

Title: idverde Contract Review (Street Cleansing)  
 Lead Officers: Zoë Court (Head of Neighbourhood Services)  
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 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Roberts  
 Wards of the District directly affected: ALL

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder		Cllr Will Roberts
Finance		Andrew Rollins
Legal Services		N/A
Chief Executive		Chris Elliot
Director of Climate Change		Dave Barber
Head of Service(s)		N/A
Section 151 Officer		Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	6/3/25	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group		
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	No	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

## **1. Summary why Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the report**

- 1.1 The Committee have a programme in place to review all of the Council's major contracts to scrutinise performance and value for money.
- 1.2 Idverde are contracted to deliver Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing across the district, this report is reviewing Street Cleansing and there is an accompanying report reviewing Grounds Maintenance.

## **2. Background and Contract details**

- 2.1 The current contract started in April 2021 and is for 8 years (to 31 March 2029) There is an option to extend the contract for up to an additional 8 years
- 2.2 The contract value is £22,500,000 (annual contract value is c£2,812,500). This is subject to RPI applied in April based on August the previous year.
- 2.3 The Street Cleansing contract includes a wide range of services; on various specifications and frequencies these include:
  - Highway Cleansing
    - General highway cleansing
    - Footway, footpath, and grass verge cleansing
    - Channel cleansing
    - Cleansing of roundabouts, traffic islands, central reservations, and other highway feature
    - Removal of vegetation
    - Cleansing around trees and other vegetations
    - Trash Screens
  - Cleansing of villages and rural roads
  - Shopping Precinct cleansing
  - Cleansing A46 trunk road
  - Litter bin emptying and cleansing
  - Weed Spraying\*
  - Tree Planting
  - Major leaf fall
  - Pressure washing footpaths and other areas
  - Investigate and removal of flytipping
  - Gritting and snow clearance
  - Removal of human/animal fouling and clinical sharps
  - Removal of dead animals
  - Removal of abandoned shopping trolley
  - WDC owned carpark cleansing
  - Parking and cemetery path sweeping
  - Rapid Response Unit (RRU) Community Cleansing Team
  - Housing community cleansing team
  - Cemetery Maintenance
  - Seasonal barrow operatives
  - Play Area Team
  - Epicormic Growth
  - Recycling litter bins

Idverde also support the Waste Education & Enforcement team with their activities, including searching for evidence at flytipping sites, clearing accumulated waste, work in Leamington town centre clearing refuse bags, report and monitor litter bin misuse.

### 3. Street Cleansing Contract Standards

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA)1990 to ensure public spaces and highways are kept free from litter and refuse as far as is reasonably practicably (as detailed in the Code of Practice on Litter & Refuse (Nov 2006)).

To comply with the legislation the Council provides a service that is responsible for the following operations:

- Cleaning all streets, footways and open spaces that are in public ownership.
- Removal of graffiti.
- Removal of fly-tipping.
- Emptying of litter and dog bins.
- Collection of dead animals both domestic and wild.
- Collection of domestic bulky waste, which is a chargeable service.

- 3.2 The Contractor is required to cleanse all Highway and Relevant Land in accordance with the Cleansing Standards set out in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) – Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (COPLAR) 2006 (See link in 8.1 of the report).

- 3.3 In the Code there are defined and illustrated Standards of Cleanliness for Relevant Land which use an A to D grading system. The Council will use the standards as a basis to assess the Cleanliness of Highway and Relevant Land, which shall include 'Litter and Refuse' and 'Detritus' in line with the Code and also weeds. The Contractor, through its cleansing regimes, shall ensure that all Highway and Relevant Land is Cleansed to Grade A standard at the point of Cleanse, regardless of the type of carriageway or surface such as paving blocks, cobbles, etc.

- 3.4 If, in the opinion of the Council, any Street hasn't been Cleansed to Grade A standard and this is capable of remedy, the Council shall issue a rectification notice in line with the Conditions of Contract. The Contractor will be expected to restore the standard of cleanliness to Grade A within the following timescales:

- i. Daily Cleanse – Same day
- ii. Weekly Cleanse – Two days
- iii. Monthly Cleanse – Five days
- iv. Two Monthly Cleanse – Five days

- 3.5 If the Street still hasn't been Cleansed to Grade A standard within the period of time specified in the rectification notice, the Council may issue a default notice in accordance with the Conditions of Contract.

- 3.6 Where there are particular situations or technical difficulties that prevent The Contractor from achieving Grade A standard, this shall be reported to the Council on the same working day.

- 3.7 The performance of the contractor in respect to achieving the COPLAR Grade A or B standard is shown in 4.1 of this report.

#### 4. Contract Performance and KPIs

4.1 The Neighbourhood Services Service Area Plan (NS SAP) tracks the monthly performance of the Contractor in relation to % of streets cleansed to an acceptable standard. The target is 80% to achieve a Grade A (no visible litter/weeds) or Grade B (some visible litter/weeds at acceptable levels). As determined by Area Contract Officer inspections.

PROGRESS 2024/25	Target	Progress
April-24	80%	73%
May-24	80%	68%
June-24	80%	51%
July-24	80%	55%
August-24	80%	65%
September-24	80%	70%
October-24	80%	66%
November-24	80%	56%
December-24	80%	65%
January-25	80%	60%
February-25	80%	
March-25	80%	
Year summary (to date)	80%	63%

4.2 Improvements to this KPI are required and a draft contract improvement plan has been agreed with the Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services. This covered in the section 6 of the report.

4.3 This is the only KPI within the NS SAP and it may be beneficial to add in other KPIs relevant to street cleansing, based on customer 4.6 reports outlined in section, as these are areas that are important to residents.

4.3 idverde use a system called PQMS Dashboard, which is a real-time online performance display on many contracts that gives clients an instant view of the health of the contract and enables idverde to flag up under performances features and benchmark standards by drilling down to the performance of the contract at site and feature level. The dashboard is continually updated as the period progresses which could form part of our suite of reports for Street Cleansing. It be customised to include:

- Inspections by grade
- Quality scores for each region and site type, enabling benchmarking across the whole contract
- Quality scores for each feature (against COPLAR standard)
- Timeline showing quality scores achieved over time, enabling trends to be monitored
- Features inspected and quality scores attributed, including photographic evidence

4.4. It should be noted that the Area Contract Officers spend a great deal of time carrying out inspections each month and are each targeted to do at least 10 inspections per week, with or without a Contract Supervisor attending.

4.5 Each street that is inspected is graded using the COPLAR standards outlined in section 3 of this report. Streets falling below Grade A or Grade B are issued with a Rectification Notice, which outlines details of what the contract breach is, how the Contractor should rectify and the deadline for the work to take place, using the timescales in section 3.3. A recent example from the spreadsheet record is shown below:

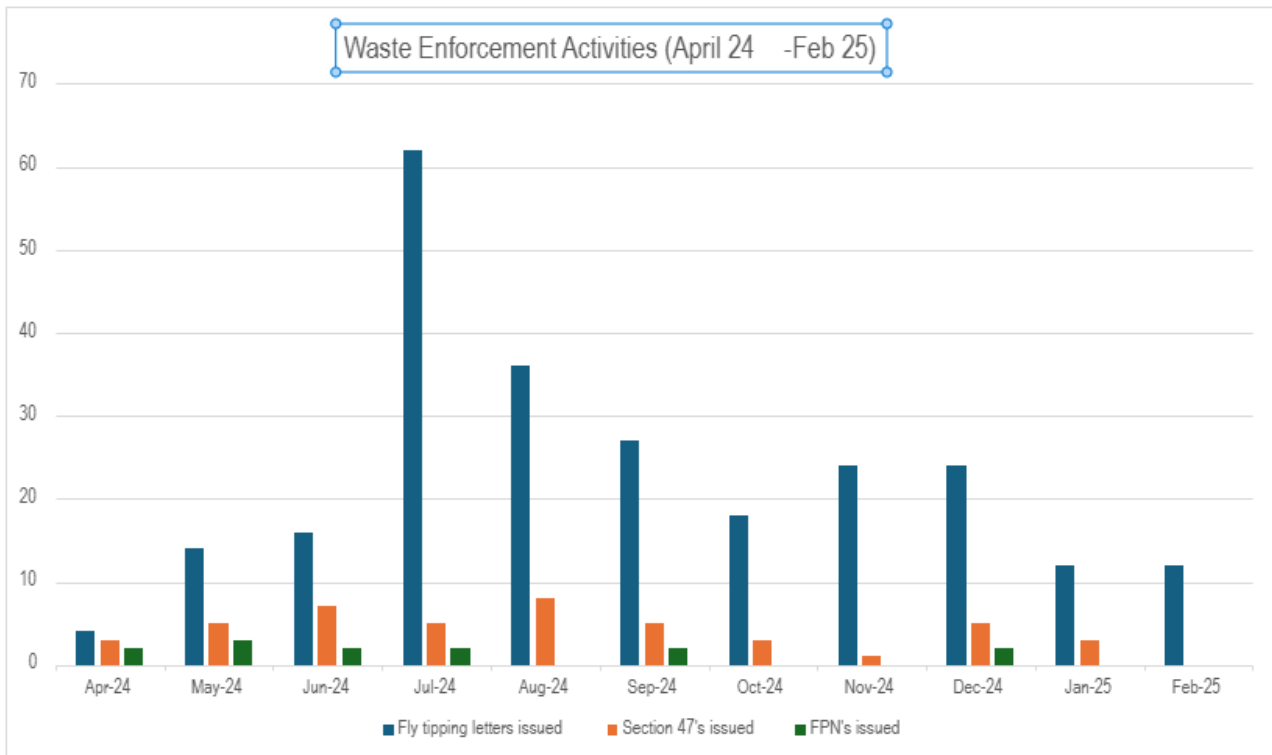
Date issued	Address or location	Details of breach of contract	How should Contractor rectify the breach	Deadline for rectification
18th February 2025	Milverton Terrace, Leamington Spa	As per section 4.1.2.1, 4.1.2.2 and 4.1.5. of the contract you have failed to perform the Services completely in accordance with the provisions of the Contract, by failing to cleanse the listed street at the correct frequency and remove leaves and tree debris from the highway. Failure to comply with this rectification notice (RN 1513) will result in the issuing of an instant default notice.  As per section 29.6 of the Deed of Agreement it should be noted that an instant Default Notice will be issued when a third and any subsequent substantiated complaint is received of a similar nature to any previously issued Rectification or Default Notice(s) for the same location in any 12 month period along with a default for every subsequent day the fault is not rectified.	Return to remove all, leaves, tree debris and brush from the entire highway, including pathway, vehicle crossing points and back edges.	20th February 2025

4.6 Failure to rectify within the timescale results in a default notice being issues to the value of £17.50. The input and output of this work needs to be reviewed as part of the contract improvement process to ensure that this is a good use of resources and proportionate to the number of service requests received

4.7 Since April 2024 there has been over 1,500 service requests from residents in relation to street cleansing, categorised in the graph below.



- 4.8 Waste Enforcement activities have been increased since 2023, with a new Waste Education & Enforcement Officer post being created to help tackle the increase in flytipping and littering noticed since Covid-19 in 2020.
- 4.9 Enforcement activities are outlined in the graph below, in addition the team have also removed 50 wheeled bins stored permanently on the highway.



## 5. Contract Development

- 5.1 Since the contract was awarded, it has been the intention to move away from using spreadsheets and emails to track contract performance and completion of scheduled jobs. idverde have an internal system called 'SMS' which is now being rolled out across both the Street Cleansing and Ground Maintenance contracts. Council officers in Contract Services will have read only access to view jobs completed in real time, when jobs are due to be completed, photographs of completed work and issues recorded (i.e. on play equipment inspections). There will also be the ability to run reports on performance (Appendix 1) is a PowerPoint presentation giving an overview of the SMS system.
- 5.2 The intention is to integrate SMS with the Council's CRM system to improve how service requests from residents are dealt with. The first service to be integrated is flytipping report, with the plan to send reports straight to the contractor, the Council can monitor response times via the reporting capability. This work is expected to start by Summer 2025, once the ICT team have completed the waste enquiries project.
- 5.3 Two budget growth requests were successful in 2023 and saw an additional play team added to the contract on a permanent basis, due to the increase in new play areas, to ensure we are meeting our obligations of keeping play areas safe and well maintained and reducing the time equipment is out of use when

defects are reported. The second budget growth for non re occurring budgets is the additional Rapid Response Unit dedicated to flytipping removal work and other adhoc community clean-up activities. Budget has been secured for a second year and impact of this team is visible across the district. Not only are flytips removing more quickly but the team are able to support on other adhoc work.

- 5.4 Contract Services are now working on a Waste Education Strategy to tackle the increase in litter, flytipping and work to increase recycling rates. Idverde will work with officers supporting the development of this strategy. Additional 'anti flytipping livery has been added to all street cleansing vehicles to raise awareness. See image below



- 5.5 Idverde are supporting a review of litter bin emptying frequencies to ensure they are as efficient as they can be.
- 5.6 Idverde are supporting a new project 'Recycling on the Go' which will see litter being segregated where possible from new litter bins due to be installed Spring 2025 and litter picking activities, including supporting community litter picking groups.
- 6. Contract improvements**
- 6.1 As laid out in the contract 'in the event that any achieved KPI falls short of the relevant target, the Contractor shall:
- Agree with the Council a detailed remediation plan for meeting the applicable target.
  - Deploy all additional resources and take all remedial action that is necessary to meet the target; and carry out actions as identified in the remediation plan agreed by the Council.
- 6.2 The new Contract Services Manager will contact Keep Britain Tidy (KBT), of which the Council is a member, for some advice and support to potentially carry out an independent Local Environmental Quality Survey. This should help the

Council and idverde in benchmarking against pat performance, national standards and look to increase service efficiency and effectiveness.

- 6.3 As part of the contract improvement plans, it is proposed that any street graded as a C or below will be visited jointly by the Council and idverde to investigate why it is below standards and what can be put in place to improve the grading on a more permanent basis, such as additional/relocated litter bins. Engaging with local community and businesses that may be contributing to litter, such schools, fast-food outlets, cigarette butts from local public houses.
- 6.4 A review of the frequency of street cleansing will also be agreed to ensure that the contractor is deploying resources to areas at the correct frequency, as the schedules have not been reviewed for a number of years.
- 6.5 A review of the KPIs captured and reported on within the SAP will take place to ensure we are tracking KPIs that are important to our residents and in line with our corporate priorities of delivering valued services.
- 6.6 Both the Head of Neighbourhood Services and the idverde Operations Director will be reviewing best practises for street cleansing, including reviewing operations and methods on other contracts managed by idverde

## **7. Summary**

- 7.1 Whilst there are areas within the contract that require improvement, this report includes various activities aimed at improving the contract efficiencies and performance, customer insight aimed at providing a visible improvement to the cleanliness of the district with a waste education strategy that will help underpin where we direct our resources, engage with local communities and respond efficiently to residents enquiries and complaints.
- 7.2 As part of the Waste Education Strategy a customer benchmark questionnaire is planned for Spring/Summer 2025 to gather residents opinions on the cleanliness of the district, we will be able to map geographical areas of concerns, which will enable us to review the current contract in conjunction with the Local Environmental Quality Survey carried out by KBT and best practises on other idverde street cleansing contracts.