

REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 27/03/25

Report of: Cat Chambers

Title: Street Cleansing Review

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 The report provides the current position of the Street Cleaning service and its combined operations.

2. Recommendations:

N/A

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

N/A

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

- 4.1 There are no resource implications associated with this service update.
- 4.2 The services labour resource operates 40 full time equivalents and currently has only 3 vacancies which are out to active advert.

5. What are the legal aspects?

This report concerns operational matters and, as such, does not raise any legal issues.

6. Report details:

City wide street cleansing standards:

- 6.1 Defra's Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse requires Street cleaning authorities to benchmark cleansing standards using a visual assessment framework. This assessment framework applies an A-D standard of cleaning, where A is litter free, and D is a location heavily affected by litter with significant accumulation.
- 6.2 The council's street cleansing service applies this visual framework to benchmark city litter levels as follows:



Grade A - No litter or refuse.



Grade B - Predominately free of litter apart from some small, scattered items.



Grade C - Widespread distribution of litter with minor accumulations. (OBJ)



Grade D – Heavily affected by litter with Significant accumulation.

6.2 Between April and December 2024 the street cleansing service carried out 367 general litter assessments across the city. The minimum litter performance standard expected post 2023-24 bin removal programme was 95% B standard or higher. 363 of the 367 assessments carried out between April and December were A/B. Between April 2024 and December 2024 the service achieved 98.91% acceptable sites rating.

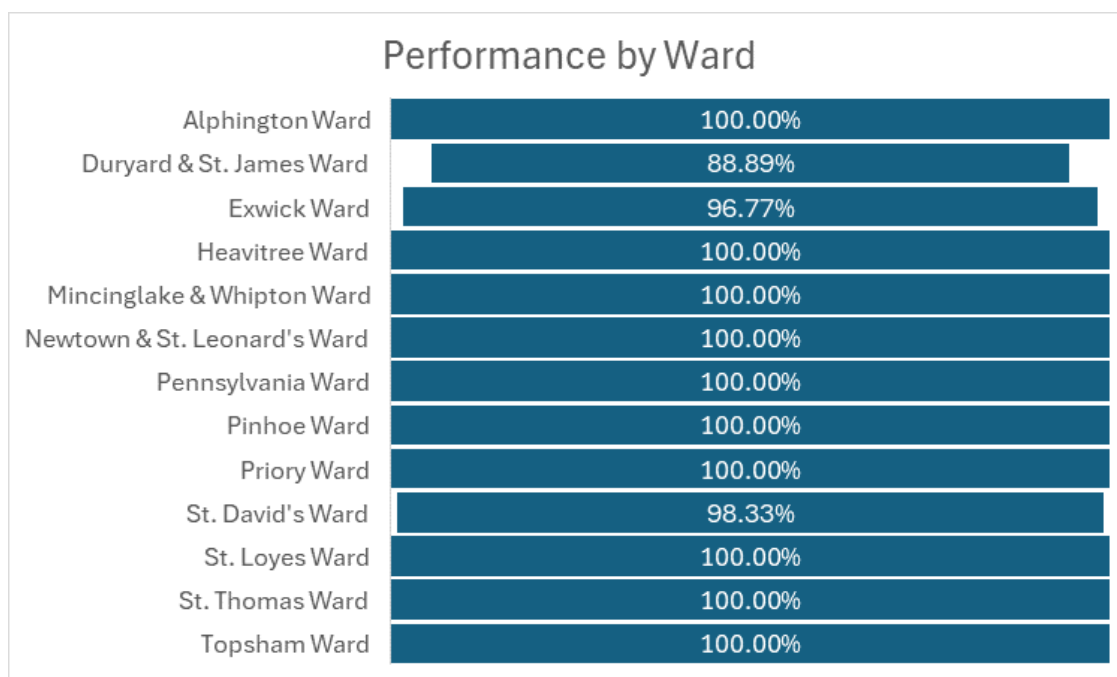
City-wide assessments indicate that there is no decline in litter standards to date as a result.

6.3 Table of Inspection by ward.

Ward	No. of Inspections	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D
Alphington Ward	19	9	10	0	0
Duryard & St. James Ward	18	5	11	2	0
Exwick Ward	31	10	20	1	0
Heavitree Ward	39	17	22	0	0
Mincinglake & Whipton Ward	29	9	20	0	0
Newtown & St. Leonard's Ward	31	4	27	0	0
Pennsylvania Ward	28	6	22	0	0
Pinhoe Ward	15	7	8	0	0
Priory Ward	32	2	30	0	0
St. David's Ward*	60	26	33	1	0
St. Loyes Ward	27	8	19	0	0
St. Thomas Ward	11	8	3	0	0
Topsham Ward	27	14	13	0	0

* St Davids ward includes 2 inspection rounds. The city centre is inspected separately to the rest of the ward. The separate approach leads to higher inspection totals within the ward.

6.4 Levels of Acceptable Performance (A&B) by Ward



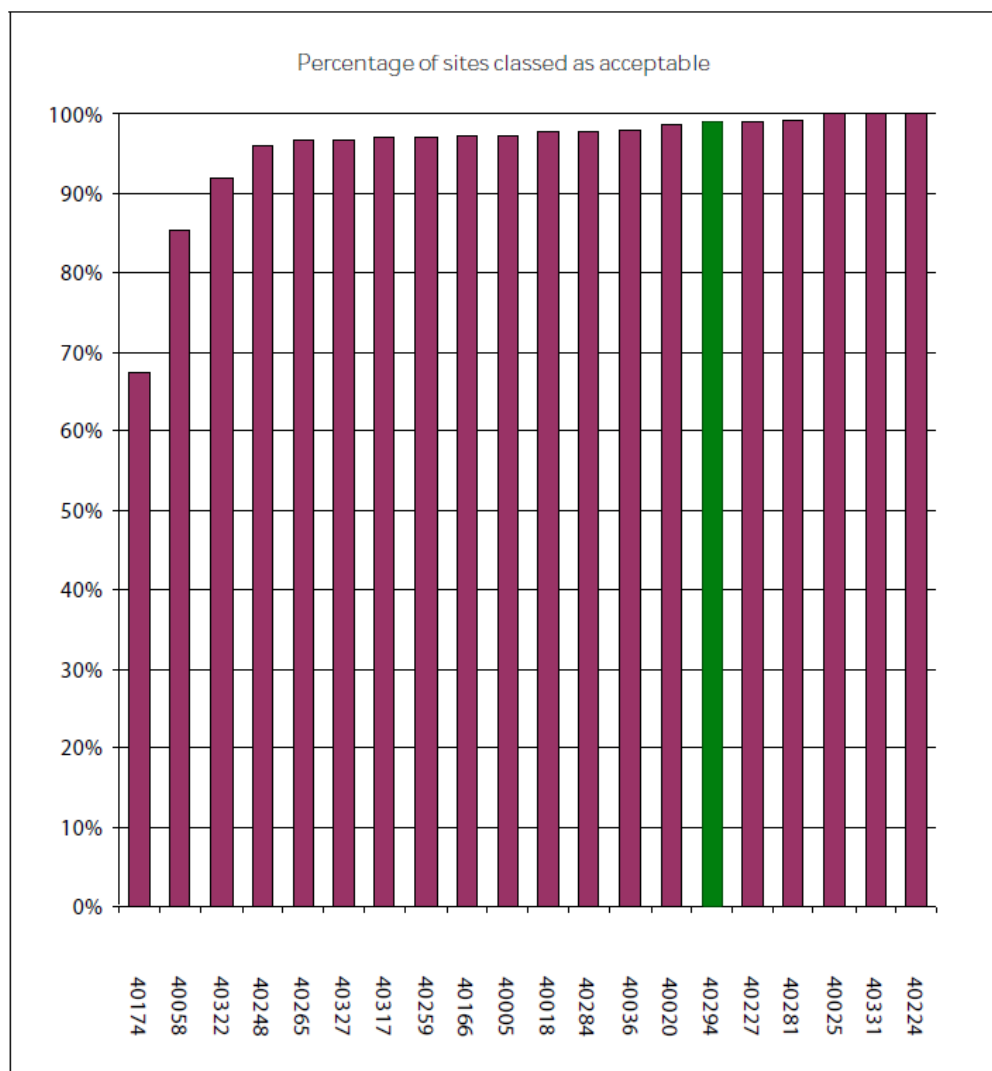
The four lower percentage performers relate to just 4 unacceptable grade 'C' assessments, 2 in Duryard and St James, and 1 each Exwick and St Davids.

- 6.5 Where identified Grade C and D litter finding are addressed as soon as possible usually within a couple of hours but at the latest within 24 hours. In the case of the four-grade c findings these were located with the following source and action considered: -

Location	Source	Action
The High Street	Waste related to trade waste and nighttime economy	Waste cleared by 9am daily – no additional action currently available

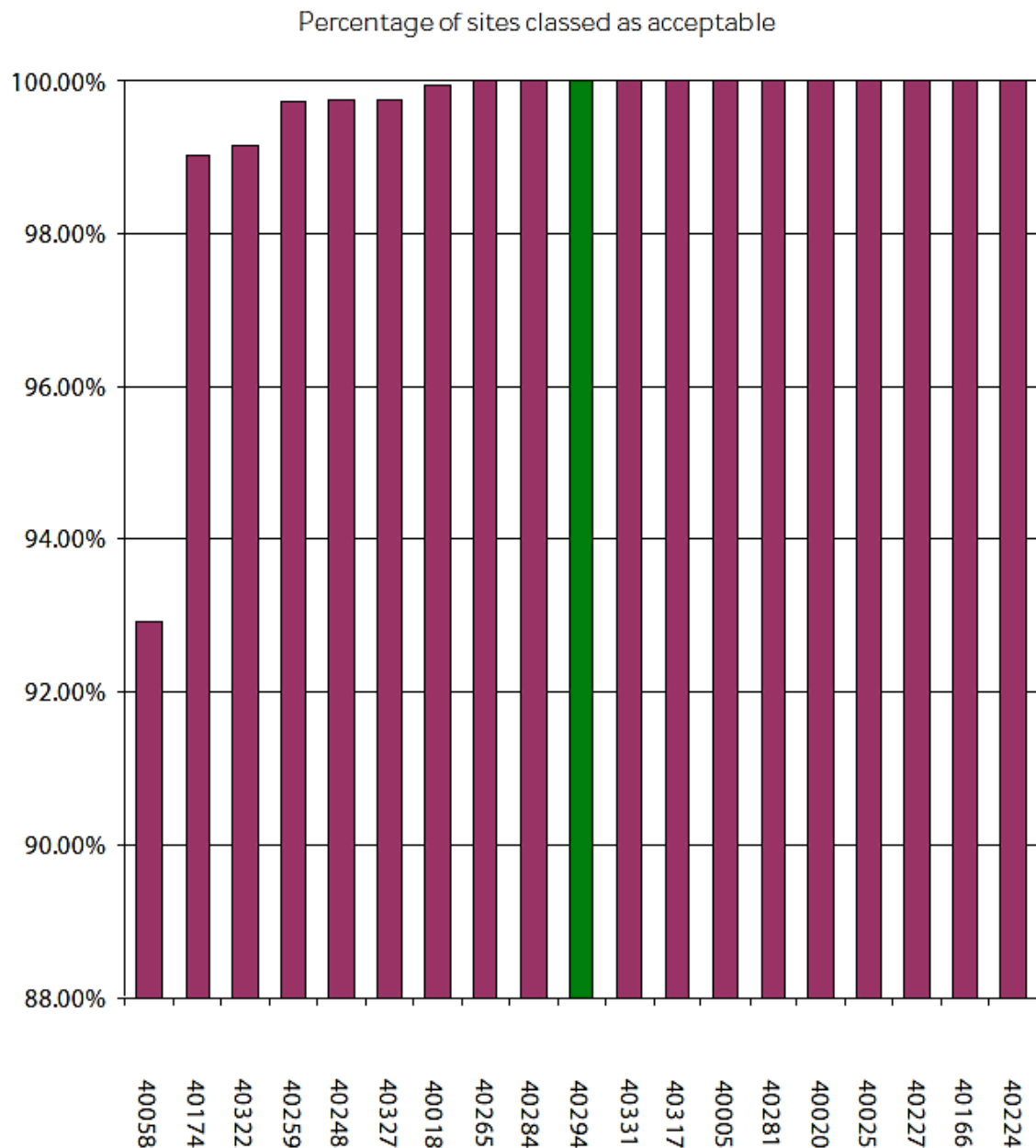
Foxtor Road	Waste related to household bin presentation	One off issue – waste cleared, and no further action was required
Victoria Road	Waste related to household bin presentation	Refuse teams on 'clear as you go', with Street cleaning schedule clearing excessive waste within 24 hours of collection refuse collection. No further street cleansing action currently available.
Victoria Street	Waste related to household bin presentation	Refuse teams on 'clear as you go', with Street cleaning schedule clearing excessive waste within 24 hours of collection refuse collection. No further street cleansing action currently available.

6.6 Benchmarked by the Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) against a local authority family group, Exeter's' standards (*green bar*) remain consistent with the top end performers for Litter quality at this time.



Dog Foul:

- 6.7 From the 370-inspections carried out, eleven streets were found to have dog foul present meaning that 97% of sites inspected were classed as acceptable. Benchmarked by APSE against family peer group, Exeter's' standards (*green bar*) are consistent with the top end performers in the group for dog foul at this time.



Detritus:

- 6.8 In the respect of detritus levels, the results to date have remained consistent since the creation of the 4 deep clean teams who, alongside the councils mechanical sweeping fleet manage levels city wide.

Levels have seen a slight improvement since the successful recruitment of the final deep clean team, at 87% average acceptable levels between April and December 24/25 compared to 79% From April to March 2023/24.

Year	Period	% of A/B sites	Date Range	Details
23/24	Q1	77%	Apr -Jun	
	Q2	76%	Jul - Aug	
	Q3	74%	Oct - Dec	Recruited into final deep clean team improving capacity
	Q4	90%	Jan - Mar	
24/25	Q1	87%	Apr -Jun	
	Q2	88%	Jul - Aug	
	Q3	86%	Oct - Dec	

Litter bin stock:

6.9 Litter impact (hotspot) demand assessments

- The council is committed to monitoring cleansing standards across the city in accordance with the DEFRA Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse 2019 (COP). It applies the grading principles outlined in COP to litter impact (hotspot) assessment, as a determining factor for the placement or removal of bininfrastructure.
- Contamination standards outlined in the COP are:
 - Grade A – No litter or refuse
 - Grade B – Predominantly free of litter apart from some scattered items.
 - Grade C – Widespread distribution of litter with minor accumulations
 - Grade D– Heavy contamination with significant accumulations.
- Where requests for new bininfrastructure are received, if street cleansing standards remain on average a Grade B or above, then additional bininfrastructure will not be considered for fitment.
- Where requests for new bininfrastructure are received, and where there is evidence to indicate that street cleansing standards in the location fall routinely below a Grade B and constitute a litter hotspot, then providing new bininfrastructure can support in reducing street cleansing resource and improving the litter grading for the location, it will be fitted.
- Where reviews of existing stock are carried out, bininfrastructure will only be retained if it continues to reduce resource demand and, or it is still required to ensure that cleansing standards do not drop to include an increasing accumulation of litter.

The ongoing need for additional bins to meet demand:

- 6.10 Operations have received fourteen litter bin fitment requests since April 2024. Hotspots assessments have indicated that two locations required additional bins which have been subsequently fitted. Eight locations have not evidenced sufficient need for additional provision, and five assessments remain ongoing.

- 6.11 Twenty-eight silver litter bins were fitted in the City Centre in December to replace the black bins present. The black bins remain fit for purpose and will be relocated to other areas of the city where they are less prone to staining and can be kept at a better standard of cleanliness.

7. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

- 7.1 The continuous review of the street cleansing services supports the delivery of a well-run council by:
- Offering a sustainable route to support a balanced budget, protecting the delivery of the council's statutory street cleansing functions, and ensuring a well-run service.
 - Optimises the delivery of frontline services, rationalising and prioritising resource allocation to make the best use of available resources for the minimum obtainable budget.
 - Efficiently managing the councils litter bin assets based on cost-efficacy and providing better value for money.

8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 8.1 The Highways Authorities withdrawal of weed control has led to increased weeds city wide with performance inspections indicating 35% of sites inspected show extensive Highways weed growth. The weeds trap litter and detritus but hinders the ability of the council's mechanical sweepers and litter picking teams to control accumulations. To manage litter and detritus as far as practicable considering constraints, Operations have implemented a deep clean schedule and continues to prioritise the delivery of detritus operations as part of daily business continuity planning.
- 8.2 Recruitment of short-term absence cover continues to be difficult resulting in periodic resource shortages that impact performance standards. This is managed through the prioritisation of statutory functions and daily business continuity planning.

9. Equality Act 210 (The Act)

- 9.1 No potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report is for noting only.

10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

- 10.1 There is no direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from this report.

11. Are there any other options?

- 11.1 No alternative options have been identified

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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