

State of the Market Survey 2011

Local Authority Street Cleansing Services





The state of the market survey was conducted by Debbie Johns, APSE Principal Advisor for Environmental services

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State of the Market 2011

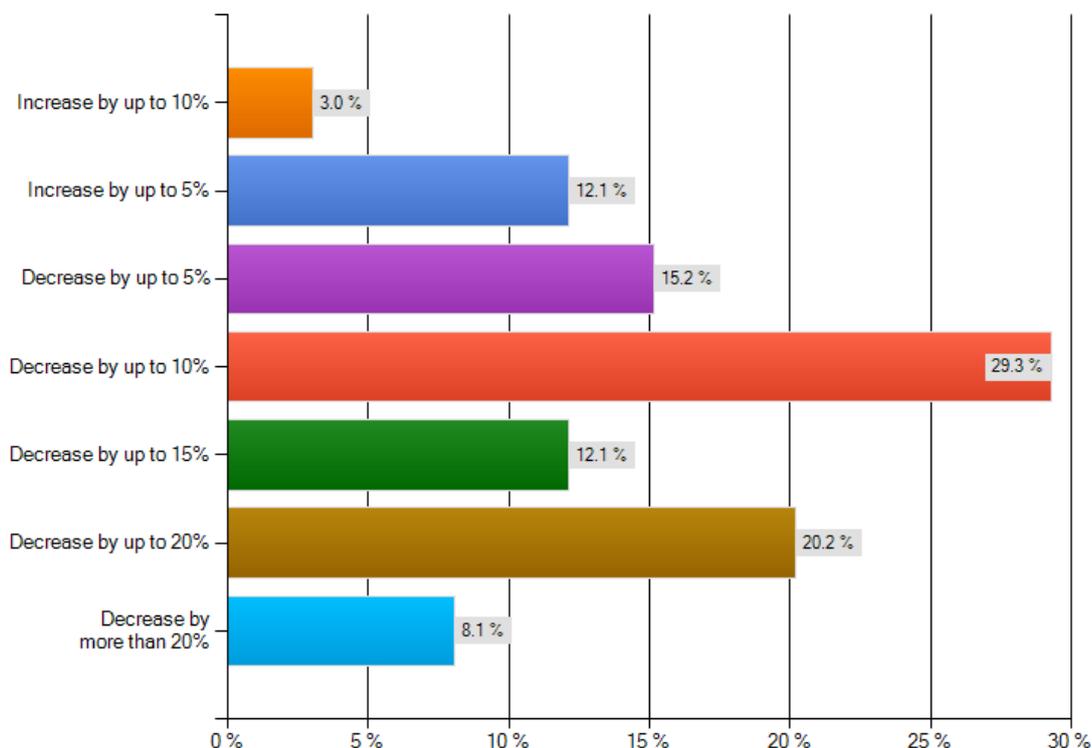
APSE conducted an on-line survey during February 2011. This follows on from the 2009 Street Cleansing State of the Market survey where similar questions were asked to allow for trend comparisons. The 2009 results can be accessed by [clicking here](#). 103 responses were received from local authorities throughout the UK. This report identifies the key findings of the survey.

Results from the survey

a) The economy

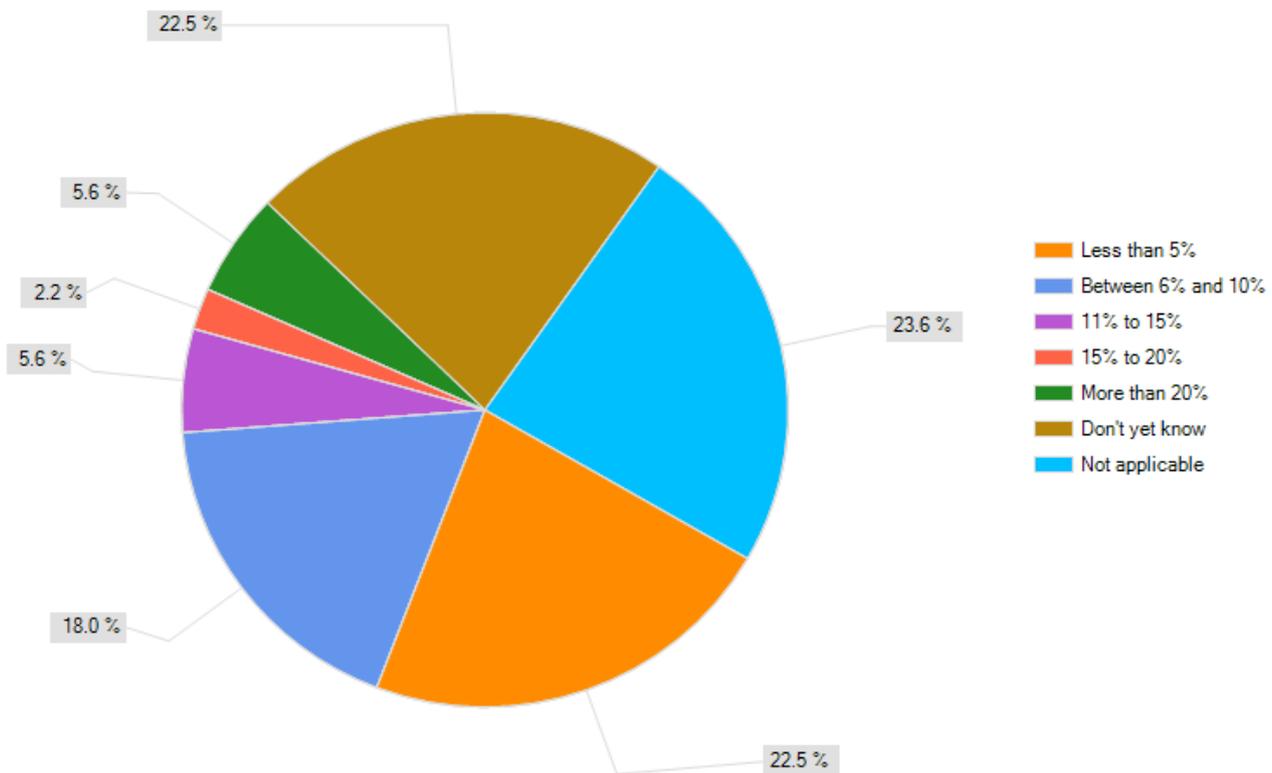
Members were asked if they thought that the street cleansing budget will change over the next year and 77% answered 'yes'. 66% of respondents had answered 'yes' in 2009 and this increase in respondents in 2011 indicating that they think that the budget will change over the next year will be a reflection of the changes in the economic climate and recent budget settlements affecting front line services. Of these 77% of respondents, 91.5% expect it to decrease in the next year and reasons cited included that budget cuts are inevitable with the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010, with reduced revenue, higher expectations and difficulties in maintaining existing standards. Other comments included that although front line services will be protected to some degree, street cleansing services will still have to contribute to overall savings. Over the next 5 years, the majority of respondents expect this to decrease by over 5%:

What is your expectation of the level of funding in your service budget in the coming five years?



On employment related matters within the next 12 months, 64% expect to implement a recruitment freeze, 53% voluntary redundancy and 34% compulsory redundancy. 17% of authorities have indicated that they intend to implement none of these. Of those services who expect to be subject to redundancy measures, they expect to lose the following percentage of staff from the service:

If your service area is subject to redundancy measures what percentage of staff do you expect to lose from the service?



b) Standards of cleanliness

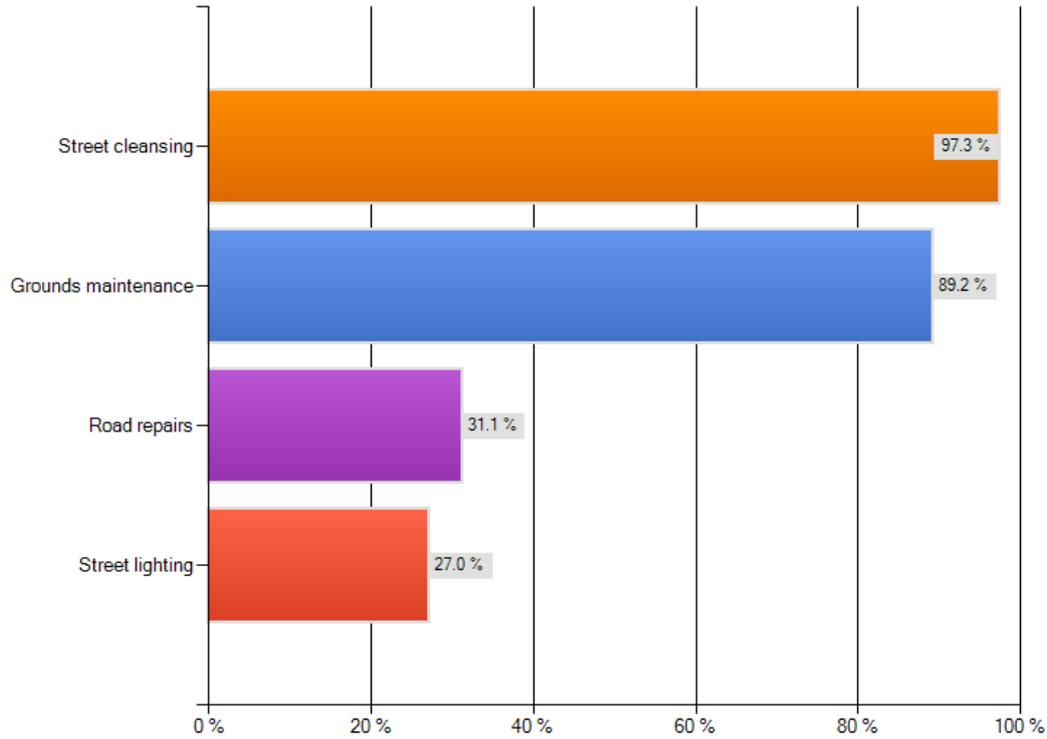
57% stated that standard of cleanliness have increased over the past year, with 34% stating that they have stayed the same and 9% stating that they have decreased. However, when asked what they expect over the next year, 46% expect these to stay the same, 31% expect them to decrease and 23% expect them to increase.

With the demise of NI 195, the survey asked how members were going to measure street cleanliness standards in the future and the majority indicated that they were measuring this in the same way as they have done in the past 2 years (53.5%) or similarly to they have done previously but with fewer surveys (28%). 13% stated that they intend taking a new approach and 9% indicated that they don't think that they'll have the resources to do this. Of those indicating that they are taking a new approach, details included cross boundary inspection systems with other neighbouring councils, using residents' perceptions as an indicator as opposed to cleanliness quality, use of DLEQ surveys and self-inspection.

c) Street scene

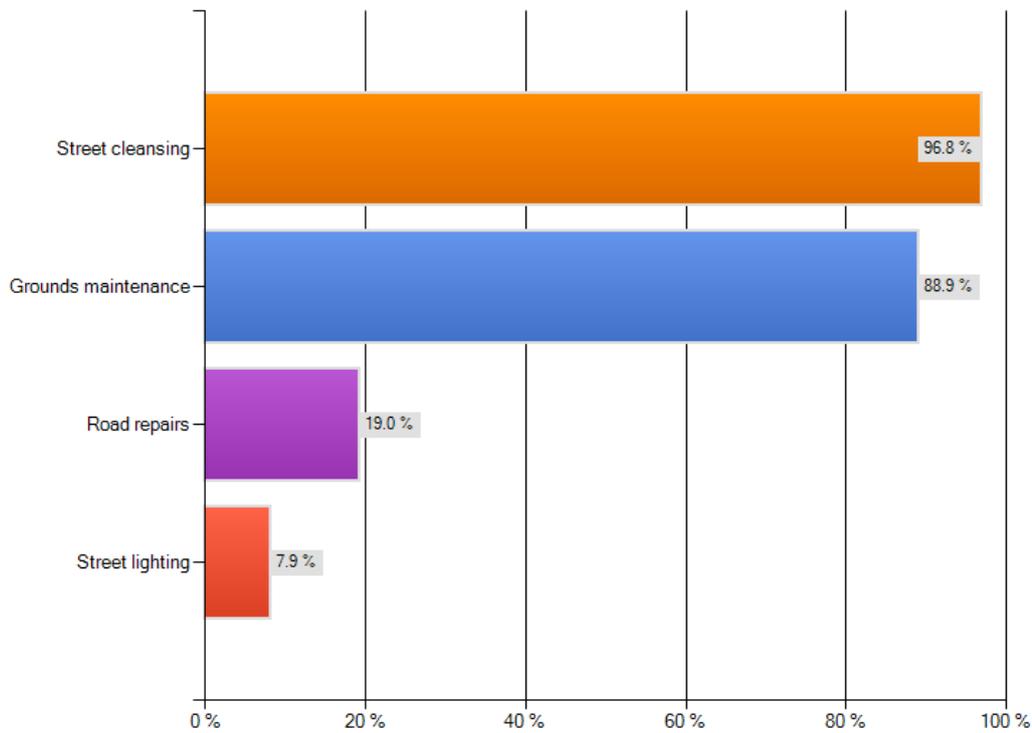
74% indicated that they are part of an integrated street scene service (an increase from 66% in 2009's survey) and of those, the services that are jointly managed are shown in the graph below:

If yes, which services are jointly managed within your street scene department?



These respondents also indicated that the following services are jointly delivered by staff within their street scene department:

If yes, which services are jointly delivered by staff within your street scene department?



Of those who answered 'no', that they were not already part of an integrated street scene service, 37.5% expect to become part of an integrated street scene service in the near future.

d) Street cleansing operations

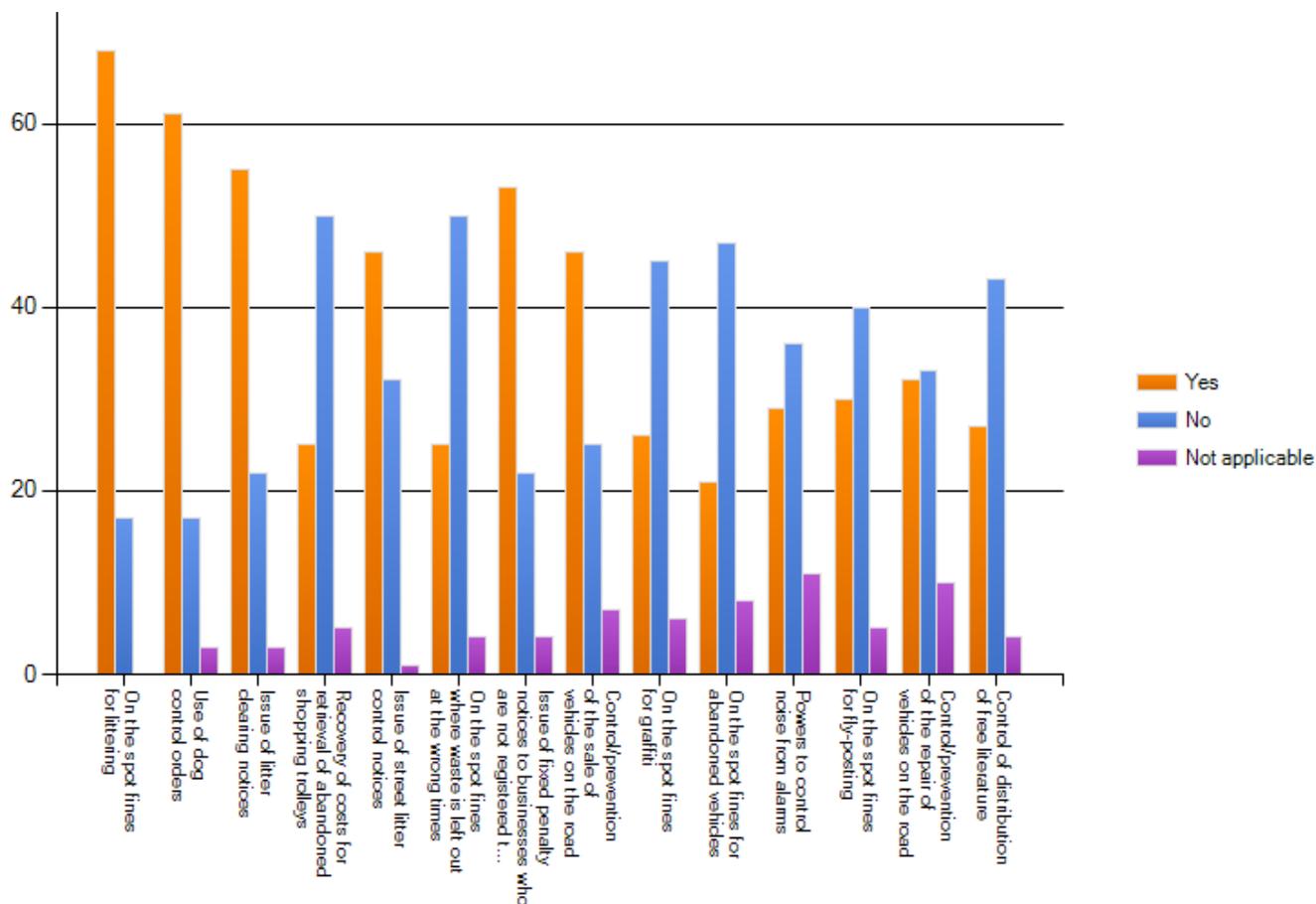
76% stated that they have area-based teams and 86.5% managed their street cleansing services in-house. When asked how they expect their service to be managed in the next 2-3 years, 78% stated in-house, which represents a slight increase in mix provision since 2009 (from 4% to 12.5%) and there is no anticipated increase in external provision.

52% stated that community sector involvement in street cleansing is increasing in their service. This is a reduction from 60% in 2009, despite the current Big Society agenda. Areas that respondents thought that community sector involvement in street cleansing was increasing include community payback and volunteering schemes; parish council organised events; voluntary clean-ups and community litter picking; environmental rangers and litter groups and local environmental improvement projects.

In terms of education campaigns, 49.5% are planning these in the next 2 years, which is a sharp decrease from 82% in 2009. These include junior citizen events; community wardens; regional campaigns; educational awareness through schools; litter campaigns; graffiti campaigns; parking campaigns; dog fouling campaigns; smoking-related litter campaigns; chewing gum campaigns; national Love Where You Live campaign and food on the go campaigns.

e) Enforcement

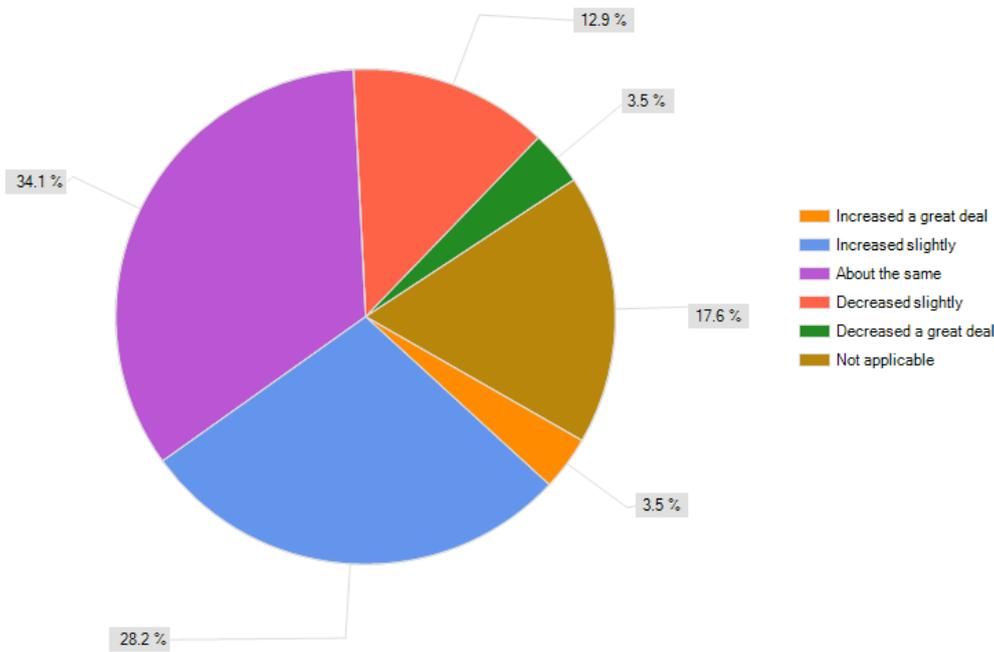
51% of respondents thought that there will be an increase in enforcement/notices issued in the next 2-3 years, a sharp decline from 79% in 2009. The survey asked which of the following powers were being used currently (where applicable) and the results are shown below. These are the powers as defined by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act for England and Wales and Councils in Scotland and Northern Ireland only answered these where they were relevant.



f) Job evaluation

80% of organisations have completed single status and/or job evaluation compared with 62% in 2009. 65.5% stated this has included the removal of a bonus scheme. The majority of respondents thought that wage costs had either stayed the same or increased slightly as a result of job evaluation as shown in the chart below.

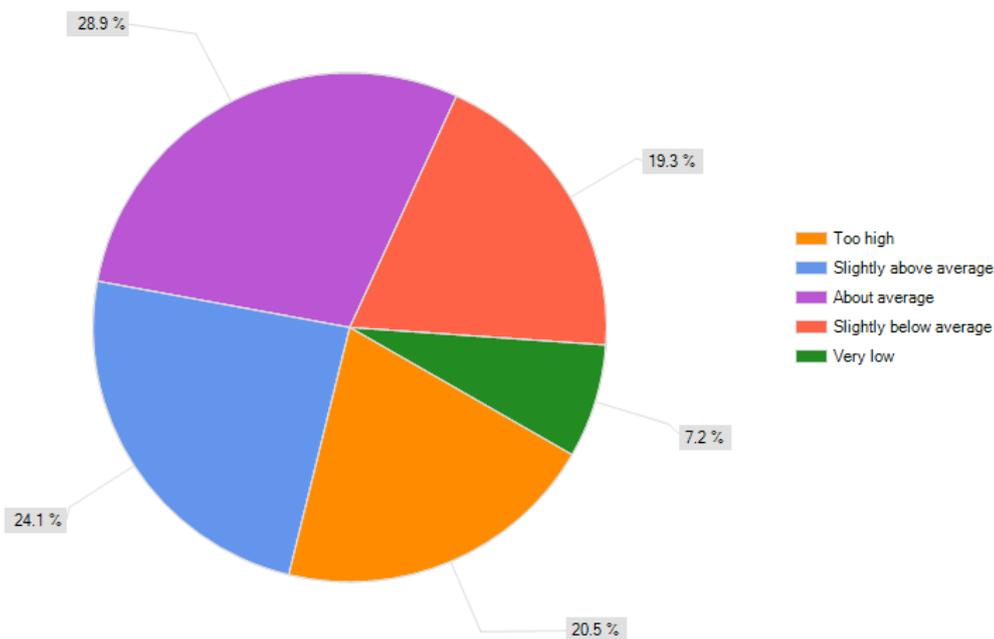
Has job evaluation affected wage costs?



g) Staff absence

In terms of staff absence, the majority thought that this was about average, slightly above average or slightly below average.

Are staff absence levels at an acceptable level?



Only 4.8% of respondents thought that the training budget is going to increase over the next 12 months (with 47.6% stating a decrease and 47.6% stating that this will stay the same).

h) Future areas of work and service reviews

48.1% currently sell their services to the private sector and 43.2% sell their services to other public bodies. Comments on areas of growth for the service in the next 12 months included:

- Increased mechanisation
- Graffiti and gum removal
- More deep cleans
- Helping with gritting & clearing pavements of snow
- Increased removal of detritus as roads deteriorate
- Neighbourhood recycling points and increased establishment of segregated litter bins (recycling) in parks.
- Enforcement
- Increased working with voluntary and community sectors (including community payback teams)
- Big society requirements
- Joint services with other councils
- Work for other public bodies, town and parish councils
- Hospitals
- New developments and retail expansion
- Private sector and local businesses outside normal hours/weekends
- Grant funded projects

Comments on future decreases in work include:

- Reduced frequency of cleansing and grounds maintenance
- Less leaf clearance
- Free services being charged for or terminated
- Non statutory duties
- Trade/commercial sector for waste removal
- SLA's with other public bodies - reduced service offer that focuses on maintaining Council land only.
- From "internal" clients where budgets are decreased
- Possible reductions in services to other departments e.g. Car park cleaning.
- School grounds maintenance
- Education
- Enforcement
- Public conveniences
- Events
- Housing land
- Less litter teams

When asked if respondents had undertaken a service review recently, 35% stated that they have completed this, 47.5% stated that they have a review which is underway and 16.3% stated that they will be doing so in the next 1-2 years. Only 1.3% said 'no' and they won't be undertaking a review in the next 1-2 years.

Respondents stated that the reviews involved the following:

Utilisation of machinery/transport	84%
Review of working time/rota's	73%
Service re-design	71%
Review of productivity/work study	57%
Use of technology (e.g. handheld)	55%
Using systems thinking techniques	27%

The Association for Public Service Excellence

APSE member authorities have access to a range of membership resources to assist in delivering council services. This includes our regular advisory groups, specifically designed to bring together elected members, directors, managers and heads of service, together with trade union representatives to discuss service specific issues, innovation and new ways of delivering continuous improvement. The advisory groups are an excellent forum for sharing ideas and discussing topical service issues with colleagues from other councils throughout the UK.

Advisory groups are a free service included as part of your authority's membership of APSE and all end with an informal lunch to facilitate networking with peers in other councils. If you do not currently receive details about APSE advisory group meetings and would like to be added to our list of contacts for your service area please email enquiries@apse.org.uk.

Our national advisory groups include:-

- Building cleaning
- Catering
- Citizen engagement
- Community safety and security
- Efficiencies, procurement and service transformation
- Housing, construction and building maintenance
- Leisure management and community venues
- Local authority, police and fire and rescue partnerships group
- Parks, horticultural and ground maintenance
- Roads, highways and street lighting
- Social Care
- Vehicle maintenance and transport operations
- Waste management, refuse collection and street cleansing
- Workforce strategy and employee relations