



Authority: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Service: Streetscene

Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC) had a number of areas of concern with their Streetscene Service and approached APSE to undertake a series of productivity (time and motion) studies in September and October 2011. CWAC required an independent look at the levels of productivity and performance across a variety of tasks within the Streetscene operation. The study was conducted as part of the Council's work with APSE and Working Time Solutions (WTS) to create a new working time arrangement for the service.

Objectives:

- Independent look at the levels of productivity and performance across a variety of tasks within the Streetscene operation.
- Identify demand and define main objectives of the service.

Outcomes:

- Understand demand and advise the Council where to allocate resources appropriately and improve the root of the problems that are often overlooked.
- APSE highlighted the inefficiencies of staffing and inconsistencies in charges of bulky household collection.
- Recommendations to management supervision to deter excessive non-productive time and unregulated start/finish times.

The Streetscene Service was integrating grounds maintenance, street cleansing and public convenience maintenance operations together so that the team completed all tasks required on site on a single visit. The changes were implemented across the borough which has 2 main operating areas. APSE's investigations uncovered that whilst this worked effectively at one site where standards had greatly improved over one year, there was little evidence of culture change from grounds maintenance operatives at the second site.

APSE advised the Council on the importance for any street cleansing operation to clearly define its main objective and recognise the demand of the service, as it is very easy to make assumptions about how the public will respond to a service. If it is merely "to clean the streets" rather than "to keep the streets clean", then it ignores tackling the problem at source through education and, particularly in the case of CWAC, enforcement. The Council was able to avoid allocating resources in the wrong areas and wasting money

and time, and focusing efforts on tackling and improving the real problems that are often overlooked.

APSE highlighted the inefficiency of it taking almost an entire team to clear up the fly-tipping from back alleys. APSE flagged up the inconsistent bulky household collection service that required certain residence to pay to have items removed whilst others could have the service for free. APSE also observed that the efficiency of the service could be greatly improved if there was more supervision to deter excessive non-productive time and unregulated start/finish times. With these improvements CWAC staff were enabled to be much more multi-task focused, which is crucial when integrating streetscene services.