year until 1995. During this period the Council approached recycling on a basis largely independent of the County Council or of its neighbouring authorities.
- 5.3.2 In 1997 the County Council commenced the production of a Derbyshire Waste Management Strategy and this Council participated in its creation through Steering and Working Groups. Subsequent to this a South Eastern Derbyshire Sub Area Strategy was completed (Further details are contained in the Baseline Assessment Section 19.0).

5.3.3 Since the creation of these strategies there has been an increasing amount of inter-authority co-operation in working together to meet the agreed objectives and, in particular, developing short-term measures to increase recycling. The Council is now committed to work in close partnership with other Derbyshire Authorities and sees this as the most productive way forward in securing the necessary improvements in the amounts recycled. One of the early successes of this partnership approach is the development of a waste treatment in Derby by an Australian private sector company. In 2002, this will take waste from four local authorities and provide a total waste solution at a cost which is comparable with current disposal costs. (This co-operative approach is also being employed in other joint working with local authorities close to South Derbyshire but outside the county). This commitment is reflected in the Action Plan.

- In the need to prepare a Waste Minimisation Plan (*See Action Plan 1.1*)
- To increase home composting (*See Action Plan 1.4*)
- To ensure successful commencement of the Brightstar Contract (*See Action Plan 5.3*)
- To maximise (external) resources to fund waste management initiatives (*See Action Plan 5.4*)
- To revise the Council's Recycling Plan (*See Action Plan 5.5*)
- To undertake a joint waste management best value review (*See Action Plan 9.3*)

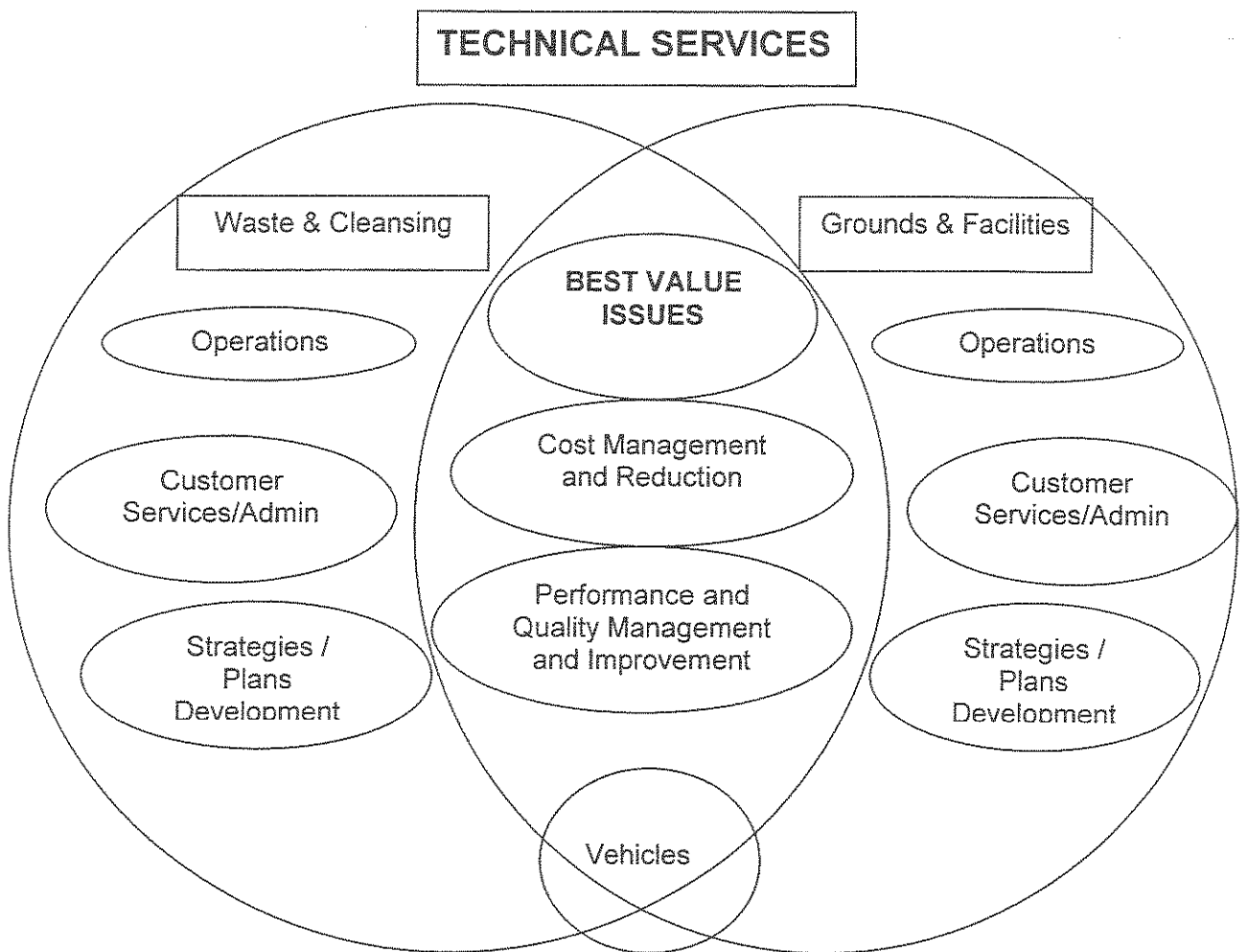
5.3.4 The new National Waste Strategy has set demanding targets for increasing the level of recycling. Each local authority has been set individual statutory Best Value Performance Standards to meet and for the Council this requires

- 14% recycling rate by 2003/04
- 21% recycling rate by 2005/06

This is one of the main key issues to address, arising out of the Review and a number of measures have been included in the Action Plan. As for all other authorities meeting these targets will mean that the Council will have to increase the current levels of recycling activity and, as a consequence, additional resources will have to be engaged. Wherever possible partnerships with the private sector and other authorities will be employed to minimise additional costs. (*See Action Plan 5.1 to 5.6*)

5.4 Are the Council's delivery structures appropriate and effective in delivering cost effective services?

5.4.1 With the repeal of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) Requirements in 2000 the Council took the opportunity to restructure the new Technical Services Division on a soft split basis. This led to a reduction in the number of staff. However, following staff consultations, it was agreed that the new structure, through leaner and more cost effective, needs further amendment a no split structure of two units with a shared function for financial control and performance monitoring as shown in the following schematic. (See Action Plan 10.1)



5.4.2 In considering the factors affecting the relatively high cost of the refuse collection service one known cause was the relatively high levels of sickness absence amongst the manual staff and the resulting employment of temporary agency staff. (See Baseline Assessment Section 6.3.1). The Council has recently introduced a new Absence Management Policy and it is intended to apply this, at an early stage, to these staff. (See Action Plan 2.1)

5.5 To what extent are services delivered through contracts and partnerships?

5.5.1 Section 11.0 of the Baseline Assessment shows the large number of contractors and partners who are employed on the delivery of services. For the cleansing service 27% of the work value is undertaken by the private sector; for grass cutting the figure is 9%

5.5.2 There are several private sector and voluntary organisations involved in recycling services which contributes substantially to the majority of these services being delivered, operationally, within the value of the recycling credit i.e. it costs less to recycle these materials than to tip them. However for recycling materials from many of the Council's bring sites costs exceed the credit value by a considerable margin and the Council needs to seek alternative means to service these sites and consider the removal of a number of those which are least productive. (See Action Plan 2.7)

5.5.3 Currently as little as 1% of the value of work engaged on the Refuse Collection service, via the Direct Services Unit, is sub-contracted. A considerable element of cost on this service (as well as cleansing and grounds) is the vehicle maintenance function and exploratory discussions have been held with private sector companies on the potential for the function to be placed with them; indeed the use of contract hire vehicles has been routinely considered, in the past, in preparing CCT tenders.

As an alternative more recent discussions have been held with potential partners with regard to a partnership that could see the resiting of the Council depot to part of his premises and the Council's fleet being maintained as part of this operation. This proposal has the potential to allow the Council to sell its current depot and reinvest the income and it is intended to continue discussions urgently. The assistance of the Legal Services Manager will be needed in evaluating how the European Procurement Regulations would apply in achieving such a partnership. (See Action Plan 2.5 and 9.2)

5.5.4 In addition preliminary discussions have also been held with another potential partners who has expressed a wish to develop a composting operation, using local authority green waste. This would complement the existing partnership contract the Council already has with Biffa, at Etwall, and provide an outlet for green waste from the urban core and the southern parishes. The Council has been instrumental in involving other local Councils in considering whether the necessary quantities of green waste could be contributed on a joint basis. The Contractor has expressed a willingness to consider up from capital investment if this is necessary to make the proposal cost effective to the Councils concerned. Discussions will continue to be held with this potential new partner. (See Action Plan 9.2)

- 5.5.5 Although the Council has numerous contractors and partners involved in service delivery few formal means currently exist for reviewing the effectiveness of their operation and this has been seen as a weakness during the Review. If effectiveness is to be maximised dialogue needs to be improved and targets set for improvement. (See Action Plan 9.1)
- 5.5.6 For several years the Council has operated a joint cleansing scheme with Parish Councils called the Lengthsman Scheme. The Council makes an annual payment to those parishes in the scheme who employ their own Lengthsman as a local means of keeping their areas clean based on the varying daily needs. This complements the Councils operations, in the parishes, of providing cleansing on a fixed rota basis. Although the Council is confident the scheme is effective in maintaining cleansing standards it has also recognised, within the Review, that there are currently no formal means for reviewing this effectiveness or considering, objectively, how it could be improved. Subject to agreement by the parishes it is intended to discuss such improvements. (See Action Plan 4.4)
- 5.6 What performance monitoring and management systems are in place within the reviewed service areas and how should these be improved?
- 5.6.1 As stated in Section 16 of the Baseline Assessment a system of regular contract monitoring was introduced, in the former Engineering Maintenance office, to monitor the performance of contractor for refuse collection, street cleansing and grounds maintenance. This monitoring has continued to present times for the former two areas but has lapsed for the latter.
- 5.6.2 For refuse and cleansing the regime was amended in 1999, on commencement of the new combined contract include performance checks on issues found to be of concern to Service Users (e.g. returning wheeled bins to the correct position). The current list of local performance indicators in use is set out in Section 13.2.1 of the Baseline Assessment. These targets are reviewed each month at a meeting involving all staff levels from management to foreman. Results are shared with all employees involved in the service.
- 5.6.3 One local performance indicator where the target has consistently failed to have been met relates to emptying litterbins (Indicator G). This failure, although of relatively less importance than others, was seen as a key issue during the Review and included in the Action Plan. (See Action Plan 6.1)
- 5.6.4 Beyond these local indicators, and the comparisons available from national BVPI's, there are currently no further performance measures within the refuse, cleansing and grounds maintenance service areas. It is intended to build on the progress made to develop indicators for grounds maintenance (See Action Plan 7.3) and build indicators into the performance improvements that will be sought within developing partnerships (see 5.5.4) and reviewing the parish lengthsman scheme. (See 5.5.5)

- 5.6.5 As explained in 5.4.1 it is intended to carry out a further reorganisation of the Technical Services Division to a no split structure. As part of this it is the intention to assign the responsibility for performance monitoring, across the Division, to a specific staff area.
- 5.6.6 As part of the Review an independent survey of the District's cleanliness was undertaken by the Tidy Britain Group. This Group work in association with a large number of local authorities on their "People and Places Programme" which includes an annual check on site conditions and performance. It is intended to join this scheme, if possible. (*See Action Plan 12.1*).
- 5.6.7 The performance indicators for the Dog Warden Service are outlined within Section 13.2.2 of the Baseline Assessment. All requests for service are logged within the Environmental Health computer system. Monitoring of these are undertaken on a six monthly basis. Other indicators are collated manually by the Dog Warden. The performance monitoring systems within Environmental Health are being reviewed. Monthly performance for dog fouling will be provided to the Environmental Protection Manager. It is also the intention to purchase a new Environmental Health Computer System which will improve performance management within the service.

6.0 Compare

6.1.0 Background

6.1.1 The Review Team has carried out a range of benchmarking exercises in order to compare the services provided in South Derbyshire against those provided elsewhere.

6.1.2 The sources used for benchmarking purposes are as follows: -

Daventry Comparator Group	A pilot benchmarking group
Rushcliffe Group	A pilot benchmarking group
Association of Contract Services Chief Officers (ACSCO) now known as Public Services Network (PS NET)	A national group of local authorities (South Derbyshire is a member of the Western Region)
Local Authority Performance Indicators	The annual published indicators
CIPFA Group	The chartered institute group
Derbyshire Family Group	The Derbyshire authorities
Neighbouring Authorities	East Staffordshire Borough Council and North West Leicester District Council

For further information on the groups listed see the Consultation Summary, Annexe 16.

6.1.3 The specific aims behind the benchmarking exercise were as follows: -

Daventry Comparator Group and Rushcliffe Group

6.1.4 These Groups were used by the Review Team during the pilot review in order to compare data and methods on the activities being reviewed in the pilot study i.e. dog fouling, fly tipping and grass cutting.

ACSCO (now known as PS NET)

6.1.5 This group is used on an ongoing basis in order to compare operational data on direct service delivery.

Local Authority Performance Indicators

6.1.6 This information has been used to compare performance against the CIPFA Group, the Derbyshire Family Group, neighbouring authorities and upper quartile authorities.

6.2.0 Content

Daventry Comparator Group and Rushcliffe Group – Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping, Grass Cutting Benchmarking

6.2.1 The main key points to result from the benchmarking exercises are as follows: -

Dog Warden Service

6.2.2 Fourteen out of sixteen respondents stated that dog fouling is cleaned up in response to complaints. South Derbyshire does not at present but intends to provide such a service in future. (See *Action Plan 8.1*)

6.2.3 A summary of the findings are contained within Section 12.6 of the Baseline Assessment. One key concern was the cost of the service compared to the average of other organisations.

6.2.4 Additional benchmarking was undertaken with five Authorities selected from the group. The main findings from this exercise were that the direct costs including salaries, vehicles, equipment and materials are very similar and in some cases cheaper. The significant variation was mainly attributable to the on-costs for the service.

Fly Tipping

6.2.5 South Derbyshire's average unit cost to clear fly tipping was 25% below the average but response time was eight days compared to the average of three days.

6.2.6 The Local Authority Performance Indicators highlight South Derbyshire's poor response time for the removal of fly tipping which it is intended to improve to upper quartile standards.

6.2.7 The exercise also provided information regarding preventative measures to reduce fly tipping instances such as the use of barriers, signing and closure of lay-bys.

Grass Cutting

6.2.8 The average number of times highway verge grass is cut (within the 30 mph signs) was twelve occasions compared to South Derbyshire's eight (now nine). It is intended to increase the Council's frequency to 12. (See *Action Plan 7.1 and 7.2*)

6.2.9 Full details of the benchmarking exercises are included in the Consultation Summary, Annexe 16.

ACSCO (now known as PS NET) – Refuse Collection, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance

6.2.10 The main key points to result from the benchmarking exercises are as follows: -

Refuse Collections

6.2.11 Operatives pay is around the average.

6.2.12 Labour, vehicle and overhead costs as a percentage of the operating budget are close to the average.

6.2.13 Tonnage collected per full time equivalent is 12% higher than the average.

6.2.14 Sickness levels are 13% compared against the average of 8%.

Street Cleansing

6.2.15 Operatives pay is around the average.

6.2.16 Labour and vehicle costs as a percentage of the operating budget are close to the average.

Grounds Maintenance

6.2.17 Operatives pay is around the average.

6.2.18 Labour and vehicle costs as a percentage of the operating budget are close to the average.

Full details of the benchmarking exercises included in the Consultation Summary, Annexe 16.

Local Authority Performance Indicators, CIPFA Family Group, Derbyshire Family Group, Neighbouring Authorities, Quartile Information

6.2.19 The main findings from the 1999/00 Audit Commission Indicators are shown in Table 1. South Derbyshire's unaudited figure for 2000/01 and the target for 2001/02 are also shown.

6.2.20 The main causes for concern were identified as follows: -

(a) Tonnes of Waste Collected per household

South Derbyshire's tonnage is high. (See *Action Plan 1.1 to 1.5*) are aimed at addressing the issue.

(b) Net cost per household of refuse collection

South Derbyshire's costs are high. (See *Action Plan 2.1 to 2.8*). The results of some further detailed benchmarking are described later in this report.

TABLE 1

Indicator	1999/2000 Performance	Position in Derbyshire (8 Councils)	Position in Family Group (9 Councils)	Position in Neighbours (3 Councils)	2000/01 Performance	2001/02 Target	Comments
Number of household waste collections missed per 100,000 (April and October to March)	22	Best	Best	Worst	22	18	Medium quartile 41 Upper quartile 17
Percentage of missed collections during May to September put right by end of the next working day	98%	Equal Third	Third	Best	No Longer Reported		Medium quartile 97% Upper quartile 100%
Percentage of household waste that was recycled	8.2%	Fourth	Fourth	Best	9.2%	8.8%	
Tonnes of waste collected per household not recycled	0.99	Third Highest	Equal Second Highest	Highest	Indicator Changed	Indicator Changed	Lower Quartile 0.90
Net cost per household of refuse collection	£33.86	Third Lowest	Second Highest	Highest	£34.48	£34.96	Upper Quartile £32.05
Percentage of highways that are of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness	Not Reported				100%	100%	
Average time taken to remove fly tips (calendar days)	6.4	Worst	Eighth Worst	Second	6.9	Indicator Removed	Lower Quartile 2.9 days
Net spending per head of population on street cleansing	£3.00	Lowest	Lowest	Lowest	Indicators Changed		Lower Quartile £4.37

(c) Average time taken to remove fly tipping

South Derbyshire's performance is poor. (See *Action Plan 3.1 to 3.4*) Some of the actions planned result from the benchmarking exercise described earlier in Paragraphs 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5.

(d) Net spending per head of population on street cleansing

South Derbyshire's spend is one of the lowest in the country. Although the Tidy Britain Group's inspection, detailed in the consultation report scored South Derbyshire slightly above average, some actions have been identified to improve the level of cleansing to areas of known concern. (See *Action Plan 4.1 to 4.4*)

- 6.2.21 As previously stated, the cost per household of refuse collection was identified as an area of major concern. Efforts were made to identify similar councils with similar service levels whose costs were less expensive than South Derbyshire.
- 6.2.22 North West Leicestershire District Council was identified as one such authority and, therefore, some detailed benchmarking was arranged.
- 6.2.23 The main results from the exercise show that there is little difference on direct operations numbers and costs such as employee expenses and transport costs although North West Leicester carry out far less clinical collections than South Derbyshire. However, there are significant differences in the following items: -

2000/01 Probable Estimates

Item	S.D.D.C. £	N.W.L.D.C. £	Difference £
Direct Services			
Depot Charges	41,457	1,178	40,279
Management & Overhead charges	89,280 (0.85 FTE)	24,013 (1 FTE)	65,267
Client Services			
Domestic bins leasing	90,310	30,000	60,310
Management & overhead charges (Domestic Services & compost)	103,500 (1.99 FTE)	67,190 (1.67 FTE)	36,310
Recycling (Domestic Services & compost) bins leasing	31,130	1,650	29,480
Contract payment to compost facility	24,170	NIL	24,170
Management & overhead charges (recycling & compost service)	65,610 (1.36 FTE)	28,070 (1,61FTE)	37,540
Total	£445,457	£152,101	£293,356

- 6.2.24 The differences in bin leasing costs (both domestic and recycling/composting) are understandable given the different commencement date of the leasing of domestic bins and the difference service provided in regard to recycling/composting.
- 6.2.25 The significant differences, however, between management and overhead charges especially given the similarity in full time equivalent numbers, beg a number of questions which are still to be resolved regarding both the level of and the allocation of the charges. It seems that North West Leicestershire's charges may be understated while South Derbyshire's seem to be overstated.
- 6.2.26 The level of South Derbyshire's on-costs and overheads does give cause for concern and as indicated in the Section of Compete, will need to be addressed in the Best Value Reviews in those support services where the charges are generated.

6.3.0 Conclusions

Dog Fouling

- 6.3.1 South Derbyshire compares unfavourably against other Councils who clear up dog fouling following complaints. The provision of a rapid response hit squad, as well as the other measures detailed in Section 9 of the Action Plan, will enable the Council to provide this service.
- 6.3.2 The service operational costs are very comparable and offer no significant variation. However, on-costs and overheads charged to the service require further investigation.

Flytipping

- 6.3.3 South Derbyshire's response time to clear flytipping is poor. The provision of a rapid response hit squad, as well as the other measures detailed in Section 3 of the Action Plan, will enable the Council to improve its performance.

Grass Cutting

- 6.3.4 South Derbyshire cuts the grass three times less than the average number benchmarked. An increased number of cuts, as detailed in Section 7 of the Action Plan, will improve the current level of service.
- 6.3.5 The Council's operation costs compare favourably.

Street Cleansing

- 6.3.6 The Council's costs are very low despite which the level of service is rated to be slightly above average by the Tidy Britain Group. The actions detailed in Section 4 of the Action Plan seek to make improvements in areas of known concern.
- 6.3.7 Operational costs compare favourably.

Refuse Collection

- 6.3.8 The tonnage of waste collected per household is high. The implementation of a Waste Minimisation Plan, as well as the other measures outlined in Section 1 of the Action Plan seeks to address this issue.
- 6.3.9 The net cost per household of refuse collection is high. Operational costs compare favourably but on-costs and overheads charges require further investigation.
- 6.3.10 The performance regarding missed collections is good and improving towards the upper quartile.
- 6.3.11 Benchmarking with better performing Councils needs to continue as part of the normal job in order to identify and learn from best practice.

7.0 Consult

7.1 As described in Section 4.5 the following Stakeholders were consulted, as part of the Review using the methods shown. (A Consultation Summary is available for the details of the methods used and the conclusions).

	Consultation Method
1. SERVICE PROVIDERS	
a) Members	Four Committee reports and seven meetings with Members Review Team
	Final report needed to Development Services Committee to discuss review results and agree action plan (September 2001)
b) Staff	Two Staff Workshops (staff involved in delivery of service)
2. POTENTIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS	
a) Contractors Trade Association – the Environmental Services Association	Exchange of letters with Environmental Services Association (ESA)
3. SERVICE USERS	
a) Public	1. Better South Derbyshire Study
	2. MORI Survey (with DCC) on views on services
	3. Telephone Survey
	4. Questionnaire on contents of the South Eastern Derbyshire Waste Strategy
	5. Focus Group
	6. MORI Survey (with DCC) on levels of satisfaction for certain services
b) Staff	1. Questionnaire to all staff
	2. Staff focus group
c) Parish Councils	1. Questionnaire to all Parish Councils
	2. Focus Groups with some parishes
d) Trade Refuse Customers	Questionnaire
e) Chamber of Trade	Questionnaire
f) Young people	Video questionnaire
4. POTENTIAL SERVICE USERS	
a) Trade Refuse Customers	Questionnaire

	Consultation Method
5. OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES	
a) East Staffs Borough Council	Meeting to compare services
b) North West Leicestershire District Council	Meeting to compare services
Other LA's in S.E. Derbyshire Sub Group c) Derby City Council, d) Erewash Borough Council, e) Amber Valley Borough Council and f) Derbyshire County Council	Meeting to discuss views on results of baseline assessment and action plan
Other LA's in benchmarking groups (see following pages)	Compared services on fly tipping, grass cutting and dog control
6. SPECIALIST ORGANISATIONS	
a) Tidy Britain Group	Report commissioned on cleanliness of district
b) Environment Agency	Representative attended early meetings of Clean Team. Meeting to discuss views on results of baseline assessment and action plan