

Item No. 5.	Classification: Open	Date: 14 October 2020	Meeting Name: Housing and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Scrutiny Review of Estate Cleaning	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Environment	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the housing and community engagement commission note the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

2. The Integrated Cleaning Contract (ICC) was created in 2003 to replace a mix of previously let cleaning contracts in Southwark with both in-house and external service providers. Southwark Cleaning was formed at the same time with the objective of being the Council's in-house, single point of delivery for all the aspects of the ICC.
3. Staff who previously worked for external contractors were transferred over to the Southwark Cleaning workforce under TUPE regulations and then transferred onto council employment contracts, resulting in enhanced terms and conditions for most of the transferred staff.
4. The ICC's main focus is the delivery of the following core services:
 - Street Cleaning
 - Estate Cleaning
 - Highways and estates ground maintenance
5. The ICC Business Unit is part of the Waste & Cleaning Division which is part of the Environment & Leisure Directorate.

Service Level Agreement

6. The Housing and Modernisation Department (H&M) is the client department for the estate cleaning and estates grounds maintenance elements of the ICC, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place that sets out H&M's expectations for the delivery of these aspects of the ICC and covers the following:
 - Service Standards and Frequencies
 - Liaison, Communication and Monitoring
 - Performance Measures
 - Service Review
 - Budget
 - Dispute Resolution

7. The 2019/20 charges for the services provided by ICC were as follows:
 - Estate Cleaning - £12,959,37.00
 - Estates Grounds Maintenance - £2,316,244.00
8. The SLA is reviewed on an annual basis and a copy of the 2020/21 version is attached as Appendix A to this report.

Services

9. The estate cleaning element of the ICC covers a range of activities that are designed to ensure that the Council's housing stock is maintained in a safe, clean and tidy condition, these activities are as follows:

External Cleaning

- Litter picking including the removal of dog waste
- Litter and dog waste bin emptying
- Manual and mechanical sweeping
- Fly tip/bulky waste removal
- Graffiti and fly poster removal
- Cleaning of bin chambers, refuse and recycling sites.
- Rotation of chute fed waste bins
- Control of weeds in hard surfaces
- Winter maintenance

Internal Cleaning

- Litter picking, sweeping and mopping of communal areas (lifts, lobbies, staircases etc)
 - Cleaning of internal fixtures and fixings, block entry doors and screens
 - Wall and ceiling washing
 - Window cleaning
 - Cleaning of internal refuse rooms
 - Clearance of blocked refuse chutes
 - Fly tip/bulky waste removal
 - Graffiti and fly poster removal
10. The estate cleaning service also provides an all year round, out of hours (6pm to 6am) emergency call out service for estates based emergency cleaning issues e.g. flooding, road traffic accidents, collection and disposal of any matter which requires urgent attention.
 11. The core hours of operation for estate cleaning are as follows:
 - 08:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday
 - 08:00 to 14:00 Saturday
 - 09:00 to 12:00 or 08:00 to 11:00 Sunday (essential service only)

12. The estate cleaning service is also able to provide additional ad hoc services to the H & M department that fall outside of the SLA, typical examples of these ad hoc works would be as follows:
- Void clearances
 - Clinical cleans of resident's homes
 - Garage clearances
 - Leaflet deliveries

Resources

13. The borough wide estate cleaning service is divided into 4 distinct operational areas:
- South (Dulwich, Nunhead and Peckham Rye)
 - Central (Peckham and Camberwell)
 - North East (Bermondsey and Rotherhithe)
 - North West (Walworth and Borough/Bankside)
14. Estate cleaning staff numbers and designation of staff for each operational area are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Estate Cleaning Staff Numbers and Designations, 2020/21

Job Type	South	Central	North East	North West	Total
Area manager	1	1	1	1	4
Supervisor	3	3	4	4	14
Team Leader	4	10	9	6	29
Cleaner	50	87	84	98	319
Driver	2	2	1	3	8
Loader	2	2	1	3	
Graffiti Operative	1	2	2	2	7
Chute Clearance Operative	0	0	0	4*	4
SHU cleaner	1.5	2	0	2	5.5
Total	64.5	109	102	123	398.5

* Deployed as required across all 4 operational areas.

15. The estate cleaning service provides training and staff development opportunities to all its workforce to not only enable them to carry out their duties more effectively but to also equip them with the skills to develop their careers within the service and the wider council.
16. Most front line cleaning staff do not have LBS email accounts nor are they issued with work smart phones therefore corporate, departmental and service specific information is cascaded down to the work force via monthly staff briefings that take place between supervisors and their teams often followed up with written material such as posters, minutes, hand-outs etc.

17. In addition to its large work force the estate cleaning service also has a significant fleet requirement to deliver the service. Details of the number and type of vehicles used by ICC for estate cleaning are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2 – Number and type of vehicles used for estate cleaning services

Vehicle Type/Quantity	South	Central	North East	North West	Total
7.5 Tonne Caged Tippers	1	0	1	0	2
5.5 Tonne Caged Tippers	0	2	0	0	2
3.5 Tonne Caged Tippers	1	0	0	3	4
Graffiti Vehicles	1	1	1	1	4
Mechanical Brooms	1	1	1	1	4
Small Vans	3	3	4	4	14
Total	7	7	7	9	30

Accommodation

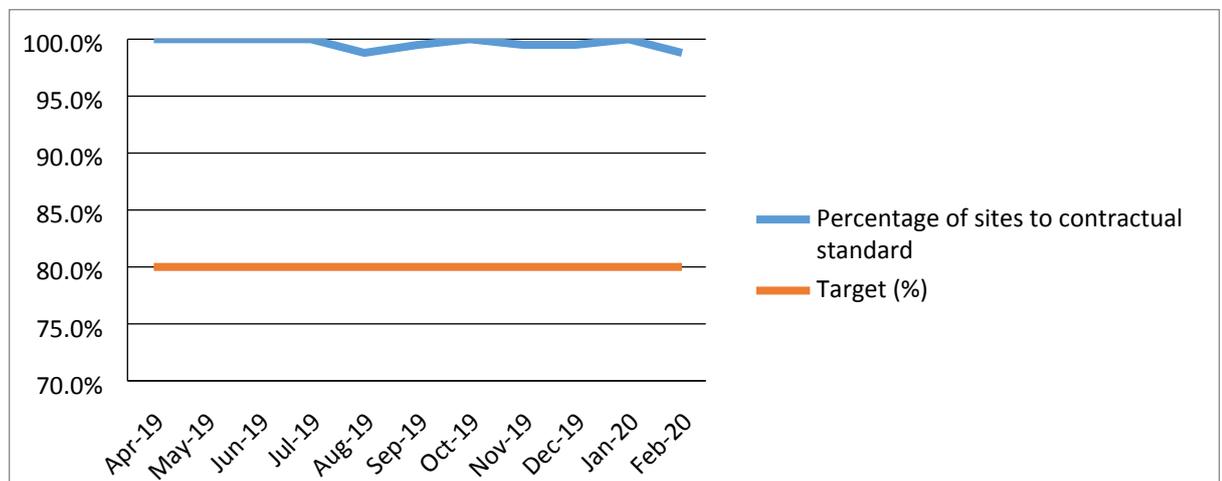
18. The vast majority of estate cleaning staff report to and work from a number of estate mess rooms spread across the borough's housing stock, details of the numbers and location of these mess rooms are attached as Appendix B. Each mess room provides the cleaners with welfare facilities, a space for equipment and materials storage as well as somewhere for local staff briefings and 121 meetings. Each mess room not only serves the cleaners on the host estate but also those working on smaller estates in the vicinity that do not have their own mess rooms.
19. Mobile estate cleaning staff such as graffiti operatives and bulky waste collection crews are based at the ICC depot in Sandgate Street, SE15. The depot also provides storage for the estate cleaning service vehicles, plant and equipment.

Performance Monitoring

20. The service level agreement sets out the structure for the monitoring of the performance of the estate cleaning service and for ease of reference this is summarised as follows:
- Resident Services Officers monitor estate cleanliness when on site and during monthly estate inspections, any cleaning concerns are raised with cleaning supervisors with immediate effect for resolution.
 - Cleaning supervisors monitor estate cleanliness when on site with more formal monitoring taking place on a fortnightly basis as well as participation in monthly estate inspections.
 - Resident Services Officers carry out a formal monitoring process on a monthly basis jointly with tenant representatives, estate cleaning supervisors and communal repairs officers where applicable during estate inspections.

- Quarterly Client/Contractor monitoring meetings are held between the Service manager and the nominated ICC portfolio holder.
 - The Service manager and cleaning portfolio holder carry out random inspections when required, focussing on any areas that have raised concerns in the recent past
21. In addition to the above the cleaning service collate monthly performance stats pertaining to the cleaning service which are submitted to the Director of Resident Services, ICC portfolio holder and the Head of My Southwark Home Owners on a quarterly basis. The performance stats included in this report are as follows:
- Monthly inspection scores for estate cleanliness
 - Number and value of ad hoc works completed
 - Details of any accidents at work to cleaning staff
 - The number of estate cleaning related service requests raised by the public/residents
 - Details of formal complaints raised
 - Details of compliments received
22. The target for estate cleanliness is for 80% of estate inspections to be at an acceptable level of cleanliness. Graph 1 below provides performance information for estate cleanliness for 2019/20. Note that for March 2020 there were no estate inspections carried out due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Graph 1 – Estate cleanliness inspections scores – 2019/20



The Impact of COVID-19 on the estate cleaning service

23. Following the government's announcement of a nationwide lockdown on 23rd March 2020 in response to the coronavirus pandemic Southwark Cleaning management were asked to determine which of the services it provided were essential and which were not, the proposals put forward were accepted by the council and plans put in place to implement the necessary changes.
24. The impact on the estate cleaning service was that most of the activities set out at paragraphs 9 to 12 of this report had to cease or be scaled back as they were not deemed to be essential however a range of core cleaning activities were

retained which it was felt necessary to ensure basic cleanliness standards on estates as well as addressing any safety concerns particularly relating to fire safety. The cleaning activities that remained in place throughout the lockdown period are listed below:

- Enhanced cleaning of internal fixtures and fixings, block entry doors and screens, lift buttons, door handles etc.
- Sweeping and mopping of communal areas but on a reduced frequency
- Fly tip/bulky waste removal
- Litter picking but on a reduced frequency
- Unblocking of refuse chutes
- Rotation of chute fed waste bins
- Removal of offensive graffiti only

25. With reduced service outputs there was not the requirement to have the full establishment of estate cleaning staff on duty, there were also considerations to be made as to how staff could effectively carry out social distancing in the work place and estate mess rooms therefore only 50% of the estate cleaning staff were asked to work at a time on a week on/week off rota basis.
26. Following a relaxation of the lockdown in late May the cleaning service started to plan for a full renewal of services, work took place in all the estate mess rooms to ensure that they complied with social distancing and hygiene guidelines, staff were briefed on their service specific C-19 risk assessments whilst also receiving their own individual risk assessment and following a number of site inspections with the Trades Unions and H&S management more cleaning staff returned to full time work which meant that more cleaning activities could be resumed throughout June with a full resumption of services being possible in early July 2020.

Current Issues

27. Aside from the on-going impact of COVID-19 there are a number of other issues affecting the operational effectiveness of the estate cleaning service which it is actively collaborating with other areas of the council and other agencies to try and resolve. Table 3 below provides details about the nature and impact of these issues along with actions being taken to address them.

Table 3 – Issues on estates affecting operational effectiveness

Issue	Impact	Actions
High levels of fly-tipping on housing estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire risk • Reduced standards of cleanliness • Reduced resident satisfaction • Strain of current cleaning resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly tip tasking group - targeted action of hot spots on estates • Cleaners provide intel to, and work with, enforcement/housing officers to identify persistent offenders • On-going review of cleaning service resources • Performance targets for clearing fly tip within

		agreed timescales
Rough sleepers/anti-social behaviour/drug taking in communal areas of housing estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire and clinical waste risks • Verbal and physical assaults on cleaning staff • Reduced standards of cleanliness • Reduced resident satisfaction • Strain of current cleaning resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning service work closely with RSO's/RSM's/SASBU/Me t Police, Homeless Persons Unit to identify hot spots/persistent offenders • Risk assessments and work box talks in place for personal safety in work. • Cleaning teams assigned to hot spots to avoid lone working.

Additional Services

28. On the 1st July 2020 the cleaning service took on the responsibility for the Highways gully cleaning contract, with the new service now firmly bedded in there is scope to offer a gully cleaning service to H&M for housing estate gullies.

Service Review

29. In recent years the council has made changes to street cleaning services to deliver efficiency savings. The efficiency savings have been made with relatively low impact on the cleanliness standards achieved for streets. There is scope for taking the learning and experience from street cleansing efficiency savings and engaging with H&M to determine whether similar efficiency savings could be made on estates.

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	Service Level Agreement 2020/21
Appendix B	Estate mess room locations

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Member	Cllr Catherine Rose, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Environment and Roads	
Lead Officer	Michael McNicholas, Head of Waste and Cleaning	
Report Author	Nick Mellish, Cleaning Service Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 October 2020	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team		8 October 2020