

# Joint Scrutiny Committee Agenda



Listening Learning Leading



Contact: Susan Harbour, Democratic Services Team Leader  
Telephone 01235 540306

Email: [susan.harbour@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:susan.harbour@southandvale.gov.uk)

22 July 2015

[www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

A meeting of the

## Joint Scrutiny Committee

will be held on Thursday, 30 July 2015 at 6.30 pm

Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton OX14 4SB

### Members of the Committee:

#### Councillors

Richard Pullen (co chair), South

Judy Roberts (co chair), Vale

Martin Akehurst, South

Alice Badcock, Vale

David Dodds, South

Katie Finch, Vale

Monica Lovatt, Vale

Ben Mabbett, Vale

Bill Service, South

John Woodley-Shead, South

#### Substitutes

##### South

Pat Dawe

Jeanette Matelot

Alan Thompson

Ian White

##### Vale

Every political group may appoint all or some of its members who are not voting members to serve as substitute members, provided that they are not members of the Cabinet

**Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio, email and easy read. For this or any other special requirements (such as access facilities) please contact the officer named on this agenda. Please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**



Margaret Reed, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

# **Agenda**

## **Open to the Public including the Press**

### **1. Confirmation of chairing arrangements for Joint Scrutiny**

To confirm Judy Roberts to chair the first meeting, and the arrangements for future meetings.

### **2. Notifications of substitutes and apologies for absence**

To record the attendance of substitute members, if any, who have been authorised to attend in accordance with the provisions of standing order 17(1), with notification having been given to the proper officer before the start of the meeting and to receive apologies for absence.

### **3. Minutes and actions arising and referral**

This is the first meeting of this committee, so there are no minutes, actions arising or referral for consideration.

### **4. Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting; and of any other relevant interests.

### **5. Urgent business and chair's announcements**

To receive notification of any matters, which the chair determines, should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances, which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chair.

### **6. Statement, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee**

Any statements and/or petitions from the public under standing order 32 will be made or presented at the meeting.

### **7. Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings (Pages 9 - 10)**

To review the attached scrutiny work schedule. Please note, although the dates are confirmed, the items under consideration are subject to being withdrawn, added to or rearranged without further notice.

## REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### 8. Annual review of the waste contract: Biffa

(Pages 11 - 29)

*To receive the report of the head of corporate strategy.*

#### **Minutes of the previous Scrutiny review meetings**

Vale 20.3.2013

*Reg Waite, Cabinet member for waste, Ian Matten, and Simon Chown from Biffa were available to answer questions from the committee on the contractor's performance, and the council's management of it during 2013:*

*The committee considered that "fair" was a harsh outcome for 30 missed collections per 100,000 and would like the bench marking for this KPT to be reviewed.*

*Last year's minutes reviewing this contract stated:*

- *There had been an increase in the amount of non-recyclable waste. The committee suggested that there should be a further publicity campaign, reminding householders of what could be recycled. The committee asked the Cabinet member and the contractor to monitor the effect of this campaign and report back to the committee in due course.*

*Following this, Biffa undertook to:*

- *Report back to the committee on the impact of the publicity.*
- *Include more literature when sacks are delivered to residents who use the sacks.*
- *Provide information on the recycling of detritus: the scheme started in September/October last year.*
- *Liaise with town and parish councils on issues such as Christmas tree recycling.*

*Further discussions points were as follows:*

- *Food waste as recycling has decreased, but there is no evidence of it going into recycling or landfill and there may be a reduction in the amount of food wasted.*
- *There is an overall (and across Oxfordshire) increase in landfill, but there are no discernable reasons: the percentage of recycling has not changed*
- *If data is available, it will be broken down on an area basis next year.*
- *The situation of contamination at Dalton Barracks has been successfully addressed.*
- *There have been no ongoing complaints about the removal of the bring sites and contamination of former sites has improved.*
- *360 degree cameras with audio will be fitted into vehicles to record data and pick up information. This will comply with the Data Protection Act and management of information. Biffa, not Vale is controlling the data and legality remains with Biffa.*
- *Biffa have had 26 compliments and ten complaints.*
- *Committee noted that communication between Vale staff and Biffa is improved on street cleansing.*

*The committee requested the following:*

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils  
Joint Scrutiny Committee agenda - Thursday, 30 JULY 2015

- *Improved information for new tenants/residents on absent bins when they took over a property.*
- *A further improvement at Dalton Barracks next year.*
- *That details of broken down vehicles is notified to ward councillor/ public.*
- *Information on the recycling of detritus, landfill tax and recycling credits to be provided next year.*
- *For arrangements to be made for councillors wanting to see a demonstration of the new technology.*

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) *to recommend the Cabinet member for waste to award a “good” performance rating to the waste management contractor Biffa (and wished to add its comment “tending towards excellent”), for its performance in 2013; and*
- (b) *to ask the officers to follow up the actions listed in the bullet points above.*

South 22.4.2014

*Mr Ian Matten, Waste and Parks Service Manager, and Mr David Dodds, Cabinet member, introduced the report and answered questions from the committee. Mr Simon Chown, contract manager for Biffa, answered questions and showed photographs of the ‘deep clean’ of streets across the district.*

*In answer to questions, they explained:*

- *the process for registering and rectifying a missed collection;*
- *free garden waste collections were offered to all properties on military bases as this was more cost-effective for both the occupants and the council given the high turnover in occupants;*
- *staff turnover was relatively high as people moved on in their careers and Biffa was taking steps to improve retention rates;*
- *Installation of 360° cameras on vehicles would give evidence in cases of allegations of damage from reversing vehicles. There should be no incidents if procedures were followed;*
- *information about recycling and waste collection was sent to every newly built home.*

*Councillors discussed the reasons for the fall in the recycling rate. Street sweepings had to be landfilled in accordance an Environment Agency directive, which reduced the recycling rate by approximately three per cent. Alternative treatments were being evaluated. The campaigns to reduce packaging had the effect of reducing this by 20-30 per cent; and the campaign to reduce food waste was also having an effect. Additional houses increased the total amount of waste produced. However, there was no clear reason why the national trend should be for increased waste tonnages and decreased recycling rates. Councillors noted that waste would now be sent to Ardley for incineration. The termination of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership reduced the ability of councils to publicise and co-ordinate waste reduction campaigns.*

*They asked for confirmation of the accuracy of 2013 figures in table one on page 6.*

*Councillors expressed the view that the evaluation of the missed bins target as fair was harsh as the number of missed bins was very low. The calculation should be revised. They appreciated the work done during the deep clean, and residents were pleased with the results.*

*They suggested a campaign to encourage people not to drop litter and ruin the good work of the street cleaning teams.*

**RESOLVED:**

*To recommend that the Cabinet member for finance, parks and waste assess the performance of Biffa Municipal Limited in delivering the household waste collection, street cleansing, and ancillary services in South Oxfordshire from 1 January to 31 December 2013 as:*

**Good**

**9. Annual review of the horticulture contract: Sodexo**

**(Pages 30 - 47)**

To receive the report of the head of corporate strategy.

**Extract from minutes of the previous Scrutiny review meetings**

*Vale 20.3.14*

*Councillor Reg Waite, the Cabinet member for commercial services; Ian Matten, waste and parks service manager, and Matthew Fowler, regional director with Sodexo, came to the table to introduce the report and to assist the discussion.*

*Councillor Waite introduced the report to the Committee. Sodexo had completed 13 of the 15 points which were in their action plan for the year, and the other two items were on track.*

*The Committee discussed this item and below is a summary of the main points:*

- *The contractors are showing continuous improvement against contract and there has been a low level of complaints: the complaints which have been received show no particular pattern.*
- *Town and parish councils have been consulted for their views on the performance of the contract as per last year's Scrutiny Committee request.*
- *The committee was pleased with the apprenticeship scheme run by the contractor.*
- *There may need to be a review of time-scales on notifications by the council to address issues; it needs to be considered in agreement with the contractor, rather than imposed by the council as at present.*
- *The committee was pleased with the retention of the Green Flag status in Abbey Gardens.*
- *Dissatisfaction from the public relating to parks may not necessarily be issues related to this contract.*
- *Committee asked to know whether customers who were dissatisfied with the parks were dissatisfied with the same or different parks.*
- *Abbey Meadows is cleared frequently of litter but has very high usage. Additional bins will be provided in the summer. There were very few comments in the customer satisfaction survey about litter in Abbey Meadows.*
- *A new tracking system will be introduced to show where the crews are located, and the council will have access to this information.*
- *The contractor is able to draw resources across contracts where need.*
- *The contractor has requested that the council "support with winter works to retain our*

*(sic) seasonal workforce". In response to the committee's request for clarification, the contractor is looking for work to undertake during the non-growing season to enable them to retain the expertise of their workforce from one year to the next. The committee recognised that this was an operational matter, not a Scrutiny one, but saw that this could be beneficial in some circumstances.*

*The committee requested the following:*

*For the next annual review to provide the following information:*

- *To include consultation with the town and parish councils, even where they are not the owners of the parks, as some customer comments may go to them.*

*For next year's action plan to contain the following information:*

- *Communications*
- *Time/response targets*
- *Tracking of operations technology*
- *Play areas – annual report and weekly visual inspection*
- *To know whether customers who were dissatisfied with the parks were dissatisfied with the same or different parks.*

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) *To recommend the Cabinet member for waste to award a "good" performance rating to the grounds maintenance contractor, Sodexo, for its performance in 2013; and*
- (b) *to ask the officers to follow up the actions listed in the bullet points above.*

*South 22.4.2014*

*The committee considered the report of the head of corporate strategy setting out the performance of Sodexo Limited in providing grounds maintenance services in South Oxfordshire from 1 January to 31 December 2013.*

*Mr Ian Matten, Waste and Parks Service Manager, and Mr David Dodds, Cabinet member, introduced the report and answered questions from the committee. Mr Kevin Harkness, representing Sodexo, answered questions.*

*They explained that performance had improved since the previous review. The majority of the work under the joint contract was carried out in Vale of White Horse District Council. Work for this council covered diverse small areas mainly around Didcot and burial grounds in Kidmore End and Wallingford. Customers and council officers looked for different things from the contractor. The apprenticeship scheme was going very well. Officers were working on setting more realistic and achievable timescales for resolving complaints and notifications.*

*Councillors congratulated Sodexo on its apprenticeship scheme and on exceeding its health and safety targets.*

**RESOLVED:**

*To recommend that the Cabinet member for finance, parks and waste assess the performance of Sodexo Limited in providing grounds maintenance services in South Oxfordshire from 1 January to 31 December 2013 as:*

**Good**

## **10. Introduction to Scrutiny and terms of reference for joint working**

**(Pages 48 - 49)**

Attached to this agenda is an introduction to scrutiny. The terms of reference for this committee, agreed by both annual councils, is laid out below (extract from original report).

There will be full training for councillors on scrutiny matters, in November, which will be delivered by the Local Government Association. At this joint scrutiny meeting, councillors are encouraged to ask questions on the role of scrutiny and also to consider practical ways of supporting the work of the joint committee, within the terms of reference of the committee.

### **Joint Scrutiny Committee**

1. Council is invited to consider the establishment of a joint scrutiny committee to meet at least twice a year to review a number of standing items that affect both councils as set out below:
  - Performance reviews of joint contracts
  - Other issues that affect both councils jointly
2. Joint Scrutiny may meet on additional occasions if the need arises.
3. The purpose of a joint scrutiny committee is to ensure a consistent approach, avoid duplication of resources and improve joint working between both councils. This committee will only seek to address matters which are being progressed across both councils.
4. The creation of a joint scrutiny committee meeting initially twice a year, with an option of increasing joint meetings as we go forward, would reduce the number of reports being written and the number of evening meetings staff have to attend and would enable contractors to attend just one meeting a year. Running joint meetings in addition to those already scheduled at each council would have resource implications in terms of staff capacity. Officers therefore propose a reduction in the number of Vale scrutiny committee meetings by two.
5. The information below sets out the proposed membership of the joint committee, arrangements for the location and regularity of meetings, the proposed chairing arrangements and the proposed terms of reference.

### **Membership**

- Five councillors from Vale of White Horse District Council (not cabinet members); and
- Five councillors from South Oxfordshire District Council (not cabinet members).
- Politically balanced in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. (Politically balanced by council, not necessarily across both councils).
- Substitutes from the political groups (not cabinet members).

### **Quorum**

Four members, two from each council.

### **Regularity of meetings**

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils  
Joint Scrutiny Committee agenda - Thursday, 30 JULY 2015

At least two per year, with additional meetings on an *ad hoc* basis.

**Location of meetings:** At the councils' offices in Milton Park.

**Chairmanship**

- The committee will be co-chaired (one from each council) and the person presiding at any meeting will alternate between the two councils. These shall be non ruling group and non Cabinet members and their will be no vice chair.

**Terms of reference**

- to monitor the performance of contractors delivering joint contracts;
- to consider any matter affecting both areas or their inhabitants jointly (subject to the agreement of the chairmen of each council's scrutiny committee).

The establishment of a joint scrutiny committee will not impact upon the ability of each council's scrutiny committee to review specific issues covered by the above terms of reference – for example a specific issue relating to a contract.

**Scrutiny Call-in**

The right to call in decisions, in line with the council's constitution, will remain with the district Scrutiny committee, but the chairman of this committee may choose to refer it to the joint committee.

If agreed officers will make the necessary changes to the council's constitution to reflect the above.

**EXEMPT INFORMATION UNDER 100A(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**



## Schedule for Scrutiny Committees 2015/16

(further items to be added to agenda as required)

Meeting date and venue	Type and chair	Agenda items	Notes
Tues 21 July	<b>South</b>		Replaced by Joint
Thurs 30 July	<b>Vale</b>		Replaced by Joint
Thurs 30 July Milton Park	<b>Joint - Judy</b>	-Intro to Scrutiny -Terms of Reference -Arrangements for joint scrutiny -Biffa -Sodexo	Replaces 21 July South and 30 July Vale  <b>Cabinet members:</b> Elaine Ware (Vale) Tony Harbour (South)
20 August Beacon	<b>Vale</b>	-Unmet housing need in Oxfordshire.	<b>Cabinet member:</b> Leader of the council, Matt Barber
22 September Milton Park	<b>South</b>	-Financial outturn to March 2015	<b>Cabinet member:</b> Jane Murphy
Thurs 24 September Beacon	<b>Vale</b>	-Financial outturn to March 2015 - Review of the Beacon -Performance of housing associations	<b>Cabinet members:</b> Charlotte Dickson Roger Cox
Thurs 22 October Milton Park	<b>Joint - Richard</b>	-Review of Capita -Homelessness Strategy	<b>Cabinet members:</b> Jane Murphy (South) Matt Barber (Vale) Elizabeth Gillespie (South) Roger Cox (Vale)  No equivalent South meeting
Tues 24 November Milton Park	<b>Joint - Judy</b>	-Corporate services contract: tender evaluation results	<b>Cabinet Members:</b> Matt Barber (Vale) Lynn Lloyd (South)  Replaces 24 Nov at South and 26 Nov at Vale
Thurs 7 January Beacon	<b>Vale</b>	Temporary Accommodation strategy ? Wi Fi in Vale Towns = if still a problem or need update	<b>Cabinet members:</b> Roger Cox (Mohinder Kainth)  No equivalent South meeting
Tues 9 February Milton Park	<b>South</b>	-Revenue budget and capital programme -Local plan progress report: issues and options	<b>Cabinet members:</b> Jane Murphy Elizabeth Gillespie

Thurs 11 February Beacon	<b>Vale</b>	Revenue budget and capital programme Leisure Provision Strategy	<b>Cabinet members:</b> Matt Barber Charlotte Dickson
Thurs 10 March Milton Park	<b>Joint</b> - Richard	Community Safety Partnership	<b>Cabinet members:</b> Sandy Lovatt (Vale) Anna Badcock (South) No equivalent South date
Tues 12 April Milton Park	<b>South</b>		
Thurs 14 April Beacon	<b>Vale</b>		

Review of CAB & WIAC South/Vale

Local Plan report Vale

Review of GLL after April 2016

*All Scrutiny meetings will start at 6.30, regardless of venue.*

# Joint Scrutiny Committee Report

Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

Author: Ian Matten

Tel: 01235 540373

E-mail: [ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk)

Vale Cabinet Member responsible: Elaine Ware

Tel: 01793 783026

E-mail: [Elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:Elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

To: JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 30 July 2015

South Cabinet Member responsible: Tony Harbour

Tel: 01235 810255

E-mail: [tony.harbour@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:tony.harbour@southoxon.gov.uk)

## Performance review of Biffa Municipal Limited - 2014

### RECOMMENDATION

That the committee considers Biffa Municipal Limited's (Biffa) performance in delivering the household waste collection, street cleansing and ancillary services contract for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014 and makes any comments to the Cabinet Members with responsibility for waste to enable them to make a final assessment on performance.

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The report considers the performance of Biffa in providing the household waste collection, street cleansing and ancillary services in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2. The service contributes to the council's strategic objective of excellent delivery of key services with particular emphasis on achieving excellent levels of recycling, keeping streets and public spaces clean and attractive.

### BACKGROUND

3. Managing contractor performance is essential for delivering the council's objectives and targets. Since a high proportion of the council's services are outsourced, the council cannot deliver high quality services to its residents unless its contractors are performing well. Using an agreed framework and working jointly with contractors to review performance regularly is therefore essential.

4. The council's process for managing contractor performance focuses on continuous improvement and action planning. The council realises that the success of the framework depends on contractors and the council working together to set and review realistic, jointly agreed and measurable targets.
5. The overall framework is designed to be
  - a way for the council to consistently measure contractor performance, to help highlight and resolve operational issues
  - flexible enough to suit each contract, including smaller contracts which may not require all elements of the framework
  - a step towards managing risk more effectively and improving performance through action planning.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE REVIEW FRAMEWORK**

6. Evaluating contractor performance has four elements:
  1. performance measured against key performance targets (KPT)
  2. customer satisfaction with the total service experience
  3. council satisfaction as client
  4. a summary of strengths and areas for improvement, feedback from the contractor on the overall assessment plus the contractor's suggestions of ways in which the council might improve performance.
7. The first three dimensions are assessed and the head of service makes a judgement of classification. The fourth element is a summary of strengths and areas for improvement and includes contractor feedback. Where some dimensions are not relevant, or difficult to apply fairly to certain types of contract, the framework may be adjusted or simplified at the discretion of the head of service.
8. Biffa were awarded the joint waste contract in December 2008 with a commencement date in South Oxfordshire of June 2009. The Vale of White Horse element of the contract commenced in October 2010. The council in 2013 decided, in accordance with the conditions of contract to extend the contract for a seven year period. The contract is now due to end in June 2024.
9. The current value of the contract, as a fixed annual charge is £9,650,920 per annum of which the Vale of White Horse proportion is £4,449,442 per annum and South Oxfordshire is £5,201,478 per annum.
10. The contract includes delivery of the following services:
  - weekly collection of household food waste from 23 litre bins
  - fortnightly collection of household recycling from 240 litre wheeled bins or green sacks
  - fortnightly collection of household refuse from 180 litre wheeled bins or pink sacks this is collected on the alternate week to recycling

- emptying bulk bins for refuse and recycling and food waste bins which service flats and communal properties
- fortnightly collection of household garden waste to residents who have opted into this charged for service. As of January 2015 there were 43,225 garden waste bins provided to customers across the two districts
- collection from Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) bring banks
- collection of household bulky waste items for which there is a charge
- litter collection and cleansing of roads, streets and public areas
- emptying of litter and dog bins
- provide a dedicated call centre facility to residents
- remove fly-tipping.

## **DIMENSION 1 – KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

11. KPT are included in the Biffa contract to provide a benchmark against which performance can be measured. The KPT cover those aspects of the service which are considered to be of most concern to our residents and are measured on an ongoing basis and reported monthly by Biffa. The KPT for this contract are:

- KPT 1 - missed collections – number of missed collections per week per 100,000 collections. Target - no more than 40
- KPT 2 - rectification of missed collections – percentage of reported missed household collections rectified within 24 hours. Target - 100 per cent
- KPT 3 - NI 192 - percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting. 2014/15 Target – 49.1 per cent (Vale) and 52.9 per cent (South)
- KPT 4 - NI 195 - improved street and environmental cleanliness – levels of litter and detritus. Targets - litter 4 per cent, detritus 7 per cent.

Since April 2011 national indicators for waste NI 192 and NI 195 are no longer used as national measures, however the council continues to use these as a measure of the contractor's performance.

### **KPT 1 – Missed Collections**

12. For the purpose of this report performance has been measured against the number of reported weekly missed collections per 100,000 collections for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014.

13. During this review period the average number of weekly missed collections across the two districts was 32 per 100,000 collections. The target is no more than 40 missed

collections. A combined total of 4,100 collections were logged as missed throughout the review period across the two districts - this is out of a total of 12,831,536 potential collections (each bin type is recorded as a separate collection) and equates to 0.03 per cent of bins being missed.

14. During last year's review meeting the committee asked officers to review the rating for the missed collection target as they considered it to be harsh that Biffa had only received a fair rating when they had only missed a weekly average of 30 collections in Vale and 34 in South per 100,000 collections.
15. Officers and Biffa have reviewed this target and agree that the scoring mechanism in the performance review of contractor's guidance is acceptable. It is based on a failure rate target of "no more than" 40 missed collections per 100,000 collections. To achieve an "excellent" rating it is necessary for Biffa to achieve an average per week of less than 20 missed collections, a "good" rating requires it to be between 20 and 30 missed collections and a "fair" rating is between 30 and 50 missed collections.

## **KPT 2 - Rectification of missed collections**

16. This measure is the percentage of reported missed collections rectified within 24 hours of Biffa being informed. The previous years percentage was 98.9 per cent, however as a result of updating their computer system Biffa have been unable to retrieve all the required data associated with this KPT for this review period. Amendments to their system and procedures have been put in place to ensure this does not happen in the future and that the data will be available for the next review. For the purposes of this review this KPT has not been included in the calculation.

## **KPT 3 - NI 192 percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting**

17. At the commencement of the contract the council and Biffa agreed baselines for assumed recycling rates as follows:

Vale

- 2013/14 – 48.3 per cent
- 2014/15 – 49.1 per cent.

South

- 2013/14 – 52.5 per cent
- 2014/15 – 52.9 per cent.

18. Table one below shows that the combined performance of both councils for KPT 3 for the period to which this report relates was 66.41 per cent, for information the previous three years figures are also shown. The individual NI192 scores for this review period are Vale 65.81 per cent and South 66.92 per cent.

19. The figures indicate an increase in the percentage of waste sent for recycling from last year. This is due to a combination of increases in garden waste and dry recycling and

a reduction in the amount of waste going to landfill and the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) compared to the previous year. The new ERF at Ardley became operational towards the middle of 2014 and the majority of our refuse now goes there.

Table One

NI 192 Performance

	Dry recycling (tonnes)	Food waste (tonnes)	Garden waste (tonnes)	Total Recycling (tonnes)	Refuse to Landfill & ERF (tonnes)	NI192
1 January – 31 December 2011	32,116	10,913	16,526	59,555	26,876	68.90%
1 January – 31 December 2012	31,865	9,800	16,711	58,376	29,957	66.08%
1 January – 31 December 2013	31,758	9,921	14,890	56,569	31,070	64.54%
1 January – 31 December 2014	32,404	9,770	18,806	60,980	30,835	66.41%

**KPT 4 – NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – levels of litter and detritus**

20. At the commencement of the contract, the council and Biffa agreed targets for litter and detritus. These targets were as follows:

- no more than four per cent of relevant land to have unacceptable levels of litter
- no more than seven per cent of relevant land to have unacceptable levels of detritus.

21. As previously mentioned we no longer report on NI 195, however officers have continued to monitor street cleanliness using the same methodology. The inspections are carried out by an independent company specialising in this type of work.

22. The combined scores achieved in this review period were, level of litter 3 per cent and level of detritus 11 per cent. This was a slight increase in both litter and detritus levels from last year's 2.4 per cent for litter and 9.2 per cent for detritus.

23. Based on Biffa's performance an overall "average" KPT performance rating score of 4.0 has been achieved. An analysis of performance against the KPT can be found in Annex A.

24. For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a guide to the assessment of Biffa against all KPT:

Score	1 – 1.4999	1.5 – 2.499	2.5 – 3.499	<b>3.5 – 4.499</b>	4.5 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

25. The head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance as follows:

KPT judgement

Previous KPT judgement for comparison

## DIMENSION 2 – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

26. Customer satisfaction for this report has been measured by the results of the most recent residents survey carried out in December 2013. M-E-L Research was commissioned to undertake a door stepping survey. In total 1109 responses were received in Vale and 1102 responses in South.

27. The main areas of questioning regarding satisfaction with the waste service were:

- satisfaction with the waste and recycling collection service
- satisfaction with street cleaning and keeping the area clean and litter free.

28. Overall satisfaction with the waste service in Vale was 85.25 per cent and in South it was 82 per cent. This compares to the previous residents survey in early 2012 when Vale achieved 80.41 per cent and South achieved 79.23 per cent.

29. In terms of the satisfaction with the waste and recycling collection service 89.71 per cent of Vale residents are either satisfied or very satisfied. In South 88 per cent said they were either satisfied or very satisfied.

30. In terms of satisfaction with street cleansing 80.79 per cent of Vale residents are either satisfied or very satisfied with the cleanliness of the streets and pavements in their local area. In South 75 per cent said they were either satisfied or very satisfied.

31. Based on Biffa's performance a combined overall customer satisfaction rating score of 3.90 has been achieved. An analysis of customer satisfaction can be found in Annex B.

32. For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a guide to the assessment of Biffa on overall customer satisfaction:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent



33. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement

Previous customer satisfaction judgement for comparison

### DIMENSION 3 – COUNCIL SATISFACTION

34. As part of the performance review officers with direct knowledge and who frequently interact with the contractor were asked to complete a short questionnaire, this included the head of service, shared waste manager, technical monitoring officers and communications officer. In total five questionnaires were sent out and returned.

35. Based on Biffa’s performance an overall council satisfaction rating score of 4.29 has been achieved. Last years overall rating score was 4.05. An analysis of council satisfaction can be found in Annex C.

36. For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a guide to the assessment of Biffa on council satisfaction:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

37. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on council satisfaction as follows:

Council satisfaction judgement

Previous council satisfaction judgement for comparison

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT

38. Taking into account the performance of the contractor against KPT, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment

Previous overall assessment for comparison

39. Other areas of note within the period of this review are:

- South confirmed by DEFRA as the highest recycling authority nationally for 2013/14 with a rate of 65.71
- Vale confirmed by DEFRA as the third highest recycling authority nationally for 2013/14 with a rate of 65.27
- Vale were first and South second for the district council that produced the least amount of residual waste per household in England
- the continued success in South of the deep cleanse
- finalists in the LGC awards for campaign of the year for our waste “sort it out” campaign.

## STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

40. Annex C also records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of the contractor in this review period.

41. Areas for improvement identified in last year’s reviews were :

- *There are some re-occurring problem properties which take a disproportionate amount of officer time to deal with, when better frontline supervision could prevent the behaviour that causes the complaint*

Overall the number of problem properties has reduced although there are still some issues with not resolving a problem at the first attempt. To improve this Biffa have introduced a more robust procedure for the “care list” which now requires a signature from a supervisor to indicate that they have visited and confirmed a collection has taken place correctly from any problem property on the list.

- *When Biffa have problems with broken down vehicles or incomplete rounds they could be pro-active and tell us sooner so that we are aware of what is happening on the collection rounds and can advise residents when we need to*

This has improved and we receive regular communications if a round is not completed on the scheduled day, although the actual number of breakdowns has also reduced.

- *Biffa could be more innovative, that said whenever we suggest a change they are always ready to work with us to implement it, e.g. kerb side battery collection.*

We have continued to work in partnership with Biffa to introduce service improvements. During this review period weekend collections of bulky waste and a scheme working with Katherine Turner Trust to reuse some of the bulky waste was introduced.

- *Responding to requests for information in a more timely manner*

There have been some improvements in this area, in particular the accuracy of data being provided. However, officers would like to see a quicker turn around to requests for some information.

- *Better communications between different levels of staff members*

This has improved, the regular operations meetings and meetings between the supervisors and technical officers have taken place. There is also daily contact with supervisors and the technical officers to discuss specific operational issues.

- *Less frequent staff changes*

This continues to be a concern. We also had a change at more senior level with the Business Manager and Operations Manager leaving in December. Scott Newman has taken over the role of Business Manager and Ian Gillott as the Operations Manager.

42. During last year's review the committee requested the following :

- *Improved information for new tenants/residents on absent bins when they took over a property*

We are having difficulty in getting information from council tax, which tells us when a new resident is moving into a property. The information is in a format that requires a lot of sorting to separate out new residents from any other change that may have been made at a property. The information is also available only after the change has been made by which time the residents have moved in to the property.

Our Communications Team are working on a welcome pack that will be provided to all new properties when the bins are delivered.

- *Further improvements at Dalton Barracks*

We worked closely with Dalton Barracks near Abingdon to address the contamination issue but they decide in the end to withdraw from the service and have arranged for their own commercial collection.

- *Information on the recycling of detritus, landfill tax and recycling credits*

During this review period street sweepings were transported to Ling Hall, Rugby by OCC where the different materials were separated. These were metals, aggregate, compost like output (CLO's) and rejects. An average 151 tonnes per month were sent there of which 82.10 per cent was recycled. There is now a facility at Ewelme operated by Grundons which carries out this process. Mays recycling rate was 80.7 per cent.

Landfill tax is paid by OCC as the disposal authority.

During the financial year 2014/15 South received a total of £988,905 in recycling credits and Vale received £800,692. These are based on a price per tonne.

- *Arrange for councillors to see a demonstration of the new technology*

A demonstration was arranged to see the cameras installed on the collection vehicles.

## COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

43. The council received thirteen official stage one complaints during this review period relating to the waste service, of these six were for missed garden waste bins, two missed recycling/refuse collection, four general complaints about the service provided by Biffa, and one complaint about glass being left on the road after collection.
44. During this review period Biffa and the council received 33 compliments from residents relating to the waste service such as:
- thanking collections teams for the *'fantastic work in carrying out their duties in Cotman Close. They have turned around their customer care and bring all bins back to our houses for which I am truly appreciative. Thanks again'*
  - driver saw resident struggling with the bins and got out of the vehicle to help, collected the bin and returned it to her property.
  - email to thank Biffa for efficient bulky waste service - who were "friendly, thoughtful, courteous and good ambassadors for you"
  - praising and thanking the street sweeper, Alan for taking pride in his job and working very hard "he goes over and above his duties when working".

## CONTRACTORS FEEDBACK

45. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to council processes. This is included in Annex D.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

46. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

47. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## CONCLUSION

In 2014 we continued to see the service improve with very few complaints from residents when you consider the number of collections that are made throughout the year. We achieved first and third in the official recycling league table. Vale was ranked first nationally for the amount of residual waste produced per household and the service continues to be well regarded by residents. Scott Newman joined as Business Manager for our contract in December, the transition went well and we look forward to building on our already good working relationship with Scott and his team.

There are still some areas for improvement and therefore the head of corporate strategy has assessed Biffa's performance as good for its delivery of the household waste collection, street cleansing and ancillary services contract. The committee is

asked to make any comments to the Cabinet Members with responsibility for waste to enable them to make a final assessment on performance.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

48. None

# Annex A – Key performance targets

KPT ref	Description of KPT	Target	Performance	Individual KPT rating (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor)	KPT rating score (excellent = 5, good = 4, fair = 3, weak = 2, poor = 1)
KPT 1	missed collections	No more than 40 missed collection per 100,000 collections	32 per 1,000,000 collections	fair	3
KPT 2	rectification of missed collections	100 per cent rectified within 24 hours of contractor being informed	Data not available	N/A	N/A
KPT 3	percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	V - 49.1% S - 52.9%	Vale 65.81% South 66.92%  Combined 66.41%	excellent	5
KPT 4	improved street and environmental cleanliness – levels of litter and detritus	4% litter 7% detritus	3% 11%	good	4
Overall “average” KPT performance rating score (arithmetic average) refers to point 23 in the report					4.0
Overall “average” KPT performance (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor)					Good

## Annex B – Customer satisfaction

In total 2211 residents across both councils responded to questions about the waste contract. Not every respondent answer all the questions.

### Q. How satisfied are you, with the waste and recycling collection service?

Rating	Number of residents	Score equivalent	Total
Very satisfied	572	X 5	2860
Fairly satisfied	1392	X 4	5568
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	82	X3	246
Not very satisfied	120	X 2	240
Not at all satisfied	39	X 1	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>2205</b>		<b>8953</b>

Waste and recycling collection service - resident satisfaction calculation:  $8953 \div 2205 = 4.06$

The following is a guide to the assessment of Biffa on customer satisfaction for the waste collection service:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	3.9 – 4.299	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

### Q. How satisfied are you with the standard of cleanliness of the streets and pavements in the village or town where you live?

Rating	Number of residents	Score equivalent	Total
Very satisfied	290	X 5	1450
Fairly satisfied	1434	X 4	5736
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	165	X 3	495
Not very satisfied	227	X 2	454
Not at all satisfied	74	X 1	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>2190</b>		<b>8209</b>

Standard of cleanliness - resident satisfaction calculation:  $8209 \div 2190 = 3.74$

The following is a guide to the assessment of Biffa on customer satisfaction for the standard of cleanliness of the streets and pavements:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	3.9 – 4.299	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	<b>Fair</b>	Good	Excellent

The combined overall customer satisfaction rating for the waste and recycling collection service and standard of cleanliness is calculated as follows:

Residents total scores ÷ number of residents

$$(8953 + 8209) \div (2205 + 2190) = 3.90 \text{ (refers to point 31 in the report)}$$



# Annex C - Council satisfaction

This assessment allows the council (as a client) to record its own satisfaction with aspects of a contractor's performance which lie outside Key Performance Targets and customer satisfaction. Each officer with direct knowledge and who frequently interacts with the contractor should complete this form. Some questions can be left blank if the officer does not have direct knowledge of that particular question.

The numbers indicated in the following table are the total number of responses received for each question

Contractor	Biffa Municipal Limited			
From (date)	1 January 2014	To	31 December 2014	

## SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatisfied
1 Understanding of the client's needs	1	3			
2 Response time	2	1	1		
3 Delivers to time	2	1	1		
4 Delivers to budget	2	1			
5 Efficiency of invoicing	2	1			
6 Approach to health & safety	2	2			

## COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatisfied
9 Easy to deal with	3	2			
10 Communications / keeping the client informed	1	3	1		
11 Quality of written documentation	1	3	1		
12 Compliance with council's corporate identity		3	2		
13 Listening	2	3			
14 Quality of relationship	2	3			

## IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dissatisfied	(1) Very dissatisfied
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work		4			
16 Degree of innovation	1	2			
17 Goes the extra mile	2	1	1		
18 Supports the council's sustainability objectives	1	2	1		
19 Supports the council's equality objectives	3	1			
20 Degree of partnership working	3	1			

The following table is a summary of council satisfaction based on the completed questionnaires

Rating	Votes	Score equivalent	Total
very satisfied	30	X 5	150
satisfied	37	X 4	148
neither satisfied or dissatisfied	8	X 3	24
dissatisfied	0	X 2	0
very dissatisfied	0	X 1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>322</b>

The overall council satisfaction is calculated as follows:  $322 \div 75 = 4.29$  (refers to point 353 in the report)

## STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths

Providing additional administrative support to the council when staff have been off sick. This has been on occasions, at short notice
Biffa are keen to resolve issues as swiftly as possible
They are very receptive to suggestions about improvements to the service and work with us to implement them
They are great at delivering a waste collection service
They are keen to work in partnership and have a good working relationship with the council
Good customer satisfaction
Willing to help with additional work such as flooding, snow and ice
The collections run very smoothly, we are first nationally for the lowest residual waste per property and first and third for our recycling rate

Areas for improvement

Response times could be improved on providing requested information
Delivery times for bins can be slow – proactive planning for peak times would be helpful
Back office procedures needed to ensure a clear audit trail of actions taken to ensure work is completed
More attention to detail needed
Responding to questions in a consistent way and in accordance with the council policies
Better use of the IT available in the waste industry

# **Annex D - Contractor 360° feedback**

## **CONTRACTOR'S REACTION / FEEDBACK ON COUNCIL'S ASSESSMENT**

Considering the recent staff changes to the management team at the contract as well as at the call centre this is a very encouraging report. Whilst most contractors would consider it satisfactory to be considered 'Fair to Good' it is not good enough for this contract moving into the extension period and the local team will be striving to improve this over the next year. There has been a marked improvement in the reaction times at the depot and they are now working much more closely with both the contract management team and the call centre to get matters resolved faster and satisfactorily.

Due to a procedural oversight we cannot supply details of the missed bins as detailed in KPT2 but this has now been resolved and we will be able to report on this in much greater detail next year. It should be noted that this does not mean that we have not completed the work in the allotted time, just that we cannot prove it, however the distinct lack of complaints does indicate that this is the case.

With the new management team comes greater experience in street cleansing and this is shown in the recent NI195 scores.

As we move towards the end of the primary term of the joint contract Biffa are still working with the local team to bring in improvements and are currently arranging to have cages fitted to the vehicles to allow for the collection of WEEE and textiles from the kerbside later in the year.

The other point we will be working on this year is the Council Satisfaction score. It is disappointing that some members of the team that we work with every day are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the services we supply and we have to make sure that we improve on this.

## **ANY AREAS WHERE CONTRACTOR DISAGREES WITH ASSESSMENT**

Biffa feel that this is a fair assessment of the contract performance for the year 2014.

## **WHAT COULD / SHOULD THE COUNCIL DO DIFFERENTLY TO ENABLE THE CONTRACTOR TO DELIVER THE SERVICE MORE EFFICIENTLY / EFFECTIVELY / ECONOMICALLY?**

N/A

Feedback provided by

Date

# Joint Scrutiny Committee Report

Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

Author: Ian Matten

Tel: 01235 540373

E-mail: [ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk)

Vale Cabinet Member responsible: Elaine Ware

Tel: 01793 783026

E-mail: [Elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:Elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

To: JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 30 July 2015

South Cabinet Member responsible: Tony Harbour

Tel: 01235 810255

E-mail: [tony.harbour@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:tony.harbour@southoxon.gov.uk)

## Performance review of Sodexo Ltd (Horticultural Services) - 2014

### RECOMMENDATION

That the committee considers Sodexo Limited's performance in delivering the grounds maintenance services contract for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014 and makes any comments to the Cabinet Members with responsibility for grounds maintenance to enable them to make a final assessment on performance.

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The report considers the performance of Sodexo in providing grounds maintenance services in Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2. The service contributes to the council's strategic objective of excellent delivery of key services with particular emphasis on delivering high performance services, keeping public spaces clean and attractive and ensuring good quality sport and leisure provision.

### BACKGROUND

3. Managing contractor performance is essential for delivering the council's objectives and targets. Since a high proportion of the council's services are outsourced, the council cannot deliver high quality services to its residents unless its contractors are performing well. Working jointly with contractors to review performance regularly is therefore essential.

4. The council's process for managing contractor performance focuses on continuous improvement and action planning. The council realises that the success of the framework depends on contractors and the council working together to set and review realistic, jointly agreed and measurable targets.
5. The overall framework is designed to be
  - a way for the council to consistently measure contractor performance, to help highlight and resolve operational issues
  - flexible enough to suit each contract, including smaller contracts which may not require all elements of the framework
  - a step towards managing risk more effectively and improving performance through action planning.

## OVERVIEW OF THE REVIEW FRAMEWORK

6. Evaluating contractor performance has four elements:
  1. performance measured against key performance targets (KPT)
  2. customer satisfaction with the total service experience
  3. council satisfaction as client
  4. summary of strengths and areas for improvement, plus feedback from the contractor on the overall assessment and the contractor's suggestions of ways in which the council might improve performance.
7. The first three dimensions are assessed and the head of service makes a judgement of classification. The fourth element is a summary of strengths and areas for improvement and includes contractor feedback. Where some dimensions are not relevant or are difficult to apply fairly to certain types of contract, the framework may be adjusted or simplified at the discretion of the head of service.
8. Sodexo were awarded a joint contract for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils for the supply of grounds maintenance in October 2011 with a commencement date of January 2012.
9. The current value of the contract, as a fixed annual charge is £459,330 per annum of which Vale of White Horse proportion is £359,427 per annum and South Oxfordshire is £99,903 per annum. The reason for the difference in costs is because of the difference in land ownership between the two authorities. The contract is due to end in December 2016. There is an option to extend for a further three years, subject to satisfactory performance.
10. The contract includes delivery of the following service:
  - grass cutting
  - maintenance of horticultural features :
    - flower beds
    - hanging baskets

shrub beds

mixed borders

- maintenance of hedges
- maintenance of play areas
- litter clearance
- vegetation control of hard surfaces
- minor tree works
- burial service at Wallingford and Crowmarsh cemeteries
- maintenance of sports facilities.

## **DIMENSION 1 – KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

11. KPT are recognised as an important element of monitoring the contractor's performance. The KPT cover those aspects of the service which are considered to be most important as a means of benchmarking against which performance can be measured. The KPT are:

- KPT 1 – quality inspection– the average percentage quality rating of randomly selected play areas and open spaces. Target – 85 per cent
- KPT 2 – the percentage of notifications and complaints that are resolved within agreed timescales. Target – 90 per cent
- KPT 3 – Overall customer satisfaction rating for the grounds maintenance service. Target – 85 per cent
- KPT 4 – Percentage of actions, identified as part of health and safety audit inspections, which are rectified within agreed time scales. Target – 95 per cent
- KPT 5 – Percentage of work orders issued that are completed within agreed time scales. Target – 80 per cent.

### **KPT 1 – quality inspections**

12. This KPT is measured by monthly joint inspections by the client and contractor of randomly selected sites. As well as an overall assessment, providing a general impression of the quality of the service being achieved, each service activity for the particular site is subject to a more detailed assessment and given a score out of ten. The total of all scores for the site are then shown as a percentage, for the purposes of this review the average for the year is then calculated.

13. During this review period the average percentage rate of randomly selected play areas and open spaces was 84 per cent. This is just below the target of 85 per cent and lower than last year's score of 86 per cent. In total 42 joint inspections took place.



## **KPT 2 – percentage of notifications and complaints that are resolved within agreed timescales**

14. This KPT is measured by evaluating the length of time the contractor takes to resolve an issue that has been brought to their attention. These can be as a result of a member of the public contacting us or as a result of the councils parks team monitoring. A notification notice is issued to the contractor with a period of time to resolve the issue, the amount of time given varies depending on the nature of the issue. For the purpose of this review the number of notifications resolved in the agreed timescale are shown as a percentage
15. During the review period 194 notices were issued and 149 were completed within the time scales. This is 77 per cent against a target of 90 per cent. This is an improvement on last year's 69 per cent score but is still an area for improvement. One reason for not meeting the set timescales is that the majority of these notification are issued during the peak summer period when resources are already operating at capacity.

## **KPT 3 – overall customer satisfaction**

16. The overall customer satisfaction rating for the cleanliness and maintenance of the council owned parks and open spaces was 88 per cent. This is based on 180 respondents out of 205 being fairly or very satisfied. More details on customer satisfaction are included in Dimension 2 that follows.

## **KPT 4 – percentage of actions identified during health and safety monitoring that are rectified within agreed timescales.**

17. As suggested in the last review joint health and safety inspections by the contracts supervisor and parks officer were increased from quarterly to monthly and involved attending sites, observing the crews and examining personal protective clothing and machinery.
18. As a result of the inspections four action sheets were raised covering nine points of concern. All actions identified were rectified within the agreed timescales, exceeding the target of 95 per cent.

## **KPT 5 – percentage of work orders completed within agreed timescales**

19. Additional work not included within the core service is issued to Sodexo as a work order. This includes a timescale in which to complete the work. The timescales vary depending on the urgency of the work required.
20. During the review period 207 work orders have been issued and 159 were completed within the agreed timescale. This is 77 per cent against a target of 80 per cent.
21. Based on Sodexo's performance an overall "average" KPT performance rating score of 4.0 has been achieved. An analysis of performance against the KPT can be found in Annex A.

22. For reasons of consistency and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of Sodexo against all KPT:

Score	1 – 1.4999	1.5 – 2.499	2.5 – 3.499	<b>3.5 – 4.499</b>	4.5 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

23. The head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance as follows:

KPT judgement

Previous KPT judgement for comparison

## DIMENSION 2 – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

24. Customer satisfaction for this report has been measured by the results of questionnaires handed out to users of the council’s parks, open spaces and play areas and an online questionnaire which was available during August/September. In total 206 questionnaires were completed.

25. The main areas of questioning relating to satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service were :

- satisfaction with the overall cleanliness and maintenance of the park
- satisfaction with the different elements of the grounds maintenance service
- Whether there were areas of improvement that customers would like to see.

26. There were no official complaints logged as part of the council’s complaints procedure during the review period. We received six compliments directly linked to Sodexo’s work.

27. Based on Sodexo’s performance a combined overall customer satisfaction rating score of 4.20 has been achieved. An analysis of customer satisfaction can be found in Annex B.

28. For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of Sodexo on overall customer satisfaction:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

29. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement

Previous customer satisfaction judgement for comparison

### DIMENSION 3 – COUNCIL SATISFACTION

30. As part of the performance review officers with direct knowledge and who frequently interact with the contractor were asked to complete a short questionnaire, this included the head of service, parks manager, parks officer, monitoring officer and parks business support team. In total six questionnaires were sent out and returned.
31. Internal customers were also consulted and some areas of concern were raised. Joint meetings have taken place to clarify the specification, their expectations and to review areas of work not routinely included within the grounds maintenance contract. Additional work orders have been issued to address some of these concerns.
32. Based on sodexo’s performance an overall council satisfaction rating score of 4.23 has been achieved. This is an improvement on last year’s score of 3.79 and 3.50 the previous year. An analysis of council satisfaction can be found in Annex C.
33. For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of Sodexo on council satisfaction:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

34. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on council satisfaction as follows:

Council satisfaction judgement

Previous council satisfaction judgement for comparison

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT

35. Taking into account the performance of the contractor against KPT, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment

Previous overall assessment for comparison

36. Other areas of note within the period of this review are:

- We retained the Green Flag for Abbey Gardens

- One member of staff has completed the apprenticeship scheme and is now employed by Sodexo on a full time contract.

## **STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

37. Annex C also records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of the contractor in this review period.

38. Areas for improvement identified in last year's review were:

- *transparency and honesty with regards to day to day operational issues.*

Officers have continued to build on the working relationship with Sodexo, in particular with the local contracts manager and feel this is no longer an area requiring improvement.

- *additional resources and equipment to deal with peak periods of work*

Additional equipment has been brought onto the contract to provide extra resource when required and the recruitment of seasonal staff started earlier so operationally Sodexo were better prepared for the peak periods. Although as already mentioned in the review, dealing with notification notices during peak periods does still present some problems.

- *additional supervision to monitor crews*

No additional supervision has been brought in but the electronic monitoring system has been operational and used to monitor crews progress. There is scope to expand on this going forward.

39. During last year's review the committee requested the following be included within the 2014 action plan, a copy of the 2014 action plan is attached.

- Communication
- time/response targets
- tracking of operations technology
- play areas – annual report and weekly visual inspections
- to know whether customers who were dissatisfied with the parks were dissatisfied with the same or different parks.

The 2014 customer satisfaction survey addressed this issue. Respondents were asked to name the park they were referring to. Those respondents that were dissatisfied mainly related to Vale parks at Peachcroft and Cotman Close. These are both high usage areas which suffer misuse and already receive increased maintenance.

## **CONTRACTORS FEEDBACK**

40. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to council processes. This is included in Annex D.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

41. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

42. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

43. Sodexo have provided a good grounds maintenance service to the council throughout the review period with very few issues of concern. The nature of the work makes it difficult to address unforeseen issues during peak periods of work or during adverse weather, this is reflected in the results of some of the KPT but whilst they may not have met their target these are not areas of concern. No formal complaints have been received indicating that members of the public are happy with the service provided.

44. The committee is asked to make any comments to the Cabinet Members with responsibility for grounds maintenance to enable them to make a final assessment on performance.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

45. None

# Annex A – Key performance targets

KPT ref	Description of KPT	Target	Performance	Individual KPT rating (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor)	KPT rating score (excellent = 5, good = 4, fair = 3, weak = 2, poor = 1)
KPT 1	average percentage quality rating of randomly selected play areas and open spaces	85 %	84%	good	4
KPT 2	percentage of notifications and complaints resolved within timescale	90%	77%	weak	2
KPT 3	Overall customer satisfaction	85%	88%	excellent	5
KPT 4	percentage of actions identified during health and safety monitoring that are rectified with agreed timescales	95%	100%	excellent	5
KPT 5	percentage of work orders completed within agreed timescales	80%	77%	good	4
Overall “average” KPT performance rating score (arithmetic average) refers to point 21 in the report					4.0
Overall “average” KPT performance (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor)					good

# Annex B – Customer satisfaction

In total, 206 users completed a questionnaire about the grounds maintenance service although not all respondents answered every question.

## Q. How satisfied overall are you with the cleanliness and maintenance of the park?

Rating	Number of residents	Score equivalent	Total
Very satisfied	55	X 5	275
Fairly satisfied	125	X 4	500
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	13	X3	39
Fairly dissatisfied	9	X 2	18
Very dissatisfied	3	X 1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>		<b>835</b>

Overall satisfaction with cleanliness and maintenance  $835 \div 205 = 4.07$

The following is a guide to the assessment of Sodexo on overall customer satisfaction for the grounds maintenance service:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

## Q. How satisfied are you with the standard of grass cutting?

Rating	Number of residents	Score equivalent	Total
Very satisfied	94	X 5	470
Fairly satisfied	100	X 4	400
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	1	X 3	3
Fairly dissatisfied	6	X 2	12
Very dissatisfied	0	X 1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>		<b>885</b>

Satisfaction with standard of grass cutting calculation:  $885 \div 201 = 4.40$

The following is a guide to the customer satisfaction assessment of Sodexo for the standard of grass cutting:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	3.9 – 4.299	<b>4.3 – 5.0</b>
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	Good	<b>Excellent</b>

**Q. How satisfied are you with the standard of shrub bed maintenance?**

Rating	Number of residents	Score equivalent	Total
Very satisfied	64	X 5	320
Fairly satisfied	115	X 4	460
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3	X 3	9
Fairly dissatisfied	11	X 2	22
Very dissatisfied	2	X 1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>		<b>813</b>

Satisfaction with standard of shrub bed maintenance calculation:  $813 \div 195 = 4.16$

The following is a guide to the customer satisfaction assessment of Sodexo for the standard of shrub bed maintenance:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

**Q. How satisfied are you that the park is kept litter free?**

Rating	Number of residents	Score equivalent	Total
Very satisfied	76	X 5	380
Fairly satisfied	108	X 4	432
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	5	X 3	15
Fairly dissatisfied	10	X 2	20
Very dissatisfied	5	X 1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>		<b>852</b>

Satisfaction that the park is kept clear of litter calculation:  $852 \div 204 = 4.17$

The following is a guide to the customer satisfaction assessment of Sodexo that the park is kept clear of litter:

Score	<3.0	3.0 – 3.399	3.4 – 3.899	<b>3.9 – 4.299</b>	4.3 – 5.0
Classification	Poor	Weak	Fair	<b>Good</b>	Excellent

The combined overall customer satisfaction rating for the grounds maintenance is calculated as follows:

Users total weighted scores ÷ number of residents  
 $(835 + 885 + 813 + 852) \div (205 + 201 + 195 + 204)$

$3385 \div 805 = 4.20$  (refers to point 27 in the report)



Areas of improvement that customers identified:-

- more trees planted
- additional litter bins and seating
- more staff working in the park
- update some of the play equipment
- wildflower areas
- more enforcement of dog owners who allow their dogs to mess
- more activities
- less activities – return to informal area
- provide somewhere to buy food and drinks.

# Annex C - Council satisfaction

This assessment allows the council (as a client) to record its own satisfaction with aspects of a contractor's performance which lie outside Key Performance Targets and customer satisfaction. Each officer with direct knowledge and who frequently interacts with the contractor should complete this form. Some questions can be left blank if the officer does not have direct knowledge of that particular question.

The numbers indicated in the following table are the total number of responses received for each question.

Contractor / supplier / partner name

From (date)  To

## SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatisfied
1 Understanding of the client's needs	1	5			
2 Response time	4	2			
3 Delivers to time	1	5			
4 Delivers to budget		4			
5 Efficiency of invoicing	1	3			
6 Approach to health & safety	3	2			

## COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatisfied
9 Easy to deal with	5	1			
10 Communications / keeping the client informed	1	5			
11 Quality of written documentation	1	4		1	
12 Compliance with council's corporate identity	1	5			
13 Listening	3	3			
14 Quality of relationship	2	4			

## IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dissatisfied	(1) Very dissatisfied
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work		5	1		
16 Degree of innovation		4	1		
17 Goes the extra mile	2	3	1		
18 Supports the council's sustainability objectives	1	3	1		
19 Supports the council's equality objectives	1	3	1		
20 Degree of partnership working	3	2			

The following table is a summary of council satisfaction based on the completed questionnaires

Rating	Votes	Score equivalent	Total
very satisfied	30	X 5	150
satisfied	63	X 4	252
neither satisfied or dissatisfied	5	X 3	15
dissatisfied	1	X 2	2
very dissatisfied	0	X 1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>		<b>419</b>

The overall council satisfaction is calculated as follows:  $419 \div 99 = 4.23$  (refers to point 32 in the report)

## STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths

The local staff are very knowledgeable and responsive
Proficient and experienced core team
Partnership working
Knowledgeable and efficient contracts manager
Responding quickly to urgent work
Responsive to requests for additional services such as snow and ice clearance and flooding
Reporting of damage to play equipment when identified
Approachable staff

ki

Areas for improvement

Electronic monitoring system – further development needed
Additional supervision to increase productivity in some areas of work

Quality of hand written documents could be improved
-----------------------------------------------------

A satellite depot to improve efficiency
-----------------------------------------

# **Annex D - Contractor 360° feedback**

## **CONTRACTOR'S REACTION / FEEDBACK ON COUNCIL'S ASSESSMENT**

Sodexo are pleased with the progress that we have made in improving the service delivery, and particularly the grass cutting, and that this is reflected in the Councils assessment. We will continue to improve and innovate wherever possible.

## **ANY AREAS WHERE CONTRACTOR DISAGREES WITH ASSESSMENT**

We do not disagree with the Council's assessment

## **WHAT COULD / SHOULD THE COUNCIL DO DIFFERENTLY TO ENABLE THE CONTRACTOR TO DELIVER THE SERVICE MORE EFFICIENTLY / EFFECTIVELY / ECONOMICALLY?**

We would request longer time scales for completion of notifications during the main grass cutting season, so we can reduce the negative impact on the planned works schedule

Feedback provided by

Date

## GROUNDS MAINTENANCE ACTION PLAN 2014

No	Task	Actions	Purpose	Target Completion Date	Completion Date	Responsibility for Action	Comments
1	Review overall performance for 2013 and identify areas for improvements and successes	Arrange meeting between client and contractor	Assess Sodexo performance in 2013 and identify areas for improvement	Jan-14	Feb-14	Joint	Various meetings took place during the winter period
		Produce annual performance report for Scrutiny	To monitor Sodexo's overall performance for 2013	Feb-14	Jun-14	Council	Overall rated "good"
2	Produce comprehensive annual programme	Produce programme identifying all annual routine contract work	To monitor Sodexo's performance against an agreed programme of work	Mar-14	Mar-14	Joint	
		Provide weekly updates to the council	To monitor Sodexo's performance against an agreed programme of work	Dec-14	Dec-14	Sodexo	Weekly meetings
3	Continue with the apprenticeship scheme	Undertaken a selection process between January and March	To improve efficiency and standards of work	Apr-14	Apr-14	Sodexo	Ongoing - changes to staff. One person has completed the process
4	Monitor Contractors Performance and effective communications	Undertake monthly joint inspections	To monitor Sodexo's performance against measurable targets	Dec-14	Dec-14	Joint	
		Weekly meetings to discuss performance and work programme	To monitor Sodexo's performance against measurable targets	Dec-14	Dec-14	Joint	
		Monthly Minuted meetings	To monitor Sodexo's performance against measurable targets	Dec-14	Dec-14	Joint	
		Monitor use of monitoring technology introduced in 2013	To monitor Sodexo's performance	Dec-14	Dec-14	Joint	Council has direct access to self monitoring technology.
5	Manage Play areas	Weekly inspections and maintenance	To maintain safe play areas	Dec-14	Dec-14	Sodexo	
		Monthly inspections	To maintain safe play areas and monitor Sodexo's performance	Dec-14	Dec-14	Council	
		Annual independent inspection by RoSPA	To maintain safe play areas and ensure compliance with British Standards	Jun-14	Jul-14	Council	
6	Monitor agreed Key Performance Targets - Quality Inspections - Target 85% - Resolved notifications/complaints within timescale Target 90% - Customer satisfaction - Target 85% - Health & Safety audit actions resolved within timescale - Target 95% - Work orders completed within timescale - Target 80%	Regular joint inspections to measure quality. Collate data Undertake joint Health and Safety audits	To monitor Sodexo's overall performance for 2014 measured against agreed key performance targets.	Dec-14	Dec-14	Joint	
7	Review training needs	Produce training matrix	To improve efficiency and standards of work	Feb-14	Feb-14	Sodexo	
		Instigate training for those staff identified	To improve efficiency and standards of work	Dec-14	Dec-14	Sodexo	
8	Customer Satisfaction Survey	Carry out face to face customer satisfaction survey in parks and open spaces	To identify customer satisfaction ratings for Sodexo's overall performance	Sep-14	Nov-14	Sodexo	
9	Locate new satellite depots	Investigate potential depot sites within the South and Vale areas	To improve efficiency and increase overall productivity. Reduce travel times	Dec-14		Joint	This is ongoing without success to date

10	Agree a programme of additional winter works to contract sites	Draw up a schedule of works and obtain quotations from Sodexo for the works	To improve the appearance of the sites and aid the contractor in achieving the maintenance standard	Oct-14	Mar-15	Joint	
						<b>Progress Key</b>	
						Completed	
						On track	
						Delayed	
						Not started	

### **An introductory guide to Scrutiny (adapted from the Centre for Public Scrutiny guide).**

#### **What can scrutiny do?**

Councils like South and Vale who have a leader and cabinet (“executive arrangements”) must have at least one overview and scrutiny committee. Scrutiny committees have powers to require Cabinet members, committee chairs and senior council officers to come and give evidence to them, to require information from the council. In this context, scrutiny committees have rights similar to the information rights that individual councillors possess (which can be found in the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012), and the right to require a response to any recommendations that they may put to the council’s Cabinet. These powers can be found in the Local Government Act 2000. Scrutiny committees also have powers relating to NHS bodies in England, Community Safety Partnerships in England and Wales and a different range of other partner organisations in England and Wales. More information about all of these powers can be found in the CfPS publication “Pulling it together”

While scrutiny committees can make recommendations, they cannot compel anyone to do anything. Their principal power is that of influence – they can advise and recommend.

#### **What are the building blocks for good scrutiny?**

Effective work programming Councils usually have an annual work programme either for the whole scrutiny function, or separate programmes for each committee. Better work programmes tend to have clear criteria for the inclusion of items on agendas, and subjects for further investigation.

#### **Positive attitude of the Cabinet and council officers**

To work well, scrutiny needs to be encouraged and signed up to by the authority’s executive. If Cabinet take a negative view of scrutiny and its role, and act defensively when scrutiny seeks to make suggestions, scrutiny’s effectiveness will be reduced. As such, scrutiny’s success rests as much on the attitude of the executive as it does on the skills and expertise of scrutiny members themselves. Officers have a responsibility to provide advice to all members of the authority. The attitudes and behaviours of officers – their willingness to provide information promptly to councillors, to answer questions frankly and to provide assistance to scrutiny members as required – will define how successful scrutiny is able to be. In many councils officers in service departments now see scrutiny as an essential partner in improving services members can help professionals to better understand local people, and to make more robust judgments about where priorities should lie.



## **Positive attitude of scrutiny members**

Scrutiny members need to be committed to making the function work. This is about ensuring that scrutiny is able to carry out constructive work that focuses on the priorities of local people (and that feeds into the priorities of the council and its partners). Scrutiny councillors should not act in a party political manner. However, they can and should bring their political skills and unique understanding of the needs of local people to bear in their discussions – and they should also recognise that, by definition, scrutiny’s work will focus on issues that are of local political contention. The challenge lies in managing that contention in a positive way, rather than using it to further party political objectives.

## **Where can scrutiny be carried out?**

### **At committee**

Committee meetings are formal, public settings. They allow the councillors who sit on them to take oral evidence, and receive written reports, from the council and external bodies. Committee meetings usually involve one or more substantive written reports being tabled on issues selected by the committee and its chair on the basis of the work programme. One or more witnesses – usually council officers or other councillors, but often representatives of other organisations or members of the public – answer members’ questions and may give presentations. There should be some kind of outcome from the consideration of any item at a committee meeting. Sometimes the act of scrutiny itself is the outcome – the exercise of democratic debate in a public forum, which may lead productively to change in the way that the council’s administration does things. It is more common however to think of “value” and “outcomes” as deriving from the making of recommendations. This value derives from having the confidence to make clear, unambiguous and challenging recommendations.

### **In task and finish groups**

“Task and finish” groups are informal, usually small, and time-limited bodies comprised of councillors and, often, co-optees brought in from outside the council because of their specific skills and experiences. They are not mentioned in legislation, although most councils make provision for them in their constitution. The size of these groups varies but usually four to six councillors are involved; those involved tend to be selected by their parties’ whips, although some councils have more open processes. The length of a review and its scope will define how frequently a task group meets, but it is usual to have at least one meeting at the start for planning, and one (possibly two) at the end to settle the report’s findings and recommendations. There will usually be a number of evidence-gathering sessions, using some of the methodologies that we mention in the section below. At the end of the process the task group’s report is submitted to the committee that commissioned it, for them to formally adopt and pass on to Cabinet (and/or other partners).