

The Quality of Public Realm for Residents and Visitors

Short Briefing Paper on “A clean and welcoming street scene”

This briefing paper has been prepared following meetings and conversations between Alistair Ferrier & Phil Dunsdon; John Copley; Tim Sadler; Andy Murray (TVP); Mat Bullivant (TVP) plus e-mails from Mel Barrett and Graham Stratford.

1. Overview

Whilst the ‘City Works’ Service of Oxford City Council already manages cleaning & collection regimes that are above the minimum required *Environmental Protection* levels & *Statutory Codes of Practice*, it is fully recognised that this is not enough if the City is to be regarded in the desired context of ‘a world class economic centre’ and ‘international heritage site’, - ‘a world class city’.

There are *seven* key areas to focus on when considering how to improve the *street scene*

- The review & improvement of street cleaning regimes, specs. & equipment.
- The operational management and coordination of the Waste Collection streams.
- The control & enforcement of Trade Waste collections. (Council & private contracts)
- The reduction of the impact of the City’s waste on the environment.
- The adoption of ‘Street Scene Manual’ (Partnership project of City & County Councils)
- The referencing of ‘Centres of Excellence’ (Gloucester; Winchester; Westminster)
- Review and upgrade street trading practices. (including Licences & Consents)
- The monitoring & management of vagrancy, begging and ‘rough sleeping’.
- The reduction of antisocial behaviour and fear of crime particularly at night.

2. Initiatives currently under way in the City

- I. Cleaning & Collection Specifications :
 - The translation of detailed spec. manuals into “easy to understand language” and explanations of service. (TS/PD)
 - This initiative also aims to highlight where current specifications fall short of expectations and achievable targets with increased monitoring to ensure such targets are being met. (TS/PD)
- II. Trade Waste :
 - Establishing an audit of all Trade Waste (completed by Sun **5th July**) (JC/PD/ACF)
 - New Schedules (evening trials in operation again since mid May) **July** (PD/DH/ND)
 - New Vehicle for ‘co-mingled’ collection: **July** (costs shared by Waste Partnership)
 - The monitoring, purge & correction of ‘private sector’ collections after City Works schedule is up and successfully operational. **August** t.b.c (JC/TS/ACF)
- III. Cigarette detritus

Behavioural issues: Education/ Communication campaign (concept stage*TS/ACF)

 - Letter to all employers & landlords regarding byelaws *
 - Audit provision for disposal (*Public areas, Eating & Drinking establishments*) *
 - Establish required provision for public waste bins & ashtrays/boxes. *
 - Once above in place & standards set - Purge offenders & re-educate.*

- IV. Recycling 'Co-mingled' waste : New Vehicle 'Trade launch' **mid July** (PD/ND/ACF)
- V. City Centre waste bin provision: Use 'Transform Oxford' Transport & Highways Service bus stop repositioning to review Highways' strategic 'de-cluttering' - audit and establish appropriate provision, including the requested "creation of central recycling points" * within the city centre. (Sponsorship campaign?) (PD/JC/ACF)
- VI. Review of Street Trading Consents / pitches / values & standards.
- Resulting in the creation of a series of strategic goals that consistently link into the ambition for a world class environment within the city.
 - Establish quick wins and begin the first steps on improving the offer.
 - Create a rate card of Street site values that correspond with the trading opportunity (realising premiums for 'Prime sites' that benefit from high visitor flow and excellent conversion rates whilst considering the possible reduction of 'off pitch' site values.)
 - Consider 'sites' & spaces within the public realm, main thoroughfares for 'entertainment consents' to be considered for 'upmarket' buskers, street entertainers & appropriate cultural event activities. (rate card as above)
 - Moving from begging to earning.
 - Moving from no standards to consistent expected standards.
 - Moving some of the vast City resource of performers, artists & musicians out into the public realm
- VII. A concentrated 'push' on community safety, in terms of removing aggressive begging and in terms of the homelessness – the removal of homeless people from shop & office doorways. (TVP/Nightsafe) (MB/GS/AM/ACF & PC Paul Philips)
- Resettlement & Shelter initiatives*
 - "Diverted giving" * –providing collection boxes for potentially three or four local charities (of which, one could be the Homeless Shelter) within a large concentrated group of City Centre establishments whereby the visiting & local public are encourage to 'give' via the heavily promoted collection boxes (by every city centre till point?) – thus diverting the resources from the street and reducing the 'attractiveness' of Oxford's Streets to aggressive begging and generally large numbers of 'incoming' vagrants / 'rough sleepers'.
- VIII. Nightsafe & Pubwatch : working to improve reduction of antisocial behaviour and fear of crime. –(Radio Link for Pubwatch – currently offering a 'free' month trial.)
- Licensing enforcement
 - Multi Agency Inspections
 - Training

[*Plus 'Public Toilet strategy': Work in Progress being submitted to City Exec. Board]

3. Who are the key players?

- Oxford City Council –
 - ‘City Works’ : Tim Sadler; Phil Dunsdon; Dave Huddle; ‘Street Scene’
 - ED : John Copley; Enforcement & Street Trading
 - Community Safety : Graham Stratford; Nightsafe Karen Crossman
- City Centre Management – Alistair Ferrier
- Oxfordshire County Council - ‘Transform’ Project management : John Crammer
- Thames Valley Police – Andy Murray; Mat Bullivant
- Others – Private contracted waste collection from Biffa & Grunden

4. What are the gaps and where might the OSP add value

- III Cigarette detritus :
Behavioural issues: Education/ Communication campaign.*
- V City Centre waste bin provision;
including the requested “creation of central recycling points” *
within the city centre. (Sponsorship campaign?)
- VII A concentrated ‘push’ on community safety:
Resettlement & Shelter initiatives *
“Diverted giving” *

[* Public Toilet strategy & implementation in line with tourist ‘welcome’ ?]

*requires support

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