

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Streetscene Policy Development and Review Panel

Date 10 July 2014

Report of: Director of Environmental Services

Subject: REVIEW OF CORPORATE CLEANING CONTRACT

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the performance of the Corporate Cleaning Contract that was awarded to Fountains Environmental Limited (now OCS) on 10 January 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the performance of the Corporate Cleaning Contract that was awarded to Fountains Environmental Limited.

BACKGROUND

2. At its meeting on 10 January 2011, the Executive awarded the Corporate Cleaning Contract to Fountains Environmental Limited, being the most economically and technically advantageous tender received. The contract was awarded for a five year period starting on 4 April 2011.
3. On 23 January 2012, Fountains Environmental Limited went into administration. Almost immediately, OCS Group UK Limited purchased certain parts of the business and assets of the Fountains Group from the Administrators, which included the Council Corporate Cleaning Contract.

SCOPE OF THE CONTRACT

4. The Corporate Cleaning Contract includes the following establishments:
 - Housing Establishments - 64 separate sheltered and non-sheltered places of multiple occupancy
 - Ferneham Hall - toilets, offices and associated rooms
 - Council Depot - toilets, offices and associated rooms
 - Public Conveniences - fifteen across the borough
 - Pavilions - six pavilions (& one chapel)
 - Car Parks - toilets, offices and associated rooms along with stairwells, lifts and lobbies
 - Town Centre - main shopping area of West Street
 - Civic Offices - window cleaning only.
 - Street Scene Operation teams rest rooms
5. Broadly speaking, the following tasks are undertaken and categorised as:
 - General cleaning of offices and associated rooms
 - Cleaning housing communal areas, car park lobbies and stairwells, sports changing rooms
 - Cleaning public toilets, along with opening and closing
 - Window cleaning
 - Cleaning of wheeled refuse bins
 - Gum removal and specialist street washing
 - Temperature checking and flushing for Legionella control
 - Single ad hoc clean-up operations.

GENERAL PROGRESS UPDATE

6. The day to day running of the cleaning contract is undertaken by the Streetscene Monitoring and Enforcement Officer, who is the single point of contact for all the departments that have work undertaken as part of the contract. This works well and prevents individuals going directly to the contractor, thus avoiding duplication.

7. Any complaints that are received are logged and passed on to OCS for action. In addition, random monitoring is carried out to ensure standards are maintained.
8. This report provides details of the performance of the contract for the year Apr 2013 - March 2014. The contractors performance is reviewed below over the various establishments :-

Ferneham Hall

9. The cleaning of Ferneham Hall is undertaken on a daily basis. It involves ensuring that primarily those areas seen by the public such as the foyer, Auditorium, Octagon lounge and bar area are cleaned to a high standard at all times.
10. There were a few performance issues for the first year of the contract, mainly due to employees not turning up at the weekends and subsequently not letting the supervisor or Ferneham Hall staff know. Over the last year things have greatly improved. The Manager has been satisfied overall with the standards and the performance of the cleaners have been maintained.
11. Meetings are held between the Ferneham Hall Manager and OCS on a quarterly basis, where any current issues can be addressed.

Council Depot

12. The cleaning at the depot is undertaken by one designated cleaner who attends each day. The areas to be cleaned include the offices, kitchens, shower rooms, communal areas and changing areas for the operatives. Generally, standards are good.

Public Conveniences

13. There are fifteen public conveniences that are included in the cleaning contract. The toilets are open seven days a week all year round except Christmas Day. The opening and closing times vary depending on the time of year as does the frequency of cleaning visits. Each site receives a thorough clean followed by a number of inspections and re-cleans depending on the usage. All sites receive a deep clean every quarter. The contractor also carries out small repair works such as changing light bulbs, replacing toilet roll holders, toilet seats and removing graffiti.
14. There are two mobile cleaners that clean the toilets during the week, and a part time cleaner at the weekends. The cleaning is undertaken across two shifts with one cleaner opening and cleaning the sites in the morning and then the second cleaner taking over and starting at 1.30pm.
15. There had been issues with the cleaning standards of the toilets, which resulted in an increase in complaints. The main issue here was that there was a requirement in the contract to visit the toilets so many times a day, that the cleaners were spending all their time driving between sites than actually cleaning. Following discussions with the contractor a new regime of visits was agreed. This has appeared to have improved cleaning standards considerably as more time is spend at the site on each visit.
16. For each site, the cleaners complete a sign in-out sheet, which informs the Contracts Manager and Council Officers the time the site was cleaned and checked. Any issues that are found at the time of the visit are recorded.

Pavilions

17. There are seven pavilions located on various recreation grounds across the borough and are primarily provided for football and rugby players in the winter and cricketers in the summer. These pavilions are cleaned on a weekly basis during the week in readiness for the following weekend fixtures.
18. All teams using the Council's facilities are asked to leave them in the condition that they found them. There are also brooms and brushes available so that floors can be swept after use. Generally this is undertaken but, during the winter months, the pavilions require more cleaning due to the muddy boots which are often not removed prior to entering the building.
19. Generally, the cleaning has been good, although on occasions the cleaners have reported that the sporting clubs are leaving the changing rooms in an unacceptable condition. Those clubs responsible have been contacted, although it is a very difficult situation to resolve where multiple clubs use the same facility.

Car parks

20. There are two car parks that are cleaned, including the recently built one at the end of Civic Way. Daily cleaning is undertaken of the lifts (internally and externally), stairs, landings, lobbies, windows, ticket machines & shelters. Cleaning, including the carpets and windows is undertaken in the control centre which is located within the multi-storey car park next to Ferneham Hall. Deep cleaning of the carpets is undertaken yearly and the cleaning of the windows four times a year. Overall, the cleaning has been satisfactory, attracting very few complaints.

Civic Offices

21. The cleaning at the Civic Offices contained within this contract only relates to the cleaning of the windows on the inside of the building on floor 1-9, the ground floor windows are cleaned internal/external quarterly as per contract. Other elements of cleaning are undertaken by staff directly employed by the Council.
22. There hasn't been any issue with the window cleaning generally, other than the fact that on occasions items have been left on the window sill preventing the cleaning of the windows.
23. In addition to this, the appearance of the window once cleaned doesn't always look good as the external areas of glass above ground floor level are never cleaned so dirt and smears are still present.
24. It has therefore been agreed that the windows (floor 1-9) which were cleaned on a bi-monthly basis are now cleaned once every 3 months but ground floor internal/external windows has been increased to monthly. There has been no adjustment to the overall cost but the cleanliness of those areas most seen by customers to the Civic Offices has greatly improved.

Housing establishments - General Purpose Maisonettes/ Flats

25. There are eighteen General Purpose Maisonettes and eight General Purpose Flats. These sites are cleaned on a weekly basis, involving sweeping, mopping stairs, cleaning of landings and handrails, bin stores, removing cobwebs, external window cleaning etc. They are cleaned by two cleaners Monday - Friday.
26. The contractor has prepared a detailed schedule which provides information on which site gets cleaned on which day, enabling the block captains and residents to know when the cleaning is to be carried out.
27. Some of the maisonettes and flats have key entrance doors, while others lead straight into the stairs and landing. The material of the stairs is non-slip concrete, which continuously causes problems with the cleaning in that sweeping with a broom can be managed but the use of a mop cannot clean the stairs and landing as well as it should.
28. Alterations to the cleaning regime of these floors have been made. The monthly clean is now a six weekly deep clean but using a pressure washer instead. This has given a slightly better result. Ultimately, the Housing department are looking at replacing the surface of these floors with a material that can be cleaned more easily.
29. In order for Housing Officers to communicate with residents some of the blocks have Block Captains. Originally, in order to obtain satisfaction levels, cards are left with the block captains by the cleaners after their weekly cleans have been completed. The block captains were then expected to send them into the Housing Officers for collation. However, this caused a delay so now block captain can also choose to report their level of satisfaction by email or phone directly to the Tennant Involvement Officer. If there are any issues then they are discussed with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Housing establishments - General purpose flats

30. The General Purpose accommodation consists of low level flats. These are generally for single occupants or couples with no children. Most of the blocks within this category have block captains and generally, the standards are good.
31. These flats are cleaned once a week by two cleaners. This includes sweeping, mopping stairs, cleaning landings and handrails, removing cobwebs, bin stores and external window cleaning.
32. The flats have a key entrance door; the material of the floor is non-slip rubber, which is easy to clean and maintain. The issues that are found here are plants and mobility scooters in corridors and landings, making access quite difficult. This issue has been brought to the attention of the housing officers.
33. Some of the bin store areas are in the basement area of the flats and there can be several refuse and recycling bins located in there. Old furniture and other bulky items are also placed in there which can cause an issue when attempting to clean. This is reported and usually removed on behalf of the Housing Officers by the Council's Streetscene Cleansing Team.
34. Other housing sites have small bin stores that have one or two wheeled bins inside, but in some, residents put personal items in them. The cleaners have to remove the bins before any cleaning can be carried out.

Housing establishments - Sheltered housing (staffed and non-staffed)

35. Generally, all sheltered housing sites have either wardens that are based on site or they have mobile wardens who visit regularly. This helps a great deal in ensuring that cleaning standards are maintained as there is an element of supervision on site and any issues can usually be rectified at the time. Due to this fact cleaning standards are generally very good.
36. The areas that are cleaned are mainly communal areas such as lounges, corridors, kitchens, stairs and landings, and external/internal window cleaning but not internal resident's flats. There are also communal bathrooms, offices and laundry rooms. Individual flats are not included as part of the contract as they are the responsibility of the residents.

Housing establishments - Customer satisfaction

37. Meetings are held with OCS and representatives from the Housing Department every quarter; these include the Housing Manager, and two Block Captains. The meetings provide the opportunity to deal with any issues, propose any improvements and give feedback to OCS. The Housing Manager also discusses data regarding the latest satisfaction levels which has been gathered following housing officers' visits and feedback from wardens and block captains.
38. During May 2014, OCS/F and Council Officers attended a Block Captain Forum meeting at Ferneham Hall. This meeting was an opportunity for all of the Block Captains to meet the Regional Managers of OCS and speak directly about any concerns they may have.
39. The levels of customer satisfaction obtained by either Tenants or Housing Officers over the last two years is as follows:

	2012/13	2013/14
April – June	77%	71%
July – Sept	67%	75%
Oct – Dec	88%	92%
Jan – Mar	78%	88%

40. It would appear that 2013/14 satisfaction levels have improved over the previous year, although it still seems to fluctuate from quarter to quarter. There is still scope for improvement.
41. Complaints still tend to be with regard to cleaning of windows, bin stores and general attention to detail and it is possible that these elements of work continue to bring the overall satisfaction levels down.

Town Centre/Street Washing

42. In West Street between The Brass Monkey public house and Westbury Manor Museum, OCS are contracted to undertake a monthly street wash and quarterly gum removal. It is only the areas that are paved with York stone that are cleaned and not the cobbled stone areas. This is due to the problem with the sand/grit between the cobbles being lost over a period of time causing loose cobbles.

43. During the months between November and February the street washing is not always carried out due to potential problems with temperatures going below freezing and increasing the likelihood of slips and falls.
44. The overall standard for this aspect of work has never really been satisfactory throughout the contract and numerous different types of machinery and ways of working have been utilised to try and obtain a standard that was previously reached in the past.
45. In order to try and improve standards, alterations have now been made to the frequency and operation for the washing of the paving in the Town centre. Originally it was specified within the contract to be undertaken 12 times a year. However, it has been agreed to only undertake this four times a year and it will be carried out by a sub-contractor that specialises in this type of work. This has provided a standard that the Monitoring and Enforcement Officer finds acceptable.

ISSUES THAT NEED FURTHER ATTENTION

Washing of Communal Refuse Bins

46. As part of the cleaning for housing establishments there is a requirement to wash out the communal waste bins twice a year.
47. Although this task only forms a small part of the contract, it appears that this aspect of work seems to be left uncompleted when there are other higher priority work tasks outstanding. This is something that we need to monitor more ensuring that they work actually gets done rather than left until we get complaints about smelly bins.
48. It is appreciated that it isn't an easy task to undertake due to the timing issues. The bin has to be washed almost immediately after it has been emptied so that it can be cleaning before residents start placing new bags of rubbish into them.
49. There is also an element of education to be undertaken, in that residents need to be advised on how best to bag up their waste to reduce any items of food or other organic matter falling loose into the bin making it smell and attractive to flies.

Bulky household items

50. There has always been a problem with a small minority of Housing Tenants who continually dump bulky household items in the communal bin areas. Although, this is not the fault of the cleaning contractor, it does have an impact on their work. Sometimes there are so many items left it has an impact on how the communal areas can be cleaned. The cleaning contractors aren't expected to move these big items so sometimes the areas aren't cleaned.
51. Liaison with Housing Officers is required to see if there are ways that this problem can be reduced in the future.

CONTRACT RENEWAL

52. The current cleaning contract comes to an end in March 2016 and due to the value, the procurement will have to comply with the European tender (OJEU) process. Towards the end of the current financial year, Streetscene Officers will work with other

council departments to review the scope and specification.

CONCLUSION

53. Generally speaking, the Corporate Cleaning Contract, which has incorporated the majority of the Council's cleaning requirements into one contract, has worked satisfactorily.
54. Since last year a number of actions have been implemented in order to improve performance. These are as follows:
 - (a) Alteration to the frequency in visits to the public conveniences has resulted in a better standard of cleaning and subsequent reduction in resident complaints.
 - (b) The introduction of GPS into the vehicles of mobile cleaners has improved monitoring and better recording of visits.
 - (c) The introduction of a more formal inspection and monitoring regime by the OCS manager has improved standards of their operatives.
 - (d) Alterations have been made to the frequency and operation for the washing of the paving in the Town centre and are now subcontracted to another local company.
55. There are still some issues that require further improvement such as liaison with Housing officer to tackle dumping of bulky items and also improve cleaning of communal bins. Officers will endeavour to resolve them as soon as possible through discussions with the management of the OCS group and Housing Officers.
56. Work on the retendering process will commence towards the end of the financial year with all those departments that have an interest in the current contract.

Background Papers:

Reference Papers:

Report to the Executive- 10 January 2011 - Award of Corporate Cleaning Contract
Report to Streetscene Policy Development and Review Panel – 8 March 2012 - Corporate Cleaning Contract – Performance Review
Report to Streetscene Policy Development and Review Panel – 11 July 2013 - Corporate Cleaning Contract

Enquiries:

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