



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Please see attached Report 195/2017 of the Chief Executive to the Special City Council meeting of 22nd May 2017, in response to a request for a Service Delivery Plan for Dublin City Council.



A Special Meeting of the City Council was requested by Councillors Mary Frehill, Andrew Montague, Alison Gilliland, Dermot Lacey, Áine Clancy, Rebecca Moynihan and Lord Mayor Brendan Carr to discuss the following motion:

'This meeting requests the CEO to produce a Service Delivery Plan for Dublin City Council. To state how he will deliver services at a standard expected for a modern, clean, well kept, efficient running city to serve both local residents' needs, local business needs and the needs of visitors to our city.

This Council notes the impact of the loss of 2,000 established personnel since 2008, while acknowledging modern work practices, this loss has resulted in:

- *A diminution in DCC corporate intelligence of the functioning of the city which will have devastating impacts in future years if this trend is not arrested.*
- *An increase in service delivery times due to the lengthy process of public procurement tendering for sub contract for work previously carried out by DCC's core staff. This has had a particular impact on repairs in housing and road maintenance.*
- *A move away from apprenticeships and consequently a seriously diminished craft skill base, trained to DCC work standards, upon which DCC can draw.*

These changes have raised serious concerns from both local residents and businesses and local public representatives regarding:

- *The perception that sub contracting may be smarter and leaner and provide better value for money without evaluating the standard of workmanship/output from such contractors.*
- *The loss of oversight and long term responsibility for service standards and response times particularly the quality of workmanship.*
- *The Council's ability to be flexible and provide a quick response to often urgent maintenance issues.*
- *Potential poor (sub-contract) worker health and safety standards on DCC work projects.*
- *The overall intention of DCC service delivery.'*

Chief Executive's Response

1. Service Delivery Plan

The primary request in this motion is that a **Service Delivery Plan** is produced for the services provided by Dublin City Council. All Sections of the Council engage in service planning to a significant extent. Corporate priorities are set by the Elected Members in the Corporate Plan, with annual priorities set out in the Annual Budget. Following the adoption of the Annual Budget, Business Plans are prepared annually by individual Departments. Works Programmes are also prepared for the main service areas and presented to Area Committees at the start of each year. The Council's performance against National Service Indicators is reported on yearly in the Annual Report.

Notwithstanding this work, I acknowledge that there are different levels of service planning and associated performance metric monitoring across different Council services, with no clear statement in relation to corporate wide service delivery. I will seek to address this over the coming months and, in consultation with the Elected Members, prepare a Service Delivery Plan for 2018. This Plan will outline for the major Council services the level of service that will be provided, the priorities and strategies for service delivery and the metrics against which performance delivery will be measured.

The motion suggests that a Corporate Service Delivery Plan will set out how the Council will:

'..... deliver services at a standard expected for a modern, clean, well kept, efficient running city to serve both local residents' needs, local business needs and the needs of visitors to our city.'

While these factors are relevant to a Service Delivery Plan the motion makes no reference to the availability of financial resources which is of fundamental importance in determining the level of services that can be delivered. The Council must have regard to the current and expected availability of resources in planning service delivery. This is especially important where most Council services are delivered 'free of charge' at the point of delivery and there is no price mechanism to moderate service demands.

It is worth pointing out that faced with a choice between not reducing the Local Property Tax and making additional resources available for service improvements the Council has consistently ignored my advice and decided to lower the Local Property Tax.

2. Developments between 2008 to 2016

Since 2008, the Council has faced significant challenges in continuing to maintain services in the context of major changes in the environment in which it operates and especially a very significant reduction in Council funding as a consequence of the Governments programme of austerity and the general decline in the economy. Given the financial challenges it faced the Council had no option but to embrace new work practices etc. which facilitated reduced employment and reduced expenditure on pay.

The trend in City Council employment (in full time equivalents) over the period 2008 to 2016 is set out in the table on the next page.

Dublin City Council Employment in WTEs at 31 December										
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change 08 to 16
Categories										
Managerial	53.0	50.0	45.8	42.8	39.8	40.6	37.0	36.0	40.0	-24.5%
Clerical/Admin.	2,286.0	1,980.9	1,949.8	1,900.7	1,844.0	1,764.7	1,712.9	1,656.2	1,657.6	-27.5%
Prof/Technical	589.6	493.4	459.0	448.6	435.4	438.1	432.2	432.0	479.2	-18.7%
Outdoor	3,023.9	2,995.5	2,889.8	2,748.4	2,571.9	2,462.4	2,394.3	2,341.8	2,213.4	-26.8%
Firefighters	<u>979.0</u>	<u>909.0</u>	<u>897.0</u>	<u>876.0</u>	<u>876.0</u>	<u>865.0</u>	<u>868.0</u>	<u>842.0</u>	<u>921.0</u>	<u>-5.9%</u>
Sub Total	6,931.5	6,428.8	6,241.4	6,016.5	5,767.1	5,570.8	5,444.4	5,308.0	5,311.2	-23.4%
Change		-502.8	-187.4	-225.0	-249.3	-196.4	-126.4	-136.4	3.1	-1,620
% Change		-7.3%	-2.9%	-3.6%	-4.1%	-3.4%	-2.3%	-2.5%	0.1%	-23.4%

Overall employment (in WTEs) declined by 1,623 between December 2008 and December 2015. This is below the 2,000 stated in the motion. In general the decline was evenly spread across all categories of employees, other than fire fighters. Total Council employment remained stable in 2016 and is set to increase marginally in 2017.

While employment declined between 2008 and 2016 the number of City Council pensioners increased over that period as the following data shows:

Dublin City Council Pensioners at 31 December										
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change 08 to 16
Pensioners										
Salary	1,220	1,381	1,422	1,435	1,518	1,517	1,555	1,604	1,673	37.1%
Wage	<u>2,476</u>	<u>2,629</u>	<u>2,656</u>	<u>2,688</u>	<u>2,797</u>	<u>2,774</u>	<u>2,781</u>	<u>2,789</u>	<u>2,863</u>	15.6%
	3,696	4,010	4,078	4,123	4,315	4,291	4,336	4,393	4,536	22.7%

Expenditure on pay and pension in 2008 and 2016 is set out in the table below:

DCC Expenditure on Pay and Pensions* 2008 & 2016				
	2008	2016	Change	%
	€m	€m	€m	Change
Wages Fire Brigade	68.7	63.512	-5.2	-7.6%
Wages GO and Craft	141.9	94.422	-47.5	-33.5%
Salaries	167.3	127.719	-39.6	-23.7%
Pensions*	<u>68.4</u>	<u>90.065</u>	21.6	31.6%
Total Expenditure on Pay & Pensions	446.4	375.7	-70.7	-15.8%

* includes gratuities

The reduction in expenditure on pay and pensions between 2008 and 2016 was €70.1m. This saving made a very significant contribution to the survival of the City Council in the face of a very significant reduction in overall Council funding.

3. Impact of the Reduction in City Council Employment

While the reduction in Council employment between 2008 and 2015 at 23.4% was very significant, I am satisfied that there has been no corresponding reduction in service levels for the following reasons:

Reductions in the Council's Service Portfolio

There have been significant changes in the portfolio of services delivered by the Council over the period. Services which are no longer being provided directly by the Council include the following:

Household waste collection
Third level student grants,
Homeless hostels,
Driver licensing and
Insurance (since February 2017).

Irish Water has also assumed responsibility for water supply and waste water services although the City Council continues to provide a range of water and waste water services for Irish Water on an agency basis under a Service Level Agreement.

The Council exited the household waste collection market in 2012 as it was making very significant losses in the face of intense competition from private operators. The decision that local authorities should cease to administer third level student grants and driver licensing was made by Government. The Council stopped operating homeless hostels as its staff did not have the necessary qualifications to meet industry best practice. Similarly the Council has also ceased to self insure as it does not meet the regulatory requirements for claims management. While the Council has taken on increased responsibilities in the area of economic and community development including the Dublin City LEO overall the changing service portfolio has released significant staff for other services.

Exploiting Developments in Technology/Improved Service Efficiencies/Productivity

The Council has exploited developments in technology and has made significant progress in improving the efficiency of its operations across all service areas. Developments in technology have also facilitated the delivery of the same or often improved services with considerably reduced staff. For example, the extensive use of 'Motor Tax On-line' has allowed the Council to close Motor Tax Offices in Nutgrove, Clondalkin and Ballymun and to reduce staff numbers with little or no reduction in service levels.

The use of technology has also allowed the development of a proactive rather than reactive response to issues and changes in the Council's operating models. A range of initiatives are on-going in the modernisation of back-office IT systems that will enable improved management, monitoring and corporate knowledge of city issues and functioning. For instance the Transportation Asset Management System 'Confirm', which is being rolled out by Roads Maintenance – it will be complete by mid-2017. This will facilitate the following developments:

- a greatly enhanced system for the management of customer service requests,
- a more robust approach to management of road assets and
- improved working practices and management information, thereby leading to improved service delivery.

New technology is also providing enhanced customer services, facilitating easier access to services and faster delivery of services. Examples include On-line Planning, the HGV permits system etc. Over 48,000 on-line customer transactions were processed by the City Council in 2016. The Smart Dublin Programme (an initiative of the four Dublin local authorities) is engaging with smart technology providers, researchers and citizens to drive efficiencies and

improve services by promoting innovative solutions to city challenges. Smart Dublin is currently seeking low cost, innovative solutions for way-finding, illegal dumping and flood warning challenges.

New Recruitment

Notwithstanding the embargo on public sector recruitment the City Council has recruited new staff every year since 2008 in order to ensure that key services are maintained and key vacancies filled. The level of new City Council recruitment every year since 2008 is shown in the table below:

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 to 16 May
Category									
Managerial	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Clerical/Admin.	1	1	5	6	4	1	8	16	60
Prof/Technical	3	0	5	6	5	8	20	40	28
Outdoor/Operational	15	37	27	24	27	17	15	46	13
Firefighters*	30	0	0	0	0	22	0	62	41
Contract/Seasonal	0	0	0	1	17	35	74	72	15
Total	50	38	38	38	54	83	117	236	158

** Included retained firefighters*

The recruitment of new staff every year since 2008 has helped to minimise any loss in the City Council’s corporate intelligence. New operational staff will be recruited for the Cleansing Service, for the Park Service and for the Roads Maintenance Service in 2017. The issue of recruiting apprentices to begin the process of renewing the craft base will be considered in the context of the preparation of the 2018 Budget.

Increased Reliance on External Contractors

There has also been increased reliance on external contractors in certain service areas where this is considered appropriate and where it offers ‘value for money’. While there have been occasional instances where procurement delays have impacted adversely service delivery due to the delay in appointing contractors this is not an argument for ceasing to use contractors. The motion implies that increased reliance on contractors has led to a reduction in quality, a loss on responsibility for service standards, a reduced ability to be flexible and to provide a quick response and to a lowering of health and safety standards on City Council projects. While I accept that there may be occasional instances where these failings apply to external contractors I am satisfied that this is not a fair characterisation of external contracting. The City Council will endeavour to ensure that instances of these failures are minimised or eliminated.

The Council can be proud of its response to the reduction in its income as a consequence of the decline in the economy and the Government’s programme of austerity. Notwithstanding a very significant reduction in employment the impact on service delivery has been of modest proportions. This reduction in staff numbers has created challenges for maintaining service levels and, to some extent, has driven the need for service review and restructuring. The commitment of Council staff in continuing to provide high quality, responsive services and in embracing major reforms should be acknowledged.

4. Review of City Council Operational Services and Corporate Reform Initiatives

In 2014/2015, a review of operational service areas was carried out in light of the predicted decline in staff numbers to 2020. Individual service managers were asked to review their particular service areas in this context and to consider options to ensure service levels are maintained or increased. The need for recruitment was also considered. Arising out of this exercise a series of restructuring proposals have been made and are currently under negotiation through the Public Service Agreement process or are being implemented.

A series of reports covering staff numbers, service delivery plans, performance metrics, efficiency measures, and the use of contractors are set out in the Appendices for the following key Council services:

Appendix A1	Housing Maintenance Service
Appendix A2	Street Cleansing Service
Appendix A3	Roads Maintenance Service
Appendix A4	Public Lighting Service
Appendix A5	Parks Service

A number of major initiatives are also being pursued at a corporate level as follows:

Consolidation of Depot Operations

As part of the review of operational services a major rationalisation of the City Council's depot network is being pursued. A project is underway to consolidate all North City operations into depot at St Margaret's Road, Ballymun. This will result in major efficiencies and savings, significantly improved conditions and facilities for staff and improved service delivery through improved inter Departmental co-operation and more streamlined depot operations. An Integrated Design Team has recently been appointed for the new Ballymun depot development. The project will create a high quality, integrated operational environment for servicing the operational needs for Dublin city and represents a continued commitment to directly providing our own operational services by direct labour.

Following the rezoning of the depot lands in Marrowbone Lane in the Development Plan to Z9 (Amenity/Open Space Lands), an examination of options for a City Centre/South City operations depot is to be carried out.

Corporate Transformation Unit

In the context of the public service reform agenda there has been an ever increasing demand for improved customer services, greater 'value for money' and more accountability. One of the key challenges the Council faces is to position itself so that it can respond and adapt to a rapidly changing environment and create a service delivery model which can continue to meet the needs of the business and citizens of Dublin. In responding to this changing context, and in order to ensure service delivery standards are maintained and improved, the City Council has and will continue to review its service delivery arrangements.

A Transformation Unit has been established with a remit to oversee and drive a transformation programme for the organisation and to work with Departments who are implementing change. As part of its work, the Unit has undertaken a service mapping exercise which looks at how customers access services with a view to:

- developing a corporate approach to service delivery,
- standardising and simplifying processes,
- reducing duplication and inefficiencies by clustering complimentary services,
- prioritising services which should be delivered by the Customer Services Centre and
- prioritising services for online delivery.

A programme of change projects has been put in place to address some of the issues which emerged as part of the mapping exercise.

Other work being undertaken by the Unit includes the following:

- preparation of a City Council Service Catalogue - which will define all services and relevant metrics from a customer perspective,
- the development of a Service Delivery strategy which will identify how services are most appropriately delivered to citizens and business, ensuring ease of access for customers and efficient and measurable service delivery by the City Council and
- updating the City Council's Customer Action Plan.

A customer survey and engagement with stakeholders and staff will take place soon, which will help inform the development of these projects.

These initiatives point the way forward and the overall intention in relation to improvements and advances in service delivery within the City Council. It is my intention to continually review service delivery performance, demands and challenges and to adapt how we respond to these issues in order to continue to provide high quality services to citizens, communities, visitors and businesses.

5. Conclusions

I acknowledge that there are different levels of service planning and associated performance metric monitoring across different Council services, with no clear statement in relation to corporate wide service delivery. I will seek to address this over the coming months and, in consultation with the Elected Members, prepare a Service Delivery Plan for approval for 2018. This Plan will outline for the major Council services the level of service that will be provided, the priorities and strategies for service delivery and the metrics against which performance delivery will be measured.

I am conscious of the need to improve service provision. I am confident that this will be possible with the recovery in the Council's finances, which will facilitate an appropriate increase in recruitment, and with the benefits of the on-going programme of reform and transformation which is currently underway.

Owen P. Keegan
Chief Executive
22 May 2017

A1.1 Operational Staff Numbers

Staff numbers in Housing Maintenance declined from 718 in 2008 to 549 in 2016.

A1.2 Service Delivery Plan

The Housing Maintenance Section's Service Delivery Plan is based on the Dublin City Council Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019, Housing and Community Services Annual Business Plan and the annual returns Housing Maintenance prepares for NOAC (the National Oversight Audit Committee).

A1.3 Performance Metrics

Some key service delivery metrics are given below:

	Units	2008	2016
Total Housing Stock	No	27,085	25,402
Available Housing	No	24,918	24,047
% of Available Housing Void	%	3.09%	1.02%
Average Void Period	Weeks	28.3	24.5
Maintenance Requests	No	60,496	60,946
Maintenance Requests Completed	No	51,743	50,160
Maintenance Requests Completed	%	85.5%	82.3%
No of Disability Adaptations Completed	No	0	183
Disability Extension Completed	No	0	10

A1.4 Efficiency Measures

Housing Maintenance has introduced a number of efficiency measures since 2008 in response to the extremely challenging financial situation and the current housing emergency including the following:

Introduction of Shift Work

The introduction of shift work in areas such as the choke-cars, has enabled Housing Maintenance to sustain output and facilitated a significant reduction in overtime payments:

Year	Expenditure On Overtime
2008	€6.08m
2017 (budget)	€1.70m

New Tenants Handbook

Housing Maintenance played a full role in the preparation of a new Tenants Handbook. The Handbook set out the role and responsibilities of tenants in maintaining their properties. It is generally accepted that raising awareness among tenants in relation to their responsibilities can reduce maintenance requests.

Use of Technology

Mobile phones and tablets are being introduced on a phased basis. This has resulted in improvements in reporting the completion of maintenance requests, in remotely uploading critical works documents such as Task Orders.etc

Caretakers Workforce Review

It is proposed to move to a mobile squad based system in the Caretakers Service to compensate for the reduction in staff numbers.

A1.5 Use of Contractors

Frameworks have been introduced in a number of critical areas. These include Void Management, Roof Repairs, Small Works and Boiler Maintenance. The Voids Framework Contract, for example, has played a critical role reducing the number of void properties. This can be seen in the figures below, which show properties refurbished under the Framework since its introduction in 2012:

Year	Voids Refurbished Under the Framework
2012	228
2013	379
2014	596
2015	666
2016	544

A Framework is being organised to clear the backlog of requests for replacement windows. This will re-position the Joinery Workshop to meet future demand and also significantly reduce the number of calls that come into Housing Maintenance.

Housing Maintenance is satisfied that it has used external contracting effectively to meet service requirements in a very challenging time. Contracting has also been used judiciously where it would not have been appropriate or feasible to use internal resources.

A2.1 Street Cleansing Service

The Street Cleaning Service is administered by the Waste Management Department located at Marrowbone Lane. The service is currently delivered through 8 depots at various locations throughout the City Council's administrative area and includes the servicing and maintenance of 3,500 litter bins and the collection of 17,000 tonnes of street sweeping and litter bin waste annually.

A2.2 Operational Staff Numbers

Staff numbers in Street Cleansing declined from 741 in 2008 to 412 in 2017. Part of this reduction reflects the Council's decision to exit the household bin collection market. Approximately 110 operatives were re-deployed following this decision.

A2.3 Service Delivery Plan

Service objectives and targets are set out in the annual business planning process, which includes key performance indicators.

A2.4 Performance Metrics

The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System (NLPMS) assesses the cleanliness rating for the city over the course of the year. Targets are set and outcomes are reported to NOAC. The results of the two litter surveys undertaken by IBAL annually are closely monitored with targeted action in areas that fail to meet minimum standards. Other metrics used include the objectives set out within the Council's three year Litter Management Plan (2016 – 2018) as well as the number of complaints dealt with by the City Council annually. The complaints are managed through the City Council's CRM system. A system of improved reporting through CRM by depot-based staff is being developed in conjunction with the IS Department.

The Street Cleansing Service is evolving continuously to meet the demands of delivering a better service in a more challenging environment. Aside from the negotiations under the WRC which cover shift times and the introduction of a time management system (see below) recent significant developments in the service include the following:

- a detailed assessment of cleaning routes within each area,
- the introduction of two dedicated street washing crews,
- a programme of bin washing and tagging,
- the trial of smart bin technology with anticipated roll out this year,
- the amalgamation of Depot operations - Coolock to Collins Ave (completed 2016) and Rathmines to Davitt Road (to be completed in Oct 2017)) and
- the roll out of a Standards Booklet to all street cleaning staff.

A2.5 Planned Efficiency Measures

A strategic review of the Waste Management Department was carried out in 2014. Significant inefficiencies in the delivery of the Street Cleansing Service were identified. Over the past two years management have been actively engaging with the Unions under the auspices of the WRC in order to implement changes to improve the efficiency of the service in an effort to ensure that the delivery of this service by direct labour is a viable option for the future.

A2.6 Contractor Usage

There has been no increased reliance on contracting to compensate for reduced numbers.

Over the past number of years there has been an increase in graffiti removal by direct labour. This has resulted in a reduction in contractor budget from €450,000 per annum to €300,000 per annum.

A3.1 Operational Staff Numbers

Staff numbers in RMS declined from 180 in 2008 to 123 in 2017.

A3.2 Service Delivery Plan

Service objectives and targets are set out in the annual business planning process, which includes key performance indicators. Each year a Works Programme is prepared. This Programme is broken down by area and is presented to each of the five Area Committees. The Programme lists the specific roads which are scheduled to have footway or roadway improvements carried out in the coming year, together with the budgeted cost. The Works Programme is generally completed on time, as has been the case since 2008.

A3.3 Performance Metrics

RMS adopted a Transport Asset Management System (TAMS), 'Confirm', in June 2015. The three key business drivers for the roll-out of this system were:

- a. to improve the availability and quality of data;
- b. to improve work flow and
- c. to allow for better informed decision making.

All services requests from our internal and external customers are now recorded on this system. This includes, by way of example, requests from the Elected Members, residents, business groups etc. to undertake maintenance works on the public road and also the return of temporary reinstatements of utility openings for permanent reinstatement by RMS. The system records the number of service requests resolved, the number of service requests outstanding, the number of inspections carried out, the location and severity of the defects recorded, the prioritisation of jobs to be carried out by direct labour and the number of jobs completed. RMS has commenced the routine monitoring of the above data in order to measure performance.

The pavement condition of roads is reported on annually in the NOAC report. RMS is responsible for the collection of this data which is sent to the RMO for onward transmission to NOAC. During each of the past 3 years over 400km of the main roads within Dublin City have been surveyed by machine (approx 30% of all roads). The data collected in these surveys is used by the pavement management system within TAMS to calculate a Pavement Surface Condition Rating for each section of road. These surveys allow RMS to determine if the overall condition of the road network and to identify the extent of roadways requiring road reconstruction, structural rehabilitation or surface restoration. This data is used to assist in identifying roadways for inclusion in future Works Programmes.

A3.4 Efficiency Measures

The single most significant efficiency measure introduced has been the role out of TAMS 'Confirm' in RMS. The overall objective of introducing this system is to make better use of the resources available to maintain roads, and thereby achieve cost savings, better value for money and an improved service. The implementation of TAMS in RMS entails significant changes within RMS in relation to how customer queries are recorded and progressed. Through the successful use of TAMS it is easier for defects to be prioritised and bundled together into a single job where appropriate.

The reduction in direct labour numbers has resulted in the greater use of 2 man crews to respond to temporary or permanent repairs to potholes or high priority defects which can be attended to by a small crew.

RMS has recently prepared a discussion paper ‘*Strategy for the Future Delivery of Services*’ which outlines proposed changes to improve quality of service and to make RMS more responsive in dealing with customer expectations. The proposals include:

- RMS to discontinue undertaking permanent reinstatements of utility openings created by third parties with the exception of those in antique granite, stone-setts and specialist stone surfaces.
- The appointment of additional Inspectorate staff to ensure quality of reinstatements carried out on behalf of utilities and other 3rd parties.
- Recruitment of additional direct labour staff to ensure sufficient resources are available to carry out core RMS tasks.
- The appointment of contractors under term maintenance type contracts to complete reactive maintenance works, where it is either not practical to prepare individual tenders and / or it is determined to be more efficient than utilising internal resources to complete the works.

A3.5 Use of Contractors

The extent of works completed by contractors has increased in recent years as shown in the table below.

% of RMS Budget Expended on Contractors

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
% of Budget	9.5	42.3	17.8	24.9	20.7	20.2	25.2

This reflects the increase in works that have traditionally been carried out by external contractors.

While previously contractors were used for reconstructing larger areas of footway and roadway, in recent years RMS have also engaged contractors, using consultants or in-house staff, to reinstate or repair multiple smaller areas of footway and/or roadway in single contracts.

A4.1 Operational Staff Numbers

Staff numbers in Public Lighting declined from 70 in 2008 to 33 in 2017.

A4.2 Service Delivery Plan

Service objectives and targets are set out in the annual business planning process, which includes key performance indicators. The primary service indicator is to have no more than 2% of the lights out of order at any time. The light outages are identified by night scouting the 15 no. routes in the City and also reporting of faulty lights by members of the public. Routine maintenance is carried out within 10 working days for faults picked up by night scouting and within 5 working days for faults reported by members of the public.

A4.3 Performance Metrics

The 2% target is being met on a consistent basis.

A4.4 Efficiency Measures

In 2013, the Deadsure Asset Management System was rolled out in Public Lighting. As part of the roll out mobile handheld devices were introduced into maintenance for both night scouting and routine maintenance. This resulted in increased efficiencies. Another efficiency measure was the introduction of smaller hoist trucks for routine maintenance allowing easier access to the lights resulting in more repairs being returned.

The Council is about to embark on a major procurement exercise to install new LED lights across the entire public lighting network together with a central management system which will allow for the remote monitoring and control of all lights on the network. It is also proposed to replace a significant number of existing columns. Apart from delivering significant energy and carbon savings this will eliminate the need for night scouting and greatly reduce the need for lantern replacement.

A4.5 Use of Contractors

Routine maintenance/lantern replacement continues to be carried out by direct labour. However there has been increased reliance on external contractors for non routine maintenance works and for pole replacement works.

A5.1 Operational Staff Numbers

Operational staff numbers in the Parks Service declined from 300 in 2008 to 185 in 2017.

A5.2 Service Delivery Plan

Service objectives and targets are set out in the annual business planning process, which includes key performance indicators. The Parks Service aims to achieve Green Flag status for each park and Blue Flag status for beaches. These are international qualitative standards for parks and beaches.

A5.3 Performance Metrics

Even with the reductions in staff numbers since 2008 it is considered that there has been no significant reduction in service delivery with regard to the maintenance of parks and open space. With the implementation on the Workforce Plan (see below) the rollout of Green Flag Scheme to other parks there will be a visible improvement in outputs.

Trees are the source of more than 50% of the complaints the Parks Service receives annually and so the budget for the Tree Care Programme has been increased from €200,000 annually to €540,000 annually over the last five years. This increased provision is dealing with a backlog of work and it will see a systematic and proactive management programme for the 60,000 plus trees which are managed by DCC in accordance with the City Tree Strategy 2016.

A5.4 Efficiency Measures

In 2016 the Parks Service negotiated and agreed with the unions a Workforce Plan which is now being implemented. This covers the following measures:

- the regularisation of all long term acting positions in the direct labour workforce for both general operatives and supervisors with a first offering to existing staff,
- an increase in the number of gardeners,
- the consolidation of direct labour staff and resources into a significantly smaller number of depots to provide greater flexibility for the District Parks Officers to respond to changing demands and needs within their area,
- the appointment of a maintenance contract manager from the direct labour workforce with responsibility for service delivery standards and
- the creation of a new Central Parks District to cover the area north and south of the river and between the canals to respond to the specific needs and service delivery standards of the city centre.

A5.5 Use of Contractors

The Parks Departments core maintenance responsibility is its parks and all parties acknowledge that the experience and skills of the direct labour staff can most effectively be used to maintain and present the most prestigious City parks. Consequently, road margins, social housing schemes and incidental open space are the areas where contract work is and will be focussed. There are no plans to increase the reliance on external contractors for parks maintenance work. Any new contracts will be related to construction work and work of a specialist nature.

