

# Scrutiny Review: Street Sweeping

A Review by the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

2017/18

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## Chair's Foreword

Keeping our streets clean is a key concern for Haringey residents and for many of them it is the one Council service that affects their quality of life on a daily basis. The Council has recognised this and has therefore made cleanliness one of its key priorities for the borough. However, the large reductions in funding that the Council receives from central government have forced it to make some very difficult decisions. These have included making savings from the amount of money spent on residential street sweeping by reducing its frequency from twice to once weekly.

There was a concern that standards of cleanliness would deteriorate following the implementation of these changes. With resources as limited as they currently are, it is crucial that the efficiency of the service is maximised. The Panel has therefore looked at how the changes have progressed since implementation to see if improvements can be made. It has found that although the reduction in the frequency of sweeping has made little difference in some areas of the borough, it has not worked everywhere.

Some residential streets will always require more sweeping than others. This is not only true of Haringey but common to most places and – as we heard during the review - a number of other local authorities have developed more flexible ways to deal with this. This has also been prompted, in many cases, by the need to become more efficient due to reduced budgets for street sweeping.

The Panel has carefully considered the current situation and what has worked well in other areas, particularly those with similar characteristics to Haringey. We feel that that *all* residential streets in the borough should enjoy high standards of cleanliness irrespective of where they are located. To achieve this will, by necessity, require the adoption of a more flexible approach to street cleaning, that can respond better to the varying demands of different locations. Residents can also play an important role in helping us improve cleanliness by bringing our attention to issues and providing feedback. We are therefore also keen that the Council work closely with resident organisations and involve them in future work to help keep the borough as clean as possible.



Councillor Tim Gallagher – Chair of Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

## **Recommendations:**

1. That a flexible approach to residential street sweeping be adopted, underpinned by a guaranteed minimum level of cleanliness for all streets in the borough and that this be incorporated into an amended contract with Veolia.
2. That further engagement work be undertaken with residents to develop additional means for them to provide feedback on cleanliness and encourage them to report issues in their area
3. That the feasibility of extending the use of mechanical sweepers be explored further.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The review was set up in response to concerns that were raised by some Members of the Council regarding the consistency of cleanliness across the borough following the reduction in the frequency that residential streets were swept from twice to once per week, which was implemented in January 2016.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny agreed at its meeting on 27 March that the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel would be asked to undertake a short in-depth review on the issue. This would consideration of the following issues:
- Relevant performance data from Haringey, including resident satisfaction levels;
  - Volumes of rubbish collected in different parts of the borough;
  - Service models used by other boroughs and comparative performance levels; and
  - Housing estates and the work undertaken by Homes for Haringey; and
  - The outcome of the Team Noel Park pilot.

### *Terms of Reference*

- 1.3 It was agreed that the terms of reference would be as follows:

“To consider and make recommendations on, within the current level of costs, the options available to improve the cleanliness of residential streets across the borough in order to achieve greater level of equality of outcome.”

### *Sources of Evidence:*

- 1.4 Sources of evidence were:
- Performance data, including resident satisfaction levels;
  - Interviews with key officers, stakeholders and resident groups; and
  - Information and data from other London boroughs, particularly those using different models of service.
- 1.5 A full list of all those who provided evidence is attached as Appendix A.

### *Membership*

- 1.6 The membership of the Panel was as follows:

Councillors: Tim Gallagher (Chair), Barbara Blake, Bob Hare, Clive Carter, Makbule Gunes and Anne Stennett.

Co-opted Member: Ian Sygrave (Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches).

## 2. Haringey Practice and Performance

- 2.1 The changes to residential street sweeping were prompted by the need to save £70 million from the Council's budget for 2015-2018. Proposals on how this would be achieved were outlined in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). These included a cut of £2.8 million in the Integrated Waste Management Contract. The total value of the Integrated Management Contract with Veolia was £16.9m and this included £10.2 million for street cleansing.
- 2.2 The final decision to make changes to the service was taken in December 2015. Alternative options were considered and included the option of adopting a combination of litter picking and sweeping based on need. However, it was agreed to continue to have a standardised borough wide schedule but reduced to once per week, delivered over five days, for residential streets. This reduced frequency included Homes for Haringey property but did not include any reduction in frequency to town centres or main roads. It was envisaged that this would save £860,000.
- 2.3 This rationale behind the decision that was taken was that it provided a consistent approach, with the same service being provided for all wards. It was also simple to explain and provided an equal opportunity for all residents to prevent litter. It was nevertheless acknowledged that there was a risk of reduced cleanliness as well as not meeting the Council's target of being in the top quartile for performance in London.

### *Performance*

- 2.4 Street cleansing performance is measured using the strategic performance indicator and former national indicator NI195 for litter, detritus, graffiti, and flyposting. NI195 scores are derived through randomly monitoring different areas across the borough in three tranches per year. Random sampling is used as it represents what a resident may expect to see. Not every ward will be included in every tranche of monitoring.
- 2.5 Each area is graded from A to D. Grade A means that an area has no issues whilst the worst affected areas will receive a Grade D. Grade B- is a part fail and anything Grade C or lower is a fail. The NI195 figure is based on the percentage of roads sampled that have failed and poor cleansing standards are reflected by a higher NI195 score. NI195 data will not show consistency of cleanliness nor necessarily be reflective of every area of the borough. It may also fluctuate due to which wards are randomly selected for each tranche. It nevertheless provides a general snapshot of borough wide performance.
- 2.6 Overall standards for litter and detritus remained high in both 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (see Appendices 1 and 2) and stayed below the upper limit specified within the waste contract with Veolia. However, there was a spike in performance immediately following the implementation of the changes and a slight decrease in overall performance in the last year. The spike mainly affected the more challenging wards of the borough. Litter was 5% for both 2015-2016, compared to a contractual target of 7%. Detritus was also 5%, compared to a

contractual target of 11%. The first tranche of monitoring for 2017-18 has now taken place. The results are still being challenged and verified so it is not yet possible to draw conclusions about overall performance at this point.

- 2.7 There was a gradual increase in resident satisfaction with street cleansing from 44% in 2005 to 75% in 2015 but a decrease in 2016 to 62%. Despite the drop, this is nevertheless the second highest figure ever recorded. Litter nevertheless continues to be a major concern among Haringey residents and was considered to be one of the biggest local issues by 51% in 2016, 43% in 2015, and 28% in 2012/13. Such levels are to be expected and common to most local authorities. 67% of residents agreed public services were making the area cleaner and greener in 2016, compared to 70% in 2015.

### *Consistency*

- 2.8 Notwithstanding the good overall standards, differences in cleanliness have been identified between different areas of the borough which support the concerns that were expressed about inconsistency. This was demonstrated by an analysis that was undertaken for the review on the variation between areas
- 2.9 The monitoring was limited as not every ward and every land type is monitored on every occasion but it nevertheless allowed comparison to be made between ward performance:
- Every ward has on at least one occasion since 2015/16 achieved a pass grade (i.e. Grade B+ or Grade B);
  - At least 12 wards have not achieved a Grade A for litter and 4 wards for detritus;
  - Most wards have received part fails for litter and detritus; and
  - 8 wards have not received a complete fail for litter and 7 wards for detritus.
- 2.10 Some wards are cleaner than others and remain clean for longer. Alexandra was the cleanest ward surveyed and poorer cleanliness scores are evident in Northumberland Park. Standards in some wards vary from year to year, for example Highgate and Crouch End, and some wards also show consistent mixed standards, for example Northumberland Park and Woodside. Not all wards were surveyed. The quality of ward performance data depends on the number of visits that have been taken and a higher number of monitoring visits provides more robust data.
- 2.11 Performance on detritus showed a similar picture to litter. There was a 5% score in 2015/16 and 3% score in 2016/17 against a contract target of 11%. However, as was the case with litter, there was clear variation in standards between wards:
- A grade A had never been scored in 4 of the 19 wards;
  - All 19 wards had achieved grades B+ and B during the time period;
  - Only one ward had never been graded with a part-fail (B-);
  - A complete fail grade (grade C, C-, D, D-) had not been awarded to 7 of the 19 wards; and
  - Only one ward had been awarded a grade D or below.

- 2.12 The Panel noted the view of Andrew Reidy from Veolia that some areas of the borough are not up to standard. Performance data appears to be strongly influenced by when streets were inspected. It was noted that 70% of inspections were not on the day that sweeping took place. Streets are unlikely to remain at Grade A for long but Grade B is still likely to look acceptable. Mr Reidy felt that what needed to be monitored was how long it took streets to deteriorate to the extent that they needed sweeping again but producing better data is likely to have resource implications. Veolia also do their own monitoring and this could be added in.
- 2.13 Individual borough performance data is no longer readily available as not all boroughs still use the NI195 measure. This means that it is not possible to monitor performance against Haringey's target to be in the top quartile for London by 2018. Performance can also be affected by a range of factors in addition to frequency such as housing density and planning use type so it is difficult to compare the performance achieved by the different models.
- 2.14 The Panel noted that, under the previous system where all residential streets were swept twice per week, some were being cleaned when there was no need. In such areas, the reduction in frequency has made very little difference.

*Lessons from Homes for Haringey and Team Noel Park Pilot*

- 2.15 The Panel heard about how the changes to the frequency of street sweeping impacted on the 20% of the borough's housing stock that are the responsibility of Homes for Haringey (HfH). Tenants receive an estate cleaning service via Veolia through the Council's integrated waste management contract. When the change to a weekly sweep was introduced, Homes for Haringey also agreed to change its sweep frequency in line with the wider contract.
- 2.16 Homes for Haringey undertake monitoring that is similar to the NI195 regime and which also offers tenant satisfaction feedback. It also has well established tenant engagement and feedback mechanisms. The Panel heard that the introduction of the changes coincided with a significant decrease in satisfaction levels. Homes for Haringey put in extra services to increase the sweep frequency in response to this. Following the reversion to twice weekly sweeps, tenant satisfaction levels recovered and estates have now been scored at 99.4% for litter and 100% for sweeping in recent monthly reports. The reversion by Homes for Haringey had had no impact on the achievement of savings by the Council.
- 2.17 The Team Noel Park pilot was set up with the aim of making Noel Park a cleaner and safer place and increasing satisfaction and pride in the area. Although success was achieved through residents being more engaged and having increased pride in the area, street cleansing/fly-tipping issues were even more entrenched and there were lower levels of satisfaction at the end of the pilot than at the start. It had been learnt that behaviour change took time and could not be achieved in a year.

- 2.18 The pilot also sought to strengthen community capacity and ownership of issues. The Panel noted that the project had demonstrated that behaviour change took time. It nevertheless had yielded some benefits. Stronger community links had been developed and resident satisfaction and engagement had increased. However, Noel Park still remained one of the areas of the borough with the greatest challenges around street cleansing and, in particular, fly-tipping.
- 2.19 The Panel noted that it is clear from the experience of Homes for Haringey tenants that greater investment can bring better results. The Noel Park pilot shows that some of the issues and behaviours around street cleansing are entrenched and require longer term strategies. This is particularly challenging where there is a high turnover in tenancies.

### 3. Alternative Models of Service Provision

#### *Methods of Street Sweeping*

- 3.1 A survey of London boroughs was undertaken for the review in order to determine the different methods of street sweeping that are most commonly used. This showed that:
- 13 boroughs run a “flat” schedule of sweeps across their borough, where all street are cleaned a set number of times;
  - 8 boroughs run a ‘needs’ based service, with the frequency of sweeps ranging from weekly to 12 weekly, according to need;
  - 3 maintain to a minimum grade standard This system included frequent inspections e.g. weekly. There is frequent litter picking and cleansing frequency was based on need; and
  - Two run a high frequency - near daily – sweep (Westminster and the City of London).
- 3.2 The bench-marking exercise showed that boroughs which operated the ‘needs’ based model supported this with additional litter picks and regular inspections of all areas in order to maintain standards. Brent operates a needs based system which states that no area should fall below Grade B-. There was still a schedule but this was based on footfall. However, it meant that some areas were being swept once every four weeks whilst others were swept three times per week. It effectively meant that areas in which people littered more got a better service.

#### *Keep Britain Tidy*

- 3.3 The Panel received evidence from Jonathan Gibbon from Keep Britain Tidy (KBT), who are currently working in the borough to assist with the monitoring of performance on litter. KBT was involved in the development of the NI195 methodologies with DEFRA and ran the Local Environmental Quality Survey of England on its behalf from 2001-2015. They have now entered into a partnership with Haringey to monitor performance based on NI195. The partnership has provided the added benefit of giving Haringey access to the KBT network of authorities, where it is possible to share best practice and experience.
- 3.4 Mr Gibbon stated that, up to a point, more frequent cleansing generally leads to higher standards of cleanliness. With reductions in funding though, it was a challenge to allocate limited resources to the right areas. The use of mechanical sweepers was one option that could be effective but they could be less effective in areas where there were a large number of obstructions. It was important to ensure that frequency of cleansing was correct and a flexible approach could assist with this.
- 3.5 He outlined the experience of a number of local authorities who were members of KBT’s network and had adopted a flexible approach to cleansing;
- **Pendle** operate on set routes but allow operatives to judge for themselves whether individual streets required sweeping. They had found that litter that was clearly evident was removed but operatives failed to sweep streets

which did not have much litter. This had resulted in an increase in detritus and weed growth. In response to this, Pendle had changed the frequency of sweeps to concentrate on areas of need. They had described their experience of moving to a flexible approach as mixed.

- **Camden** had adopted a more flexible approach to cleansing under their new contract with Veolia. Operatives followed a schedule but were now allowed to move past a street if it appeared to be clean. There was a tendency for operatives to stick to schedule and the new policy had not yet been fully implemented. Camden felt that it was too early to judge the effectiveness of their new approach.
- **Ashfield** had combined street cleansing and grounds maintenance. They had upskilled operatives and created area-based teams to do what needed to be done rather than just following route sheets. Some staff had taken to this very well and had built good links with community and in-depth knowledge of their area. However, other staff had required more direction. Ashfield had judged the changes to be generally successful. The new approach had started in 2011 and was still in operation.
- **Manchester** used a flexible approach in residential areas. This had allowed them to cover cleansing across the city with limited resources. They had reported no issues with resident perception to date and were happy to talk to any other authorities considering this approach.
- **Stockport** carried out mechanical sweeping and litter bin rounds at night. Streets were no longer cleaned merely so that the public could see someone cleaning them. They worked mainly to a 14 day scheduled service (7 days in some places) and teams attended to areas that needed cleaning. They felt that this allowed them to use limited resources as well as possible. NI195 monitoring had been retained and there was a target of 12% for litter and detritus. Resident perception had not yet been measured but there had been no mention of complaints so it appeared that the changes had been successful.

3.6 In summary, Mr Gibbon stated that flexible approaches still require a schedule and there is a need to offer some direction to staff. It was important when visually assessing the street for all issues to be considered e.g. detritus and weeds, and not just litter. There also appeared to be a need to consider the frequency of cleansing in each area as well as flexibility. Consideration could also be given as to whether to adopt a flexible approach in retail areas as well as residential. There was a tendency to revert to schedules amongst authorities who had switched to flexible systems. A number of other authorities were considering making similar changes. A more flexible approach required strong leadership and a response to residents that adjusted their expectations.

### *Case Studies*

- 3.7 More detailed feedback from two of the local authorities referred to by KBT - Camden and Manchester - was obtained. The is included a visit to Camden to meet with officers to discuss their experience.

### **Case Study - London Borough of Camden**

Camden previously worked to a schedule based street sweeping system, with frequency ranging from twice daily to a minimum of once weekly. In order to make savings of £3 million, Camden undertook a phased reduction in the frequency of sweeping between 2011 and 2014. The emphasis was on providing consistent and appropriate management of streets to keep them clean, rather than focussing on how often they were cleaned. A concentrated effort was also made to work with residents, businesses and visitors to stop them dropping litter in order to help mitigate the reduced spending. From 2015 onwards, different cleaning methodologies were trialled.

Their current system was finalised and implemented from 1 April 2017. The new system is outcome based and specifies that, on completion of any cleansing operations, Grade A standard should be achieved. In addition, all areas covered by the contract are required all times to be maintained to Grade B or above. There is flexibility on how this is achieved. There are still schedules but these can be changed according to the condition of streets. There are key outcome targets and penalties for the contractor if there is a failure to restore cleanliness levels within the specific rectification period. These are dependent on whether the area is classified high, medium or low priority. There are also penalties for failure to empty bins, which are required to be not more than 85% full.

In addition, Camden are now using more machinery than previously, including self-propelled street vacuums and washers. They also had a mobile response resource and were able to segregate clean recyclable material from non-recyclable litter.

The new system is still “bedding in” and it was felt that there was still some work that needed to be done on the south of the borough. Further work is also needed to be done to improve the monitoring information that was available on the condition of streets. They felt that it was important that there is good reporting so that the contractor can respond quickly when streets needed cleaning. The public are a key part of this.

The changes to street sweeping were part of a number of changes that were implemented from April, including changes to the frequency of refuse collections with approximately a third of streets moving to fortnightly collections. There had been some dips in performance in certain areas but it was too early to draw conclusions.

Further performance data is required before final conclusions can be drawn about whether the new system was meeting its objectives. However, there has not been any widespread criticism from residents regarding the new system. One particular advantage of the new scheme is that they are able to respond to reports of streets

needing cleaning from residents. Previously, they would normally have to wait until the street in question was scheduled to be cleaned again.

There has been some increase in complaints but it is not clear whether this is specifically due to the changes to the waste contract. Changes have also made so that it is easier to report problems and to complain, including the introduction of an app and it is possible that this could have led to the increase.

Veolia would shortly be taking over responsibility for taking calls from residents. In respect of the issues that they were experiencing in the south of the borough, it was hoped to rectify these shortly. The area in question (Holborn/Bloomsbury/Covent Garden) was very popular with tourists. There had been a constant street cleaning presence there before the changes and action was required to ensure that standards were maintained.

Performance data to date showed the following:

### Comparison Table vs 2015/16

	Litter	Detritus	Fly-posting	Graffiti	Weed Growth	Staining	Recent Leaf & Blossom Fall	Fly-tipping
NI195-style results 17/18 T1 - Camden	4.03%	3.46%	2.64%	5.83%	5.65%	15.56%	2.22%	4.44%
NI195-style results 2016/17 - Camden	2.18%	2.53%	1.76%	3.89%	3.92%	10.28%	3.61%	3.01%
KBT Greater London benchmark 2015/16	4.76%	4.56%	1.17%	2.40%	3.94%	7.89%	5.12%	2.24%

### Case Study – Manchester City Council

Manchester’s waste contract always had an element of flexibility within it. However, the new waste contract with Biffa, which began from July 2015, explicitly included such an approach. All residential streets are required to be maintained to at least Grade B. District centres are cleaned every day and there is a constant presence in the city centre. There are penalties if the contractor fails to restore levels of cleanliness within a specified time. The Council has a small assurance function to ensure that performance was being achieved.

The flexibility is underpinned by schedules that reflect how often streets typically need to be cleaned. Cleanliness is not reliant on just responding to issues that are raised by residents. If streets are already clean, they are left. Follow up inspections are undertaken on the day of cleaning to ensure that standards are maintained.

Standards have not only been maintained but have improved since the new contract was implemented. NI 195 monitoring is still undertaken. The contractor has become more sophisticated in how it operates and in its scheduling. It was Biffa's responsibility to work out effective schedules and implement them. These have evolved over a period of time. Some areas of Manchester need far more street sweeping than others and the schedules have developed to reflect actual requirements.

Members had been nervous about the new approach but there had not been any noticeable increase in complaints from residents. The approach did not mean that some streets were neglected. All streets were inspected but they were only cleaned if they needed to be. The new arrangements required operatives to exercise a level of discretion but this was fairly limited in practice.

#### *Feedback from Resident Organisations*

- 3.8 The Panel heard from some representatives of resident associations. One had been involved in the Team Noel Park pilot project. The primary focus of this had been on fly tipping but he had hoped that it would also lead to greater co-operation between grounds maintenance and street sweeping. He was of the view that a model similar to that used in Ashfield would suit Haringey best as it was based on conferring with residents and involved an unscheduled approach. The condition of the pavements in Noel Park made street sweeping difficult. He did not feel that a lack of complaints was a useful performance indicator of performance as the majority of residents were unlikely to report poor sweeping on-line. Some areas of the borough were remarkably clean though.
- 3.9 Another resident stated that she felt that Hornsey was very clean but there were other people who did not share this view. It was likely that some parts of the borough needed sweeping more than others. In particular, wards in the east of the borough were more densely populated, had more young people and also had more people who were new to the borough. The frequency of street sweeping did not necessarily need to be specified completely.

#### *Community Engagement*

- 3.10 The Panel noted that there had been an "environmental champions" scheme within the borough but this had fizzled out. It had nevertheless been a worthwhile scheme and would be worth re-visiting. A resident representative commented there were already groups in existence that could be used to promote cleanliness, such as neighbourhood watch and resident associations. Engagement and information sharing could make a difference as attention could be drawn to problems at an early stage. Mr Gibbon reported that environmental

champion schemes could be effective. Lambeth had a scheme called Community Freshview, which involved residents in improving the local environment by tidying and brightening up the area. This included installing planter boxes where fly tipping had taken place.

- 3.11 Resident representatives felt that access to information regarding littering would help to motivate residents to address the issues. The Panel noted that a range of performance information, including some relating to littering, was available on the Council's website.

*Association of London Cleansing Officers*

- 3.12 The Panel received evidence from Stephen Didsbury, the Head of Waste and Public Protection at the London Borough of Bexley and secretary of the Association of London Cleansing Officers. He provided a case study of the approach followed by Bexley but stated that this would not necessarily be effective in Haringey. Bexley had been required to make similar savings to those made by other local authorities and these had made changes to their cleansing services necessary. Mitigations had been introduced in order to reduce their impact.
- 3.13 Bexley is a fairly densely populated area, with a population of around 250,000 and approximately 100,000 households. A lot of litter is generated by shopping centres and therefore close attention is given to them. The main shopping streets are cleaned daily before 8:00 a.m. and, in addition, particular attention was also give to the first 100 metres of residential roads leading off these. If litter can be contained within these areas, other residential streets can be cleaned less frequently. The Panel noted that the first 50 metres of side roads off of main shopping streets received similar attention in Haringey.
- 3.14 The budget for the service in Bexley is just below £3 million. Roughly one third of this is spent on shopping centres. There is an emergency response team to respond when cleansing was required urgently. Residential streets are swept every three weeks but consideration is now being given to a more frequent service as some streets are beginning to look dirty just before they are were due to be cleaned again. There had also been reduced frequency in grass cutting but it was found that litter was getting stuck in the longer grass so this change had been suspended.
- 3.15 Littering is a criminal offence and therefore needed to be treated as one. As part of Bexley's current enforcement policy, Kingdom had been commissioned and had now issued over 4000 Fixed Penalty Notices since October 2016. There was a payment rate of approximately 75%. There has also been over 150 successful prosecutions, with £50,000 of fines and costs. It was likely that the amount raised by fines would diminish in time as awareness of the enforcement action spread.
- 3.16 He reported that mechanical sweepers are now heavily used and these tend to do a better job than manual sweeping. They produce straight edges, which look cleaner. 75% of cleansing staff are now drivers. This approach contrasted with

neighbouring Greenwich, who had three times as many staff but no equipment. Such an approach would not necessarily work in Haringey. In particular, heavier mechanical sweepers cannot be used where pavements were uneven.

- 3.17 Bexley had also introduced Community Litter Picking, which aims to bring community resources to help address litter. As part of this, groups of residents have assisted with litter picking. This had been used mostly in areas used for recreation and on grass verges. It was thought that people were less likely to litter if they can see their neighbours assisting in keeping the neighbourhood clean.
- 3.18 There is a programme in schools to promote recycling and this had been extended to include littering. The schools programme had started in June 2017. In first 6 weeks, there had been the following as part of this:
- 22 Litter picking activity sessions, with the litter collected sorted into waste and recycling to help the recycling message; and
  - 17 Litter school assemblies, with over 3000 schoolchildren reached and littering messages taken back to parents.
- 3.19 Mr Didsbury felt that the three weekly frequency of residential street sweeping generally worked well although streets to the north of the borough could start to look dirty towards the end of the period. There are two litter patrols though and these visit some roads half way through the period. There are also two mobile response teams to deal with emergencies. A lower level of frequency had been considered but it was felt that this might cause problems. Whilst it seemed to work in Bexley, he felt that only sweeping every three weeks would probably not work in Haringey due to its greater density. NI195 monitoring was no longer undertaken by Bexley but complaint levels were monitored and the number of these that related to street sweeping had dropped by 20%.
- 3.20 Mr Didsbury commented that the street sweeping that was undertaken was very intense and streets therefore took longer to deteriorate. At one stage, intermediate litter picking had been removed but this had not been successful. There had recently been a change of leadership within the Council and street cleansing was now assuming a higher level of priority.
- 3.21 The Panel noted that Haringey had commissioned an education and outreach function from Veolia but this had been scaled back due to the need to make savings. Education was effective but it could take time before the benefits were realised. Technology could now be used to get the message through. The Council was keen to maintain the outreach function and this would be discussed with Veolia. It was noted that needs or outcome based models could bring flexibility but required a robust level of monitoring. However, both flat schedule and needs or outcome based models tended to be hybrids of each in practice.
- 3.22 Haringey also has a mobile response team to deal with any emergencies although this is not as developed as Bexley's. It was likely that a flexible system could be structured so that there was also a minimum level of sweeps.

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 The reduction in the frequency of residential street sweeping from twice to once weekly has made little difference in some areas of the borough but it has not worked everywhere. Monitoring undertaken as part of the review has shown that there is a lack of consistency in cleanliness, with some wards staying cleaner for longer than others. The Panel also noted the view of Mr Reidy Veolia that some areas of the borough are not up to standard.
- 4.2 There are reduced resources for residential street cleansing and it therefore makes sense for them to be used where the need is greatest. The Panel feels that there should be a high standard of cleanliness across the borough, irrespective of location. The fact that some residential streets require more sweeping than others cannot be ignored. This phenomenon is not unique to Haringey and it is common to virtually all local authority areas. It is not possible to provide a consistent level of cleanliness across the borough without sweeping some streets more than others. Whilst residents will arguably not be receiving an equitable level of service in such circumstances, they will nevertheless be receiving an equitable level of outcome provided all streets are kept to a similar level of cleanliness.
- 4.3 The Panel therefore feels that a greater degree of flexibility needs to be built into the street sweeping contract. Such an approach will provide greater scope to respond effectively to the varying demands of different areas of the borough. This should nevertheless be underpinned by a minimum level of cleanliness that all residents should be entitled to expect. It notes that both Camden and Brent's contracts requires that a minimum level of Grade B should be maintained for all streets by the contractor, with penalties for failing to restore levels of cleanliness within a specified period of time. Camden's contract also specifies that all streets should be cleaned to a Grade A standard. It recommends that a similar approach be adopted in Haringey.

### ***Recommendation:***

**That a flexible approach to residential street sweeping be adopted, underpinned by a guaranteed minimum level of cleanliness for all streets in the borough and that this be incorporated into an amended contract with Veolia.**

- 4.4 One of the reasons behind the adoption of the current once per week street sweeping system was that it provided an equal opportunity for all residents to prevent litter. It was therefore at least partially based on bringing about behaviour change and involving residents. The Panel strongly supports such efforts. However, the evidence from the Team Noel Park pilot and the experience of other boroughs is that such initiatives take time to deliver benefits and are very much long terms options. However, engagement of the public should be an essential part of a more flexible approach to street sweeping and, in particular, could provide a valuable additional source of intelligence regarding the cleanliness of streets.
- 4.5 The Panel has noted the importance of effective monitoring in ensuring that contractual standards are met. There are now considered to be sufficient

resources in-house to provide the level of monitoring that may be required by a more flexible system of street sweeping. Resources are nevertheless limited and, in such circumstances, the Panel would recommend that engagement be undertaken with resident organisations with a view to finding ways in which they may also be able to contribute feedback on cleanliness in their area and therefore supplement the Council's performance information. In addition, further work should be undertaken to encourage more residents to report issues in their area. One of the advantages of an outcome based system of street sweeping is that it is easier to respond positively to such reports of streets that require sweeping.

***Recommendation:***

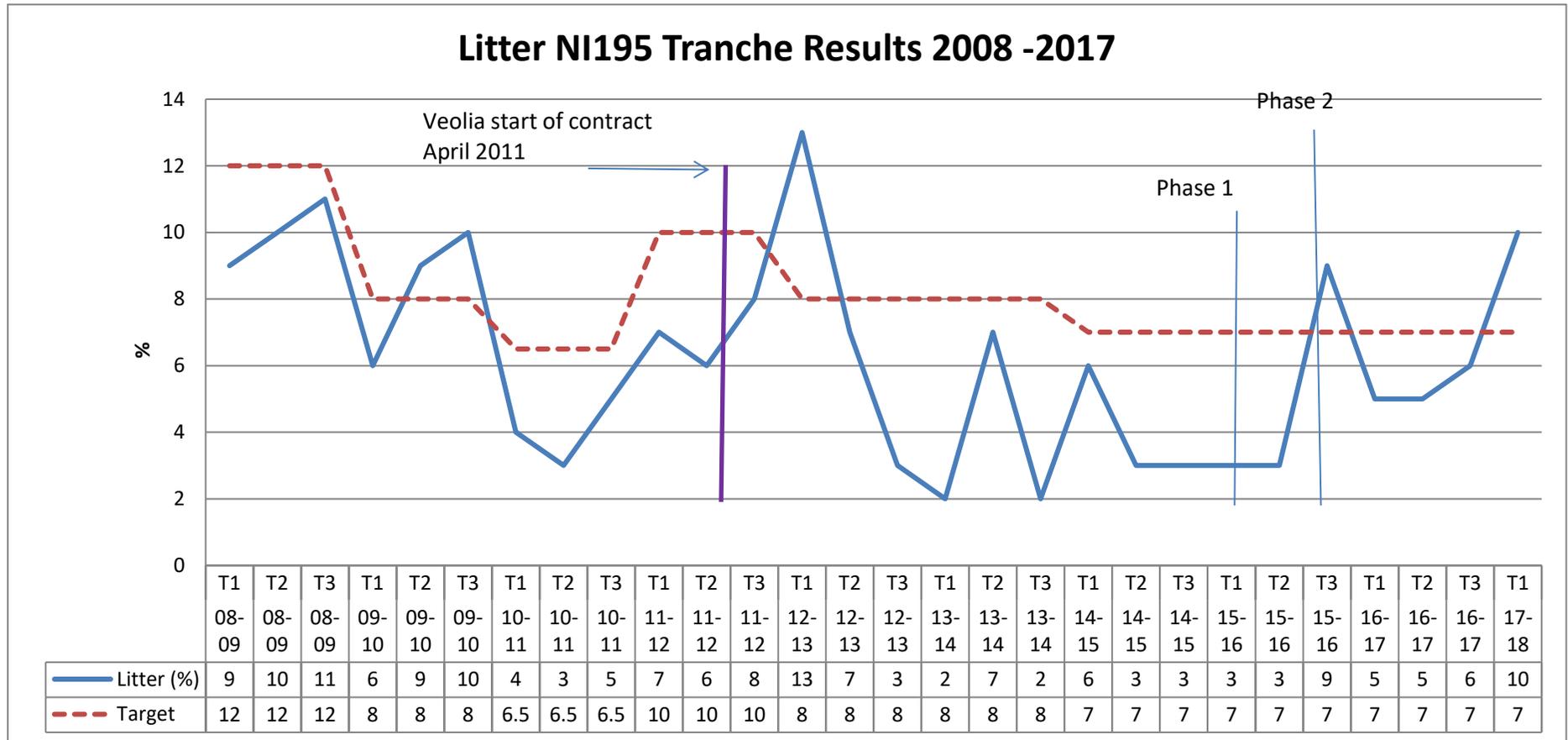
**That, further engagement work be undertaken with residents to develop additional means for them to provide feedback on cleanliness and encourage them to report issues in their area**

- 4.6 Both Camden and Bexley are increasingly using more mechanised means of sweeping. Mr Didsbury commented on their effectiveness in improving the appearance of cleanliness in an area. The Panel also noted that Haringey officers were interested in providing a more mechanised service. However, Haringey's streets are different to Bexley and a number would not be suited to mechanical cleansing due to their condition. The Panel would nevertheless recommend that the feasibility of extending the use of mechanical sweepers be explored further.

***Recommendation:***

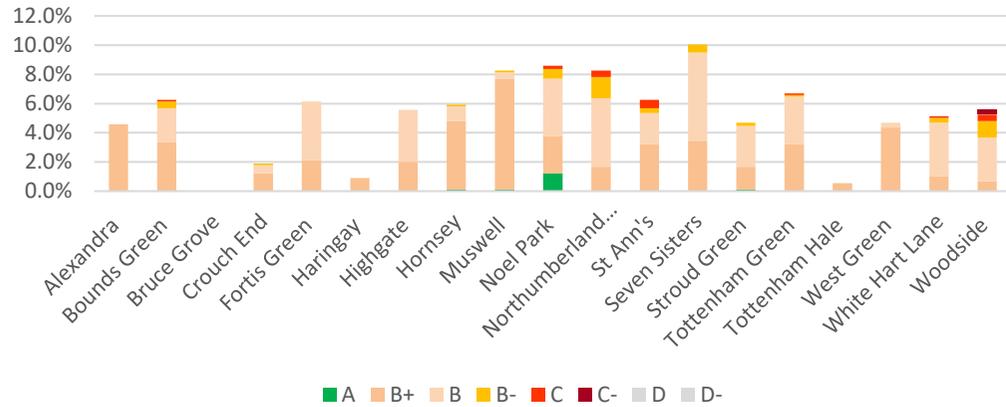
**That the feasibility of extending the use of mechanical sweepers be explored further.**

Appendix 1: Street cleansing performance between 2015/16 to present

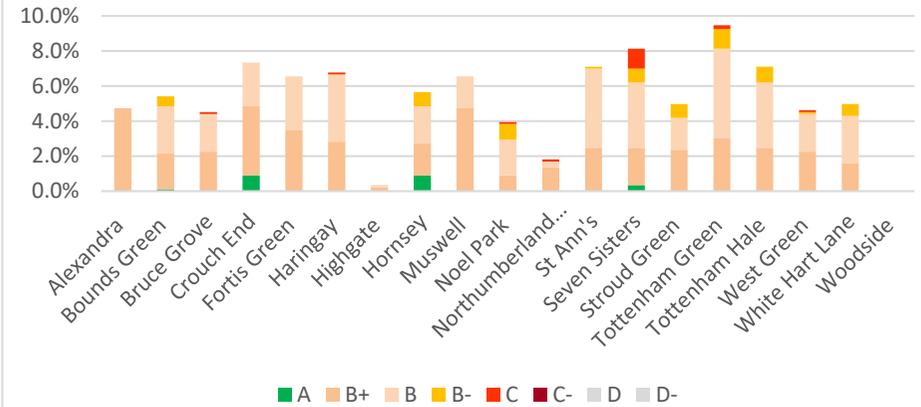


## Appendix 2: Performance by Ward for Litter and Detritus

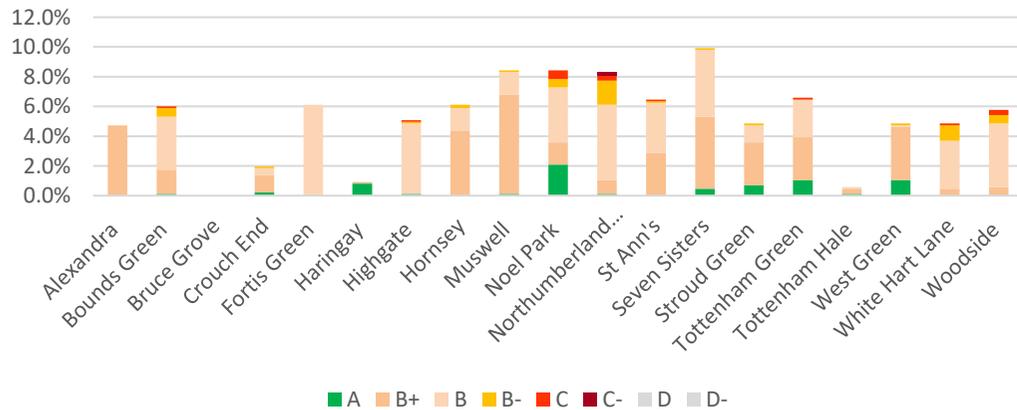
### 2015-2016 Litter



### 2016 - 2017 Litter



### 2015-2016 Detritus



### 2016-2017 Detritus

