

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	5.
Date:	6 th December 2010	Status	Open
Category	Part of the Budget and Policy Framework		
Subject:	Eyes and Ears		
Report by:	Director of Neighbourhoods		
Other Officers involved:	Patch Management Group Senior Management Team		
Director	Director of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor D. Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change Champion		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

COMMUNITY SAFETY – Ensuring that communities are safe and secure
CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services
REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities
ENVIRONMENT – Promoting and enhancing a clean and sustainable environment
STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

TARGETS

To assist everyone in feeling safe and secure at home and outdoors:

- Increase the people 'who feel safe when outside in their local area during the day' from 85% to 88% by March 2011
- Increase the people 'who feel safe when outside in their local area during the night' from 43% to 45% by March 2011

To improve the quality and consistency of services

- Increase the number of housing repair jobs that are able to be resolved on the first visit to 85%

To protect, enhance and improve the natural and built environment in a sustainable way

- Increase the standard of street cleanliness (litter and detritus) to 95% by March 2011
- Remove all fly tipping within 24 hours of being reported

To continue to monitor, review and improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of all Council Services

- Increase 'Value for Money' on the services we deliver by achieving our efficiency target of £2.3 million by March 2011

VALUE FOR MONEY

The proposals contained in this report should assist in the early identification of neighbourhood management issues, reduce the need for additional one-off inspections and secure savings through prompt response to service demands.

THE REPORT

In March 2010 a report was presented to the former PPMG 2 meeting concerning proposals to cease Estate Audits and seek to improve the condition of the District's neighbourhoods through a re-launch of the Eyes and Ears campaign. This proposal was subsequently agreed by Executive where an update on progress was requested in six months.

The intention of the re-launch is to have the equivalent of almost 365 days per year assessment, with issues being identified for rectification in accordance with agreed standards for service delivery. To be effective emphasis was given to the need for those Officers who are out and about within the District to report such matters when they are observed. The new arrangements are intended to identify problems and issues early and as part of everyone's day to day duties. They do not alter the current service standards or delivery times. Neither do they place on the individual reporting an issue responsibility for resolving it, nor will it be a disciplinary issue if issues are not reported by officers

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Training and awareness sessions on the re-launch of Eyes and Ears have been provided for every department and a separate session was provided to Members. As the re-launch coincided with the summer holiday period there were some delays in the training and awareness sessions. As a result there has been insufficient time to enable the new system to bed down and a short delay in presenting this report. In view of these delays it is proposed that the trial period be extended for a further six months.

Based upon the initial analysis of completed forms there has been an increase in reporting compared to the previous arrangements. Prior to the re-launch 245 forms were received over a 19 month period from employees, Members and the public. This equates to 13 per month. In the period April to September, 101 forms were received. During October we received 40 forms in total. These were submitted by officers from eight departments and three forms from Members. Of the 40, seventeen were for Bolsover area, seven Shirebrook, five South Normanton and eleven for the Clowne area. Fly-tipping was the top issue reported in October.

Feedback to the Patch Management Group indicates that some employees have been identifying issues that could have been reported using Eyes and Ears forms but have been reported in another way. Steps are therefore being taken to capture this additional information.

The litmus test for this initiative, however, is not the number of forms received but the standards in the District and the look and feel of our neighbourhoods.

During the re-launch awareness session for Members a number of concerns were raised regarding feedback to Members about action taken following any forms that they return. Where there is an existing CRM script for the type of work identified, it may be possible to generate a method for updating the service request. However, for work where there is no CRM script or no tie in to back office systems, this will be difficult to achieve without manual analysis of individual forms as there is no simple straightforward system to report completion of jobs / tasks. Clearly, however, if Members wish this to be pursued a solution could be found but it will require additional work that will impact upon other current work.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

If Members require a system of reporting back on progress, there may be some investment required in system upgrades. This would be detailed in a future report.

Legal:

None

Human Resources:

There is a short time commitment for each officer who observes an issue on the “patch” to record and process the “Eyes and Ears” form.

RECOMMENDATION that

Members approve the extension of the Eyes and Ears trial period for a further six months.

REASON FOR DECISION

To assist the Council in addressing issues of low public perception in respect of Council services and the neighbourhoods in which people live.

ATTACHMENT: N/A
FILE REFERENCE: Patch Management File
SOURCE DOCUMENT: N/A