

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny

Report of Scrutiny Panel 3 – Keep Northampton Tidy

DRAFT - Version 2

1 Purposes

1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was:

- To undertake a review regarding implementing a 'Keep Northampton Tidy' campaign with an accent on preserving wildlife and encouraging children (and adults) to take an interest in their surroundings, to include Community Clean Ups and 'Northampton in Bloom.'
- A review of the problem of littering and fly-tipping, particularly in un-adopted roads and the gateways into the town.
- To explore opportunities to enhance the gateways into the town.

1.2 A copy of the scope of the Review is attached at Appendix A.

2 Context and Background

2.1 Following approval of its work programme for 2014/2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in April 2014 commissioned Scrutiny Panel 3 to undertake the review – Keep Northampton Tidy. An in-depth review commenced in May 2014 and concluded in March 2015.

2.2 A Scrutiny Panel was established comprising Councillor Tony Ansell (Chair); Councillor Sivaramen Subbarayan (Deputy Chair); Councillors Penny Flavell, Mick Ford, Phil Larratt, Matt Lynch, Dennis Meredith and Winston Strachan. Vanessa Kelly, Executive Officer, Northamptonshire Waste Partnership, was co-opted to the review.

2.3 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority 2 – invest in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods (creating an attractive, clean and safe environment.)

2.4

The Scrutiny Panel established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities:


- Background data such as:
 - The National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group – Fly-tipping Framework: A National Framework for England for tackling fly-tipping
 - Relevant Planning and Environmental Legislation
 - Performance data and statistics regarding fly-tipping
- Relevant background reports
- Best practice data, such as Local Authorities and campaigns elsewhere
- Desktop research
- Evidence from expert internal witnesses:
 - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Enterprise
 - Director for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
 - Cabinet Member for Community Engagement
 - Cabinet Member for Environmental Services
 - Corporate Communications Unit, NBC
 - Neighbourhood Wardens and Environmental Health Manager, NBC
- Evidence from expert external witnesses
 - Northampton BID
 - Relevant National organisations, such as Keep Britain Tidy
 - Environment Agency
 - The Canal & River Trust
 - Highways Authority, NCC
 - Highways Agency
 - Network Rail
 - Northants Police
 - Parish Councils
 - Relevant Service Directors – Daventry District Council, South Northants and Wellingborough Council
- Various site visits

3 Evidence Collection

3.1 Evidence was collected from a variety of sources:

Background data

3.2 Background reports

3.2.1 [The National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group - Fly-tipping Framework: A National Framework for England for tackling fly-tipping](#) 

Environmental Legislation

3.2.2 Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Section 87)

The Act defines the offence of leaving litter, throwing down, dropping or depositing litter in any land, and leaving it. The land must be “open to the air”. Littering is an offence in public places and on private land (unless the owner of the land has given permission for the dropping of litter). Littering offences can be prosecuted through a magistrates’ court, carrying a maximum fine of level four on the standard scale. The legislation applies to small pieces of litter, including chewing gum, cigarette ends and matches.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 (section 88)

This Act gives the power to authorised officers of the local authority (and others including Police and PCSOS) to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice as an alternative to prosecution.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 89

This Act sets out a duty to clear litter and refuse from relevant land and relevant highway to which the public have access. A DEFRA Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse provides guidance on how this duty should be discharged. It describes acceptable cleaning standards and response times for different types of land use zones.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 92 and 94

This legislation gives local authorities powers to issue a Litter Clearance Notice requiring land to be cleared and monitored to prevent it becoming heavily littered again. However this legislation is due to be replaced by new powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Policing and Crime Act 2014.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 93 and 94

Under these powers local authorities can require the occupiers of certain types of commercial premises to prevent or removed accumulations of litter where there is recurrent defacement by litter of open land. This power is due to be replaced by new powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Policing and Crime Act 2014.

Fly-tipping

Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Section 33)

This legislation prohibits the unauthorised or harmful deposit, treatment, disposal of waste.

A fly-tipping offence has been committed if:

- A person has deposited, knowingly caused or knowingly permitted the dumping of controlled waste in or on land that does not have an environmental permit or that is not in accordance with an environmental permit (as governed by the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2007).
- A person has submitted controlled waste to a “listed operation” other than in accordance with an environmental permit (a listed operation is widely defined and includes almost all operations that may be carried out on waste, including disposal, cleansing, recycling and incineration).
- A person has treated, kept or disposed of controlled waste in or on land in a manner likely to cause pollution to the environment or harm to human health.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Section 46 & 47)

This legislation gives Local Authorities the power to serve a Notice specifying the type of receptacle in which household waste (section 46) and commercial waste (section 47) must be presented for collection. It allows details of waste collection times to be specified. Failure to comply with the terms of the Notice can result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part III (Statutory Nuisance)

District councils can serve an abatement notice if an accumulation or deposit is considered to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance. Reasonable costs can be recovered. Inert material, however, would not be categorised as a statutory nuisance as prejudice to health relates to hygiene and sanitation type issues (“disease, vermin or the like”).

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 Section 4

A local authority can serve a notice requiring an owner to remove, at their own expense, accumulated waste where damage by pests is likely to occur. Costs can be recovered should the council have to remove it.

3.2.3 Planning Legislation

The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (as amended)

The Act contains little provision with regard to amenity. Section 215 of the Act together with the Government Circular 2/98 (Prevention of Dereliction through the Planning System) sets out the powers of Local Planning Authorities to provide the proper maintenance of land in their area.

This provision however, more relates to land parcels and buildings where an owner or occupier can be required to improve the visual amenity of the area through the judicial system.

These provisions require an initial investigation to ascertain who is responsible for the land or its condition. Following this a formal Notice would need to be issued setting out the steps required to be taken and giving a period to comply with those steps of not less than 28 days.

Following the issue of any such Notice, and during the compliance period, the recipient may appeal to the Magistrate’s Court against the issue of the Notice. Should no appeal be forthcoming, and no compliance secured, the recipient can then be prosecuted for non-compliance with the Notice. This full process would generally take some 3 months. During this period the land or buildings would remain in their unacceptable state.

Ultimately if no compliance is secured the Council may take remedial action to carry out the works required but must fund that process and later secure a charge on the land or property until such time as it is sold.

3.2.4 [Performance data and statistics: Flytipping – 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014](#)

3.2.5 **Report It App.**

The Report it App. contains a number of key features:

- The app. is available on Apple – ISO platform and Android – Google platform. It can also be accessed via the Council's website. A third platform on Windows is currently being developed.
- Social activity has been aggregated to the app., detailing information that NBC wants to publish. It is a dynamic, ever-changing page
- The user can download photographs to the app.
- The simplicity of using the app. was emphasised.
- The app. also contains the facility for the user to find out information, such as bin day collections

3.3 Core Questions

3.3.1 The Scrutiny Panel devised a series of core questions that it put to its key witnesses over a cycle of meetings (Copy at Appendix B).

3.3.2 Key witnesses provided a response to these core questions at the meetings of the Scrutiny Panel held on 22 October 2014, 26 November 2014 and 15 January 2015.

3.3.3 Salient points of evidence:

Cabinet Member for Environment, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)

- Littering is a frustrating issue as often people will blame the Local Authority for it but it is not the Council that is dropping litter. The provision of more bins will not solve the problem. There needs to be a combination of education, enforcement and awareness.
- Community pride and personal responsibility is also a key

issue, for example, picking up recycling and refuse bins when they have blown over.

- The Policy on the removal of fly tipping from private land that was approved by Cabinet at its October 2014 meeting gives the Council the authority to remove, where possible, the waste from private alleyways and shared private land. Where appropriate the Council will then recover the cost of such clearance from those responsible for the fly tips or the land owner(s). This is a unique initiative that has attracted interest from Keep Britain Tidy.
- The Policy on the removal of fly-tipping from private land should be useful in circumstances of fly-tipping on private land, next to laybys.

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, NBC

- All advertising for Council run events is undertaken using authorised advertising boards and sites. The Council, itself, has a policy of never flyposting to advertise its own events.

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, NBC

- The Advertisement control system under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 covers a wide range of advertisements and signs, all of which communicate information or a message to passers-by. Advertisements may be permanent or temporary and depending on how long the advert is to be displayed for may affect whether or not the advert requires advertisement consent.
- Not all advertisements require consent from the Local Planning Authority (LPA). They may be exempt or have deemed consent (not requiring formal consent from the LPA) under the Regulations. Although, advertisers are advised to check with their LPA if they have any doubts as to whether consent is required. There are nine classes of advertisements that are exempt from advertisement control providing that the conditions and limitations for each class are met. Examples include traffic signs, national flags and advertisements displayed on enclosed land such as railway or bus stations.
- There are 16 classes of advertisements that have the benefit of deemed consent under the Regulations providing that the

conditions for each class are met. The conditions generally deal with the size, height, number and illumination of the advertisement. Examples include estate agent boards and local event notices.

- If an advertisement does not fall within the exempt or deemed consent categories, then it will require consent from the LPA. Examples include poster hoardings, externally illuminated signs and directional signs.
- To obtain consent, an advertiser must make an application to the LPA. On considering whether to consent to the advertisement, the LPA will consider the visual amenity and interests of public safety of the advertisement. The LPA is not required to consider the content of the advertisement as offences to decency are not planning matters and are regulated by the Advertising Standards Agency.
- To display an unauthorised advertisement is a criminal offence. The LPA can issue proceedings in the Magistrates Court. However, unless the offence is ongoing or repeated, the LPA may not consider formal enforcement action to be necessary in the first instance.
- The maximum fine is currently £2,500 with an additional daily fine of £250 on conviction of a continuing offence.
- There is no statutory definition of fly-posting. However, it is generally taken to be the display of advertising material on buildings and street furniture without the consent of the owner, contrary to the provisions of the Regulations.
- The number of fly-posts in the town has reduced over the past two years
- There are other types of unauthorised advertisements (such as hoardings, A boards and business cards displayed in telephone boxes) which fall outside the normal definition of flyposting.
- There are a number of pieces of legislation under which fly-posting can be controlled. The principal mechanism is s.224 and s.225 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Other powers exist under the Highways Act 1980, the Cleaner Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and local legislation. In the worst case scenario, the LPA can prosecute the advertiser or the beneficiary of the advertisement and a fine could be imposed by the Magistrates Court.
- An advertisement relating to the visit of a travelling circus, fair or similar travelling entertainment to any specified place in the

locality will not need consent provided the following requirements are met:

1. The advertisement does not exceed 0.6 square metres in area.
 2. No advertisement is displayed earlier than 14 days before the first performance or opening of the entertainment at the place specified.
 3. The advertisement is removed within 7 days after the last performance or closing of the specified entertainment.
 4. At least 14 days before the advertisement is first displayed, the Local Planning Authority is notified in writing of the first date on which, and of the site at which, it is to be displayed.
 5. Illumination is not permitted.
 6. No part of the advertisement is more than 4.6 metres above ground level, or 3.6 metres in an area of special control for advertisements. (Please contact the Local Planning Authority for details of the location of areas of special control).
- There is no restriction relating to the number or siting of these advertisements.
 - Planning Enforcement works closely with the Highway Authority and the NBC Regulatory Services department. The three departments have different legislation to deal with unauthorised advertisements, which include flyposting, and apply the most relevant and effective legislation to deal with each breach. The Neighbourhood Wardens also monitor the relevant areas and remove unauthorised advertisements, where appropriate. We also liaise with the Licensing department and external agencies such as, Pub Watch, to remind the Licensee of the premises of their obligations.
 - Planning Enforcement has not needed to utilise the Town and Country Planning Act to prosecute offenders as the unauthorised advertisements have either been removed, following informal warnings, or the other departments have applied their more appropriate legislation. Prosecuting under the Town and Country Planning Act can be a protracted and expensive process and during the litigation period the advertisement may remain in situ.

- Planning Enforcement tends to negotiate the removal of the unauthorised signs and if applicable, secure a suitable replacement.
- The Council has limited or no control over when proposed development of land, not within its control or ownership, will take place.
- In the particular case of St Edmunds, the developer is due to submit a planning application imminently. This has taken a long time due to the complex and technical nature of this site, also taking into account its status as a Listed Building, a great deal of work and considerations is required prior to the submission of an application. The planning department is working close with the owner of the site on a suitable scheme for the site.

Environmental Health Manager (Environmental Protection), NBC

- It is important to use of a range of methods to raise people's awareness and their roles in keeping Northampton tidy. For example, posters, press releases, social media, radio adverts. People will respond to a variety of approaches. The use of social marketing strategies to reward and incentivise good behaviour can be effective. In some cases, techniques that shame poor behaviour have been used for example, Tidy Britain Pig Campaign; however, these have not always been effective. Campaigns which engage the participants and give them some ownership work well, for example poster competitions where children design an anti-littering poster when the winning design is then used to promote the message are effective. Some campaigns also make use of shock tactics, for example, the "Which Side of the Fence Campaign" where a street of area of land is divided and one part cleaned for a period and the other side not and then the results are publicised. Engaging with groups within a community and giving them a level of ownership in helping to keep their neighbourhood clean has proved to be effective at promoting a sense of pride and ensuring the ongoing maintenance of previously neglected areas.
- The importance of a tidy environment is important; if an area looks clean people are less likely to make it dirty. People need to realise that both chewing gum and cigarette ends are litter. Enforcement action taken as a deterrent to others should be publicised.

- Potential work with the Haulage industry and other transport operators to focus on litter on the move – for example, the extract from North West Leicestershire i Tidy Britain document would be useful.
- Increased promotion of the use of the NBC app. to report incidents of littering fly tipping etc. Possible enhancement of the app. to allow reporting of positives, good points in the community. Possible enhancement of app. for use as a channel to request and coordinate community action e.g. litter picks.
- The engagement process could be enhanced by increasing publicity and ensuring that forms to apply for Community Clean Ups are readily available through a quick link on the NBC website. Have a “How To” button on front page of website. Make things easy for people to get involved. Make further use of community networks to publicise Bloom and other initiatives. Ensure that all NBC staff with community contact are fully briefed on procedures. It is importance that community clean ups are coordinated with and complement cleansing work carried out by contractor - Don't duplicate, enhance! Provide support to enable this to happen. Kangaroo runs are used as a selective tool during weeks of action and as such are not publicised more widely than the immediate area where they are taking place.
- Some of the gateways into the town, particularly those on high speed roads and the accesses to the town centre on Wellingborough Rd, Kettering Rd, St Michaels Rd and Barrack Road and some residential areas (generally those with lower proportions of owner occupation) have a detrimental effect on the town.
- Work with other Agencies could take place to minimise fly-tipping and littering and discourage this taking place, as well as enhancing the gateways into the town Improved clarity in defining land ownership and responsibility for carrying out cleaning. Open sharing of cleaning schedules between organisations to remove duplication. Production of joint publicity campaigns to publicise littering issues.
- Possible work with representative bodies of companies e.g. work with haulage industry and rail operators / network rail on transport litter. Ongoing work takes place on a regional basis to share intelligence about fly tipping. Local authorities across Northamptonshire work together on enforcement sharing good practice, production of publicity materials, standardisation of

approaches in dealing with businesses etc. Resources are shared e.g. CCTV cameras and the expertise to install and analyse results – CCTV use is subject to rigorous control. Currently leaflets on Householder and Business waste duty of care are being updated and will be produced as a web based resource. Joint campaigns take place through this network.

- It would be useful to engage more effectively with other agencies such as major landowners. Potential litter can be generated by a number of sources including wind-blown waste from unsecured materials stored on sites and litter associated with vehicles visiting sites. The fly tipping guidance produced by National Fly tipping Prevention Group is a useful model on collaborative working.
- Schedules and service levels for main areas, town centre / main arterial routes ensure a generally good standard.
- The system needs to be more joined up and easier for people to understand. The marking of bins and other street furniture would make identification easier.

Enforcement is an effective tool. In 2013/14 78 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for littering were issued during 2014/15 up to 1 October, 54 littering FPNs have been issued. 2 FPNs had been issued for dog fouling during 2013/2014 and 5 had been issued so far this year. This is not well publicised a quarterly bulletin may be useful. Attached at Appendix C are full statistics regarding the issuing of FPNs.

- The Environment Health Manager walks to and from the town centre daily and thinks that the route she takes along Billing Road and St Giles Street is of average cleanliness when compared to similar towns and cities. The standards of cleanliness in the main streets in the town centre are very good. In common with many towns, there are some problems with chewing gum stains and with cigarette butts in gaps in paving. Outside the central area main routes are in a poorer state, especially St Michaels Rd, Wellingborough Rd, Kettering Rd.
- It is vital that the community is engaged with. People are much less likely to litter if they feel a sense of pride in and responsibility for their area. There is a difference between thinking that cleansing is the Council's job and realising that it is everyone's job.

Neighbourhood Wardens, NBC

Options to raise awareness:

- Use of roadside banners, adverts on buses, J C Decaux advertising boards, signage around the town, signs on lampposts similar to the ones used to raise awareness of dog fouling, adverts on NBC and Enterprise vehicles. Provision of information in new tenant packs to social housing tenants / students etc. Provision of information to businesses especially about controlling litter from smoking areas / patron generated litter. Doing more publicity on enforcement actions carried out. Carrying out a larger number of targeted campaigns and publicising the results. Providing more funding for Junior Wardens and education activities. Making further use of local media / social media.

Enhancement of community clean up procedure

- Access to the application forms should be easier. Clean ups could be linked with national campaigns such as The Big Tidy Up / Spring Clean etc.
- If communities participate in clean ups is there any way that they could be rewarded by getting an enhanced level of service provision.
- Ensure that if community groups do a clean-up either the waste is removed by our contractor or paperwork is provided so that they can dispose of waste at HWRC
- Provide more resources to support clean ups / equipment.

Areas considered to have a detrimental effect on borough

- The lower part of Kettering Road, St Michaels Rd, Abington Sq, Wellingborough Rd,
- Across the town the fact that verges and shrubberies are poorly maintained and overgrown
- The number of derelict buildings / sites awaiting development in prominent locations is there any way that planning can pressure the commencement of development or require sites to be kept in a tidier manner.

- Potential for funding from new developments towards litter mitigation measures more bins / publicity etc.
- Problems in the town centre in the early mornings and with equipment failure and lack of investment in equipment.

Potential work with other Agencies

- Possibility of providing a truck stop with toilet and café facilities on industrial estates to prevent problems with littering etc. from lorries.
- Work with Highways authority to schedule more cutting back litter picking on main routes.
- Potential for changes in road design to prevent green space in central reservations where weeds grow and litter collects.

Effectiveness of measures of performance

- The perception is that the figures quoted are not met.
- Concern that main gateway routes are not litter picked frequently enough.
- Concern for duplication if multiple reports are received about one fly tip, what mechanisms in place to stop this?
- Suggest that more frequent grass cutting makes the town look tidier as long grass looks bad and creates more mess when it is cut.
- Suggest that fly posters should be prosecuted in a speedier manner.
- Concern that the level of service provided in Northampton has deteriorated since it has been contracted out.

Highways Agency

- The role of the Highways Agency is to manage and monitor strategic networks – motorways and trunk roads. In Northamptonshire these are the M1, A5, A45, A43 and A14. The strategic roads within Northampton consist of the A45 and the M1

- The Highways Agency has close working relationships with the County Council and District Councils in Northamptonshire
- Litter is a problem on motorways and trunk roads and is keen to see improvements, in particular in gateway locations, such as Junction 15 of the M1
- It is currently the responsibility of the Highways Agency to clear litter from motorways and that of Local Authorities to clear trunk roads of litter
- The Highways Agency is currently preparing to become a Government owned company (ALMO) with a longer funding horizon of six years. It is expected that the new organisation will have more autonomy and more available funds. It is hoped that after April 2015 the organisation will be in a position to consider allocating more funds to problems such as littering on the trunk road network.
- The Highways Agency and its contractors carry out regular route inspections. Littering is a problem but it is difficult to enforce against.
- Grass cutting is carried out in the interests of safety/visibility rather than for amenity. Post April 2015, the grass cutting schedule may be able to be reviewed in this respect.
- The Highways Agency does not encourage more signs in situ that are necessary
- The Highways Agency wants to do more about littering. One contribution is running anti-litter messages on variable message signs when not required to issue any advance warning.
- The Highways Agency has a dedicated telephone line that people can use for reporting issues such as littering. Regular checks of the strategic road network takes place too.

Community Safety Manager, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)

The Community Safety Manager, NBC, provided details regarding Street Drinkers. Key points:

- Street drinkers are a difficult client group to work with due to their chaotic lifestyles and complex needs. It is therefore important to

have good partnership working in place in order to address a wide range of issues. Northampton has established a multi-agency approach, in order to effectively utilise available interventions and enforcement tools.

- The approaches outlined in Appendix H demonstrate the wide range of work that is undertaken by agencies. With the introduction of new powers on 20/10/2014, there is now the opportunity to further strengthen this work.
- If an individual does not ask for money and just sits there they are not necessarily breaking the law. Key wording in the relevant Police Act regarding begging is “aggressive begging”
- In Northampton, beggars are issued with a warning letter and “yellow card”, and informed if they are found to be begging again they will be issued with a red card and will be prosecuted. This approach has proved effective and due to this initiative some beggars have now left the town
- New legislation regarding Anti-Social Behaviour now includes the option to add positive sanctions to ‘Orders’, notices and injunctions, such as requiring an individual to attend a Drug and Alcohol Programme
- A number of beggars have serious alcohol problems; mental health issues and/or are homeless. Community Safety is trying to engage more with prolific Street Drinkers in order to address their offending behaviour and also provide support in addressing their issues. Five Street Drinkers are currently engaged in this process, three are doing well and one has taken part in a de-tox programme. Positive actions are being seen but it is not a quick process.
- A CCTV camera is in situ close to where Street Drinkers congregate. A request can be put in that more focussed recording takes place.

Managing Director, Wellingborough Norse

- People’s awareness and their roles in keeping Northampton tidy could be raised through campaigns, community involvement, increased awareness of costs.
- Northampton Borough Council engages Community Groups in keeping Northampton tidy, Community clean ups (and the use of tools such as

- The engagement process could be enhanced by helping the community to help itself. Identify groups currently not involved. This will require knowledge of the complexion of community/neighbourhood groups in the borough.
- Along with the regular Agencies (such as the Environment Agency /Police etc.) increase engagement with Landowners to help minimise fly-tipping and littering and discourage this taking place
- Ensure all measurements are based on what is needed rather than a prescribed specification. Flexibility is key.
- The Managing Director confirmed that his experiences of the main routes into the town centre, both by vehicle and on foot, in terms of cleanliness and tidiness were acceptable
- There is a need to ensure that residents feel pride and responsibility in their town, ownership of the issues. The key elements of Education, Engagement and Enforcement need to be balanced.

Head of Environmental Services covering Cherwell District Council and South Northants Council

- There are a number of ways people's awareness could be raised from one off publicity drives to more sustained campaigns. In Cherwell District Council area Neighbourhood blitz events are used. In these areas week long events covering around 1,500 properties take place, residents are made aware through leaflets and additional street cleansing resources are used to bring up the area to the highest standards. Residents are engaged to try and take pride in their area so that standards do not slip. There are things such as free bulky waste collections in those areas for that week to encourage residents to remove things such as old sofas or white goods. Sometimes these items which may be sitting in their front gardens damaging the overall appeal of an area. Besides Neighbourhood blitz events Cherwell District Council use a cartoon character Major Sparkle to encourage young people to keep areas clean. Environmental Services has a set of flip charts which it can present at primary schools.
- There are no easy answers. It requires sustained engagement is required to keep in touch with Community groups and keep up their level of enthusiasm
- From Towcester, some of the dual carriageways can be scruffy at times. Cleaning such roads is tricky and sometimes requires the use of traffic management to close lanes off so that litter picking can be

carried out safely. This can make cleaning such roads more expensive.

- Working with groups such as Chamber of Commerce and other businesses which have an interest in keeping areas such as the town centre tidy. The provision of cigarette litter bins outside restaurants and licenced premises can help. Working with businesses so that they keep their waste contained and don't put their waste out too early for collection
- Some of the reaction times seem slow compared to others. For example removing weeds on the highways seems a reasonable time, 5 days for litter picking requests seems long. In South Northants or Cherwell, the areas the Head of Environmental Services covers, a request for litter picking would usually be carried out by the end of the next working day. Generally the response times look ok.
- The Head of Environmental Services comes into Northampton about once a month for meetings. Generally he approaches the centre by walking down Gold Street. Usually, the road is litter free. However chewing gum looks to be an issue.
- The effectiveness of the Street Cleansing team is always key. The team must be committed to keep areas clean, work flexibly, clean the areas which need cleaning and not have a work programme which is solely based on cleaning frequencies. The quality of staff is important and staff need encouragement so that they know their work is seen to be of great importance. If the team is effective then efforts through education and enforcement to stop litter and fly tipping occurring are also important. Publicity for successful prosecutions, issuing of fixed penalty notices help get the message to residents that littering and fly tipping will not be tolerated.
- South Northants has different littering issues due to the district being very rural and only having two small urban centres. However Cherwell District Council with three urban centres two of which have 7 day/week shopping some of the issues are similar to those experienced by Northampton Borough Council. Both Councils have a strategy for keeping the district clean by having an effective Street Cleansing team and using education and enforcement as well to keep the districts clean.

**Assistant Director, Highways, Transport and Infrastructure,
Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)**

- Utilising of Community Signs (Such as those used for Community Speedwatch) could raise people's awareness and their roles in keeping Northampton Tidy. These could be brightly coloured and used on a temporary rotational basis in problem areas.
- In some areas ask for a small charge to use Kangaroo run could be requested, this could mean additional runs could be funded. Ref Northampton in Bloom encourage sponsorship.
- Work with other Agencies could take place to minimise fly-tipping and littering and discourage this taking place by the design of new estates which could exclude areas which are often subject to fly-tipping. The provision of additional litter bins at gateways to the town.
- The Town Centre is kept very clean. However, litter is often noticed on the Northampton Ring Road (Danes Camp Way). Traffic management requirements in these areas is expensive and requires a lead in time to implement so it may not always be so reactive.
- Danes camp Way seems sometimes to be prone to litter. Weedon Road could benefit from sign and bollard cleansing
- Northamptonshire Highways is one of the campaign sponsors and has contributed £1,000 towards an anti-littering campaign. Northamptonshire Highways actively attends campaign meetings and is currently considering whether magnetic A3 campaign posters can be carried on maintenance vehicles during March. The variable message signs on approaches into Northampton are used to display/promote messages such "Stop the drop don't litter" during campaign awareness events.
- Over the last year Northamptonshire Highways has operated a county-wide sign de-cluttering scheme. This scheme looks to remove redundant signs and posts from the highway network. Over the last year in Northampton Borough a number of different sign types and post have been removed, these are summarised below:

Sign Type	Description	Numbers Removed
Warning/other signs	Removal of redundant chevron signs on roundabouts and other warning signs within a 30mph speed limit following a review.	26 signs 40 posts
Parking signs	Removal of redundant signs following amendments to parking regulations	81 sign faces 19 posts
Redundant Posts	Redundant posts located within Northampton Borough.	13 posts

- Northamptonshire Highways has adopted a “one up two down” policy. When a new sign is erected, wherever possible two redundant signs are to be removed.
- Redundant signs can be reported to Northamptonshire Highways through the Street Doctor enquiry system
- Cyclical sign cleaning programme is no longer undertaken by Northamptonshire Highways. Signs that require cleaning are identified through planned inspections of the highway or through enquiries from the public. The maintenance crew attending to clean the sign(s) will clean others in the vicinity that require cleaning.
- If members of the public believe a sign requires maintenance it can be reported through the Street Doctor public enquiry system.
- Signs are only replaced when they are no longer fit for purpose (i.e. faded or damaged) or are missing. These are identified through planned inspections of the highway or through reports from the public. The timeframe for replacement of the sign depends on the sign. Stop, Give Way and Chevrons are replaced with the highest level of urgency.
- When signs are replaced consideration will also be given to the sign type and whether it does need to be replaced at all.
- Historically attempts have been made to co-ordinate the grass cutting and litter picking functions that are undertaken where there has only been moderate on-going success. The co-ordinating of activities to reduce costs (i.e. through sharing traffic management) is an area for improvement
- Northamptonshire Highways arranged for additional litter picking and grass cutting to be carried out on a number of grassed verges

ahead of Britain in Bloom in 2014.

- Targeted maintenance of urban roads subject to 24/7 parking has been undertaken by Northamptonshire Highways. Northampton Borough is liaised with during the planning of these works to allow road sweeping to be carried out.
- There is a good working relationship and open communication channels between Northampton Borough and Northamptonshire Highways on the resolution of enforcement issues. These include fly-tipping, graffiti, highway obstructions or vegetation issues.

Northampton BID

- Businesses in Northampton are aware of the importance of a clean and safe town centre, and have proactively supported the funding of new litter bins, the cleaning of vacant premise frontages, organised business clean ups and through a considerable financial contribution towards the refurbishment of a dedicated Street cleansing machine. The town management of Northampton Town Centre is a key objective for Northampton Town Centre BID and as such the BID remains keen to work with both Northampton Borough Council and other agencies to improve the cleanliness, safety and general ambience of the town centre in line with the BID business plan.
- Northampton Town Centre BID have previously worked with Amey and NBC in the last 12 months to organise a Street cleansing event which saw 30 business volunteers work with council partners to undertake a clean-up in July 2014. The BID will consider potential opportunities to undertake similar work again in the future and will liaise with Amey and NBC accordingly.
- Waste storage and collection has been identified as an issue. Bags and boxes of rubbish piled in the street during the day times and into the evening look unsightly, may encourage vermin and be thrown or kicked around by individuals. Northampton Town Centre BID will continue to encourage businesses to take responsibility for the storage and collection of their waste and have worked with waste management companies and NBC previously to better co-ordinate waste collections. Further ongoing support is required by NBC to provide genuine enforcement and advice in this respect.

- Northampton Town Centre BID actively record and report litter and cleanliness issues within the BID area to NBC using the street care application. Response times are monitored against Service Level agreements.

Detailed below is the area covered by Northampton Town Centre BID:

BID Area



Operations Chief Inspector, Northants Police

- Northamptonshire Police has worked closely with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to produce analytical studies of areas of greatest need of partnership concentration of preventative activity. This highlighted five priority areas and these have received a huge amount of attention with weeks of action now emerging as the preferred effective format. There is a need to be working closely with community groups to keep the areas tidy once this has occurred and the ownership needs to be with the community concerned in that with on-going assistance from partners.
- The Police launched Street Watch schemes for this purpose in order to take pride in their areas and engage with the community on the street to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour which The Operations Chief Inspector would see as incorporating littering to a degree. He perceives Street Watch assisting here with engagement with local Borough Council wardens and Housing. Their role should be to be present and passively challenging in the areas concerned including for littering locally, monitoring hotspots and signposting services.
- The Police is working to start up schemes in the key areas in partnership with 'Northampton Voluntary Impact' volunteer service but progress is slower than would have been liked despite The Chief Inspector pump priming this work.
- The five priority areas are some of the most challenging areas for multiple services in Northampton. They also represent generally densest population masses and most challenging demographic in terms of offenders and victims.
- CCTV in forecourts has dissuaded much fuel theft activity. Perhaps a Strategy which incorporated surveillance would have an impact. Policing this would be challenging against the priorities and resources that the Police has.

Network Rail

- Engagement together and working together is beneficial to raise any concerns or actions required. Update newsletters/online information on improvements being made with before and after photos to promote improvements being made.
- Network Rail (NR) also are continuously clearing areas of concern to it and it also runs days engaging community clean ups from litter picking, vegetation and graffiti removal. It, at present, has a large project in

clearing the railway infrastructure of all scrap and historical assets left for many years to enhance the look of our infrastructure from a line side perspective. The Council could work with NR to enhance areas around the railway network that access can be gained too by all parties whilst trains are still running.

- Network Rail has used covert cameras in the past in areas of constant fly-tipping and crime. Signage giving this message sometimes stops these issues from arising. Also routine patrols by security or police can help. Signs with 'call us if you see fly tipping' etc. and contact numbers may also help.
- Street cleansing, cleanliness and enforcement seem effective. Network rail also has a response time set of 20 days for all service requests made via its helpline 08457 11 41 41. It will get to cases and assess degree of work required and determine what is required to remove and make good any issues. Network Rail then plans the works within its teams to rectify the issues. Anything deemed offensive to the public is removed as soon as possible.

Duston Parish Council

Three Parish Councillors from Duston Parish Council provided a response to the core questions. Key points:

- People's awareness and their roles in keeping Northampton Tidy could be increased by raising the profile of on the spot fines
- There is a need for different types and more hanging baskets and tubs. This gives a feel good factor to the town such as the hanging baskets in St James
- There is a need to keep bins emptied. Fast food areas can be a big problem.
- Involve children in Primary schools to encourage them to take care of their areas

3.4 Site Visits

- 3.4.1 Site visits took place to Peterborough and Market Harborough. The purpose of the site visits was for a comparison to be made with other towns against that of Northampton. The Scrutiny Panel also visited Northampton town centre.

3.4.2 Key findings:

Northampton

- St Johns station passage was observed as very clean and tidy.
- Evidence of street drinkers and rough sleepers was apparent.
- Refuse bins outside a restaurant were very tidy, with sacks neatly stacked.
- Investigations are taking place regarding the removal of big waste bins outside commercial properties in the town centre.
- Planting of foliage in brick planters would enhance an area. For example, the tyre planters in Victoria Gardens were admired; giving the area a sense of community pride.

Peterborough

- Peterborough has a big night-time economy, of a similar scale to that of Northampton. The city centre was not very clean, with litter and graffiti visible during the site visit.
- There was a problem with pigeons; the signage “Please do not feed the pigeons” was very useful.
- The toilets were very clean. There is a charge of twenty pence to use the toilets.

Market Harborough

- Market Harborough is smaller than Northampton and is a market town. It has a small night-time economy comprising mainly restaurants and eateries.
- The town centre was very clean with minimal littering.
- Public toilets were of varying standards; one was noted as very clean and well maintained whereas another appeared not to have been cleaned for some hours.
- Telephone boxes appear to attract flyposting.
- There was clear signage regarding the prohibition of drinking alcohol in public places.

3.4.9 Appendix D provides comprehensive findings from the site visits.

4.1 Desktop Research

4.1.1 As part of its evidence gathering process for this review, desktop research was undertaken regarding best practice elsewhere.

4.1.2 Braintree District Council has undertaken a number of programmes aiming to make the environment cleaner and greener, including anti-litter messages to a variety of target audience. It formed a group entitled “the Galleys Corner Partnership” that attracted sign up from a variety of local businesses, including the local Police. The aim of Partnership is to work together to tackle environmental quality.

4.1.3 Galleys Corner Partnership received first prize in the innovation category and best overall project at the National Keep Britain Tidy awards in 2011.

4.1.4 “Love Essex – Anti-Littering Campaign” ran throughout June and July 2014 and was supported by Keep Britain Tidy. It comprised of various roadshows and school visits that were reported as being fundamental in spreading the word to communities.

4.1.5 Cleaner, Greener Oxford was launched in November 2009 with the aim of clearing up the city centre of litter, cigarette butts and chewing gum; the campaign was re-launched in September 2014. Oxford city centre was awarded the Purple flag in 2010 and 2011.

4.1.6 The Keep Britain Tidy Survey 2012/2013 highlighted that the greatest improvement is in detritus and staining. One of the most visible manifestations of poor local environment is graffiti; with just 3% of the places surveyed having an unacceptable level of graffiti. There has not been a significant improvement in the number of places meeting the required standard regarding littering and an increase in the number of places having fast food litter.

4.1.7 Appendix E provides comprehensive findings from the desktop research exercise.

4.2 Purple Flag Accreditation

4.2.1 The Purple Flag Award Scheme assesses each areas crime rates, hygiene standards and a range of visitor attractions.

4.2.2 The reported aim of the initiative is to improve perceptions of places, address imbalances in activities, tackle anti-social behaviour, and encourage a diverse evening offer; providing significant recognition for Councils and partnerships who deliver key services associated with the night-time economy.

4.2.3 Accreditation of Purple Flag is dependent on 30 key factors and street cleansing is only one small part of this. The cleanliness of the centres would be assessed under the well-being section of the criteria.

4.2.4 There are costs for towns and cities to apply to be accredited with the Purple Flag. Costs vary dependent upon the population. Costs for Local Authorities with a population of over 200,000 are £3,000 and £1,000 for a 12 months light touch fee to maintain standard.

4.2.5 Nottingham reports that higher levels of cleanliness have been achieved in the city with 130 new solar powered self-compacting litter bins installed. An iPhone app launched to enable people to report issues of littering and vandalism. A specialist deep cleansing machine, which is jointly funded by Nottingham City Council and the BID, is reported to have a major impact on addressing the issue of chewing gum in particular.

4.2.6 Appendix F provides full details regarding the Purple Flag Accreditation.

4.3 Shop Cleaning Orders (Community Protection Order) and Street Litter Notices

4.3.1 As part of its evidence gathering process for this review, details of Shop Cleaning Orders (Community Protection Order) and Street Litter Notices were obtained.

4.3.2 The key points of the Part 4, Chapter 1, of the Act in relation to littering and cleaning of shop fronts are:

4.3.3 In respect of littering and cleaning of shop fronts, Part 4, Chapter 1 (Community Protection Orders) (CPO) of the above Act states that the community protection notice is intended to deal with unreasonable, ongoing problems or nuisances which negatively affect the community's quality of life by targeting the person responsible (section 43(1)).

4.3.4 The notice can direct any individual over the age of 16, business or organisation responsible to stop causing the problem and it could also require the person responsible to take reasonable steps to ensure that it does not occur again (section 43(3)).

4.3.5 Paragraph 2.5 above provides an example of how Community Protection Orders relate to the cleaning of shops fronts:

“The notice should be issued to someone who can be held responsible for the anti-social behaviour (section 44). For instance, if a small shop were allowing litter to be deposited outside the property and not dealing with the issue, a notice could be issued to the business owner, whereas if a large national supermarket were to cause a similar issue, the company itself or the store manager could be issued with a notice.”

4.3.6 Breach of any requirement in the notice, without reasonable excuse, would be a criminal offence, subject to a fixed penalty notice (which attracts a penalty of £100) (section 52) or prosecution. On summary conviction an individual would be liable to a level 4 fine (currently up to £2,500). An organisation is liable to a fine not exceeding £20,000.

4.3.7 Street Litter Control Notices apply to the following types of business:

- Premises used wholly or partly for the sale of food and drink for consumption either off the premises or on the premises if outside and adjacent to the street.
- Service stations.
- Recreational venues such as cinemas, theatres, sports facilities and pitches.
- Banks and building societies with automated teller machines.

- Betting shops.
- Premises selling lottery tickets.
- Premises 'outside' where goods are displayed for sale on or adjacent to the street.
- Mobile vehicles, stalls and other moveable structures used for commercial or retail activities on a street.

4.3.8 Enforcement officers can help and advise businesses on compliance, but where advice and informal requests to deal with litter problems hasn't worked SLCNs provide an enforcement mechanism which the Local Authority can use. This would place ongoing legal responsibilities onto owners and businesses that are contributing to the problem.

4.3.9 A Street Litter Control Notice is served on the occupier or (if the premises are unoccupied) the owner, so as to place an ongoing obligation on him to comply with the requirement(s) specified for that land.

4.3.10 Comprehensive details are attached at Appendix G.

5 Equality Impact Assessment

5.1 Overview and Scrutiny ensures that it adheres to the Council's statutory duty to provide the public with access to Scrutiny reports, briefing notes, agendas, minutes and other such documentation. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Scrutiny Panels are widely publicised, i.e. on the Council's website, copies issued to the local media and paper copies are made available in the Council's One Stop Shop and local libraries.

5.2 The Scrutiny Panel was mindful of the eight protected characteristics when undertaking this scrutiny activity so that any recommendations that it made could identify potential positive and negative impacts on any particular sector of the community. This was borne in mind as the Scrutiny Panel progressed with the review and evidence gathered.

5.3 So that the Scrutiny Panel obtains a wide range of views, a number of key witnesses provided evidence as detailed in section 3 of this report.

5.4 Details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken can be located on the Overview and Scrutiny [webpage](#).

6

Conclusions and Key Findings

6.1 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:

6.1.1 Evidence gathered highlighted that there were ¾ million fly-tipping incidents reported in England last year.

Keep Northampton Tidy

6.1.2 The Keep Britain Tidy Survey 2012/2013 highlighted that the greatest improvement is in detritus and staining. One of the most visible manifestations of poor local environment is graffiti; with just 3% of the places surveyed having an unacceptable level of graffiti. Nevertheless, there has not been a significant improvement in the number of places meeting the required standard regarding littering and an increase in the number of places having fast food litter.

6.1.3 The Scrutiny Panel noted that Northampton Borough Council has taken successful prosecutions regarding littering. However, it was realised that prosecutions have become more difficult by the recent control of evidence gathering, for example, use of CCTV – surveillance criteria has been tightened up. Previously, Senior Officers had the power to authorise officers to use covert surveillance but this is now not possible, a request must be put through the courts. An application for CCTV covert surveillance is currently pending.

6.1.4 The Scrutiny Panel was concerned about the amount of fly-tipping that is seen in alleyways. It realised that the removal of fly-tipping on public land is the responsibility of the Local Authority. Should the Local Authority decide to remove fly-tipping from private land it can, but this has financial implications.

- 6.1.4 The Highways Agency has launched a national Littering Strategy to investigate how other Agencies deal with littering. The Northampton Waste Partnership is working on an Anti-Littering Campaign.
- 6.1.5 The Scrutiny Panel highlighted that cigarette butts can take up to two years to bio grade and plastic bottles and glass indefinitely. It supported the dissemination of portable ashtrays.
- 6.1.6 The Scrutiny Panel was concerned that the last day of the school term can be a problem as often some of the school leavers will have parties in parks, leaving a lot of litter.
- 6.1.7 In receiving background data, the Scrutiny Panel was pleased to note that the missed bins performance indicator was doing very well.
- 6.1.8 The Scrutiny Panel observed problems with chewing gum around the town. Similar problems were also seen during a site visit to another town.
- 6.1.9 The importance and value of the Report it app. was noted. By October 2014, 983 individuals have used the Apple platform which has been in existence for over year. 270 have accessed the Android app. which was released in April 2014. The Scrutiny Panel felt that all borough Councillors should be made aware of the app, and how it works. The Scrutiny Panel was pleased that the "Report It" app. was evolving but felt that the use of the app. could be widened further, such as the inclusion of a facility to report tree issues, such as over-hanging trees and used as a channel to request and co-ordinate community action such as litter picks.
- 6.1.10 The Scrutiny Panel felt that the planting of foliage in brick planters would enhance an area. For example, the tyre planters in Victoria Gardens were admired; giving the area a sense of community pride.

- 6.1.11 The Scrutiny Panel was pleased that investigations are taking place regarding the removal of big waste bins outside commercial properties in the town centre.
- 6.1.12 Fly-posting is a form of littering and can sometimes be perceived as dangerous to drivers by distracting them. The Scrutiny Panel conveyed its concerns about fly-post advertising, noting previous campaigns whereby adhesive stickers stating “event cancelled” had been placed over illegal flyposting worked very well.
- 6.1.13 The Scrutiny Panel observed the problem with pigeons, agreeing the signage “*Please do not feed the pigeons*” that was seen in Peterborough was very useful.
- 6.1.14 Street Drinkers are a difficult client group to work with due to their chaotic lifestyles and complex needs. It is therefore important to have good partnership working in place in order to address a wide range of issues. Northampton has established a multi-Agency approach, in order to effectively utilise available interventions and enforcement tools. The Scrutiny Panel highlighted that Street Drinkers do not make the town look attractive, and create littering such as empty bottles and cans. There is a need to look at how the multi-Agency approach to Street Drinkers is working. There is a need to look at the town as a whole. As part of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee role, in meeting their responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, a bi annual report from the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is provided.
- 6.1.15 Evidence received highlighted the problem of abandoned shopping trolleys. The Scrutiny Panel felt it would be useful for supermarkets in the town to be contacted to emphasise this problem to them.
- 6.1.16 The Shop Front Cleaning Orders (Community Protection Notices) and Street Litter Control Notices has only recently become legislation. Guidance on the legislation is awaited. The Scrutiny Panel acknowledged the importance of this new legislation and felt it was important that all Members should receive details of it.

Keep Northampton Tidy - Campaigns

- 6.1.17 The evidence received highlighted the need for a range of methods to be used to raise people's awareness and their roles in keeping Northampton tidy. Campaigns such as posters, press releases, use of social media and the media would be useful. It was noted that Campaigns that engage participants and give them some ownership have worked well previously; for example, children designing an anti-littering poster with the winning design being used on the poster. The Scrutiny Panel felt that additional funding for Junior Wardens and education activities would be useful in helping keep Northampton tidy.
- 6.1.18 The Scrutiny Panel emphasised the importance of engaging with the community. Evidence received suggested that people are less likely to litter if they feel a sense of pride in and responsibility for their area.
- 6.1.19 The Scrutiny Panel noted the effectiveness of Kangaroo Runs. However, funding of the initiative can be an issue as some areas of the town suffer from fly-tipping more than others. It would be useful for a budget to be made available for initiatives such as Kangaroo Runs. Each Kangaroo Run costs around £750.
- 6.1.20 The Scrutiny Panel felt that more work is needed regarding streamlining Community Clean Ups so that they are co-ordinated to supplement the cleansing regime of the contract. The Scrutiny Panel also considered that there is potential to publicise campaigns, such as Community Clean Ups.
- 6.1.21 The Scrutiny Panel agreed that education is a key issue in solving littering problems.
- 6.1.22 Littering campaigns at service stations would be useful.
- 6.1.23 Desktop research undertaken noted that Braintree District Council has carried out a number of programmes aiming to make the environment cleaner and greener; including anti-littering messages to a variety of target audience. "Love Essex – Anti-Littering Campaign" ran throughout June and July 2014 and was supported by Keep Britain

Tidy. The Campaign comprised various roadshows and school visits; the aim of which was to spread the word to communities.

Gateways into the town

- 6.1.24 The Scrutiny Panel accentuated the need to improve the gateways into the town, in particular the A45. It felt that the grass cutting scheduled needed enhancing but the Scrutiny Panel realised that the Highways Agency currently undertakes grass cutting in the interests of safety/visibility rather than for amenity. There is also a need to work with the Highways Agency regarding litter picking schedules on the main routes into the town. In its evidence, the Highways Agency confirmed that post April 2015 the grass cutting schedule may be able to be reviewed in this respect.
- 6.1.25 The Scrutiny Panel noted that Network Rail has a response time set of 20 days for all service requests made via its helpline 08457 11 41 41. It will get to cases and assess degree of work required and determine what is required to remove and make good any issues. Network Rail then plans the works within its teams to rectify the issues. Anything deemed offensive to the public is removed as soon as possible.
- 6.1.26 The Scrutiny Panel stressed the need for joined up working, such as during motorway closures, it would be useful for litter picking to take place. It was acknowledged that this is not always convenient as road works usually take place during night-time hours. The fly-tipping guidance produced by the National Fly-tipping Prevention Group is a useful model on collaborative working.
- 6.1.27 The Scrutiny Panel emphasised the need for a “Welcome to Northampton” sign. It was acknowledged that a request had been submitted to the Highways Agency for the erection of the signs but installation costs were high. Extra finance made available for gateways and signage, such as “Welcome to Northampton” would be useful.
- 6.1.28 Evidence gathered detailed that over the last year Northamptonshire Highways has operated a county-wide sign de-cluttering scheme. This scheme looks to remove redundant signs and posts from the highway

network. Over the last year in Northampton Borough a number of different sign types and post have been removed.

Purple Flag Accreditation

- 6.1.29 The Scrutiny Panel recognised that Purple Flag Accreditation can raise the profile of a town centre. It acknowledged that accreditation is dependent upon 30 key factors and street cleansing is only a small part of this. The cleanliness of the centres is assessed under the well-being section of the criteria. There are costs for towns and cities to apply to be accredited with the Purple Flag. Costs vary dependent upon the population. Costs for Local Authorities with a population of over 200,000 are £3,000 and £1,000 for a 12 months light touch fee to maintain the standard. It was realised that it could take time for towns and cities to achieve the 30 criteria of the Purple Flag Accreditation.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was:
- To undertake a review regarding implementing a 'Keep Northampton Tidy' campaign with an accent on preserving wildlife and encouraging children (and adults) to take an interest in their surroundings, to include Community Clean Ups and 'Northampton in Bloom.'
 - A review of the problem of littering and fly-tipping, particularly in un-adopted roads and the gateways into the town.
 - To explore opportunities to enhance the gateways into the town.

Scrutiny Panel 3 recommends to Cabinet that:

Keep Northampton Tidy

- 7.1.1 Investigations take place regarding widening the use the successful Report It App. wider further, such as the inclusion of a facility to report tree issues, such as over-hanging trees report tree issues, and used as a channel to request and co-ordinate community action such as litter picks.

- 7.1.2 All Councillors are sent details of the Report It App. and how it works.
- 7.1.3 Officers, such as Neighbourhood Wardens, are charged with putting adhesive stickers over illegal fly-posts advertising events indicating cancellation of the event.
- 7.1.4 Funding of £2,000 is made available for:
- Officers to be charged with disseminating portable ashtrays in the town centre.
- Chewing gum boards to be erected in various locations in the town centre.
- “Do not feed the pigeons” signs to be erected in various locations in the town centre.
- 7.1.5 To enhance an area, empty brick planters already in situ in the town centre are either filled with various foliage or removed.
- 7.1.6 Officers are instructed to contact supermarkets highlighting the problem of abandoned shopping trolleys in the town and encouraged to participate in trolley collection schemes.
- 7.1.7 All Councillors are provided with details of the Shop Front Cleaning Orders (Community Protection Notices) and Street Litter Control Notices Legislation, the guidance to this Legislation when it becomes available and other relevant Legislation.
- 7.1.8 All relevant Agencies are encouraged to come together on regular basis with the aim of making a contribution to the cleanliness and community safety of the town.
- Keep Northampton Tidy Campaign**
- 7.1.9 Information about resources available are published on the Council’s website.

- 7.1.10 In recognising their success, Cabinet explores the effectiveness of Kangaroo Runs.
- 7.1.11 Additional funding of £5,000 per year is allocated for five schemes with Junior Wardens and education activities.
- 7.1.12 The viability of running a National Citizen Scheme (NCS) to attract mid-late teenagers involvement is investigated.
- 7.1.13 Community Clean Ups are co-ordinated so that they supplement the cleansing regime of the Environmental Services contract.
- 7.1.14 Campaigns, such as Community Clean Ups, are publicised both on the Council's webpage and by the organisers of the Community clean ups.

Gateways into the town

- 7.1.15 Where possible, joined up working between the Local Authority and the Highways Agency regarding major highway closures and litter picking takes place.
- 7.1.16 Where practical, the Local Authority and the Highways Agency arranges littering campaigns at service stations.
- 7.1.17 Post April 2015, the Highways Agency is contacted to ask that it reviews its grass cutting schedule on the gateways into the town to include amenity cuts in addition to safety/visibility cuts; and that it reviews its litter picking schedules on the main routes in the town.
- 7.1.18 Planning Services, Northampton Borough Council, together with the Highways Authority, Northamptonshire County Council, explores improvements to gateways and signage, such as "Welcome to Northampton" signs to be erected on the entrance to Northampton on the A45 and at Billing at Junction 15 (M1); and all other major gateways where signage does not exist. Future financial provision with the Highways Authority is explored.

Purple Flag Accreditation

- 7.1.19 A time limited Action Plan in respect of the 30 criteria of the Purple Flag Accreditation is produced; with the aim of exploring the feasibility of entering an application for Purple Flag Accreditation for Northampton.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 7.1.21 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report in six months' time.
- 7.1.22 It is recommended that a briefing on the Multi-Agency approach to Street Drinkers is presented to a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2015/2016.