



South Staffordshire Council

# In-sourcing - Benefits to Improving Service Effectiveness

South Staffordshire Council

Mark Moore – Community Services Manager





# The District of South Staffordshire

Predominantly rural district that borders the West Midlands conurbation, Shropshire, Worcestershire and neighbouring Staffordshire authorities

Small hamlets and large villages with no central town

Divided into five localities and broken down further into 25 Wards and 27 Parishes

Includes the maintenance of just under a million square metres of grassland, over 60,000 square metres of shrubs and over 15km of hedges





## Challenges – Grounds Maintenance

Prior to 2017 the council's ground maintenance functions were performed by an external contractor

The contract was due to expire late 2017 and the council reviewed the future provision of the grounds maintenance functions with an expectation that a new delivery model would contribute towards a council-wide £2.2m savings target

Despite required level of savings the expectation was that the quality, frequency and standards of the function would be maintained





# Why the Decision to In-source?

- The review examined a number of options for the future delivery model including entering into a shared service agreement with a neighbouring authority, re-procuring a new provider and investing in an in-house delivery model.
- The review also examined the potential for functions to become income generating to offset costs and provide greater flexibility to offer enhanced levels of service.



## Successes – Grounds Maintenance

Successful delivery of in-house grounds maintenance operations delivering savings in excess of £140k per annum.

Increased flexibility through in-house delivery model

Investment within work force and training opportunities

A saving of £16k per annum realised in outsourcing the street sweeping function.

Increased number of sweeps per annum leading to improved resident satisfaction.



## Successes – Grounds Maintenance

Joint working pilot agreement involving South Staffordshire Council, Staffordshire County Council and District and County elected members, South Staffordshire Council's Street Scene Team also undertook several environmental projects on behalf of and funded by County Highways.





## Challenges – Trees

The management of the council tree stock was reliant on external contractors

A need to drive revenue through exploitation of commercial opportunities

Recognition of a more proactive approach to managing the council tree stock required

Limited use of technology and data





# Why the Decision to In-source?

- In-sourcing as part of overall strategy to deliver £2.2m savings
- In addition to the savings achievable by undertaking tree work directly a further business case was examined to offer tree work services on a commercial basis to private businesses, parish councils and residents of both South Staffordshire and neighboring areas





# Successes – Trees

Commercial income targets exceeded each financial year since inception of the team.

Realised savings in excess of £40k per annum from reducing reliance on external contractors

Investment in district wide tree survey / reporting





# Challenges - Environment Crime

Prior to 2020 the environment crime function sat with the council's planning enforcement team

Environment crime wasn't directly resourced and had limited impact

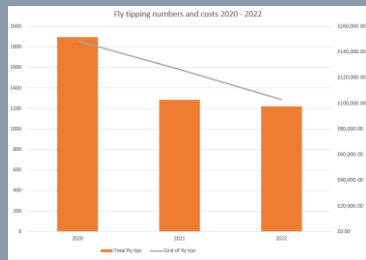
The responsibility for environment crime transferred and a business case approved to recruit one new FTE member of staff

A steep learning curve for the team to pick up relevant legislation, monitoring, and a wider strategic approach



# Successes – Environment Crime

Reduction in collected fly tipping (31.5% drop from 2020-21 to 2022-23, and operational saving of over £40k in staff time)



Strong relationships created with the Police, DVSA, housing association and neighboring local authorities  
Much better use of specific legislation to compel people to cooperate with fly tipping investigations.



# Challenges - Street Cleansing

Road sweeping function performed in-house

Reliance on one appliance and single member of staff

Function had limited resilience causing quality and reputational issues





# Why Out-source?

- Difficult to address issues of resiliency without growing costs exponentially.
- Would of required large capital spend on new vehicle.
- Additional training for existing workforce or additional recruitment required.



## Successes – Street Cleansing

A saving of £16k per annum realised in outsourcing the street sweeping function.

Greatly improved resiliency.

Increased number of sweeps per annum leading to improved resident satisfaction.



# Future Aims & Ambitions

Continue to review and develop service plans

Tree works – developing commercial work, staffing and training

Litter strategy

Investigate viability of commercial approach to clearing fly tipping from private land

Successfully managing the transfer of the Council's Community Safety function

# Questions ?

