

LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING

9

28th January 2016

Presentation By Matthew Reedman

Team Manager

Highway Services

Minute Item 7

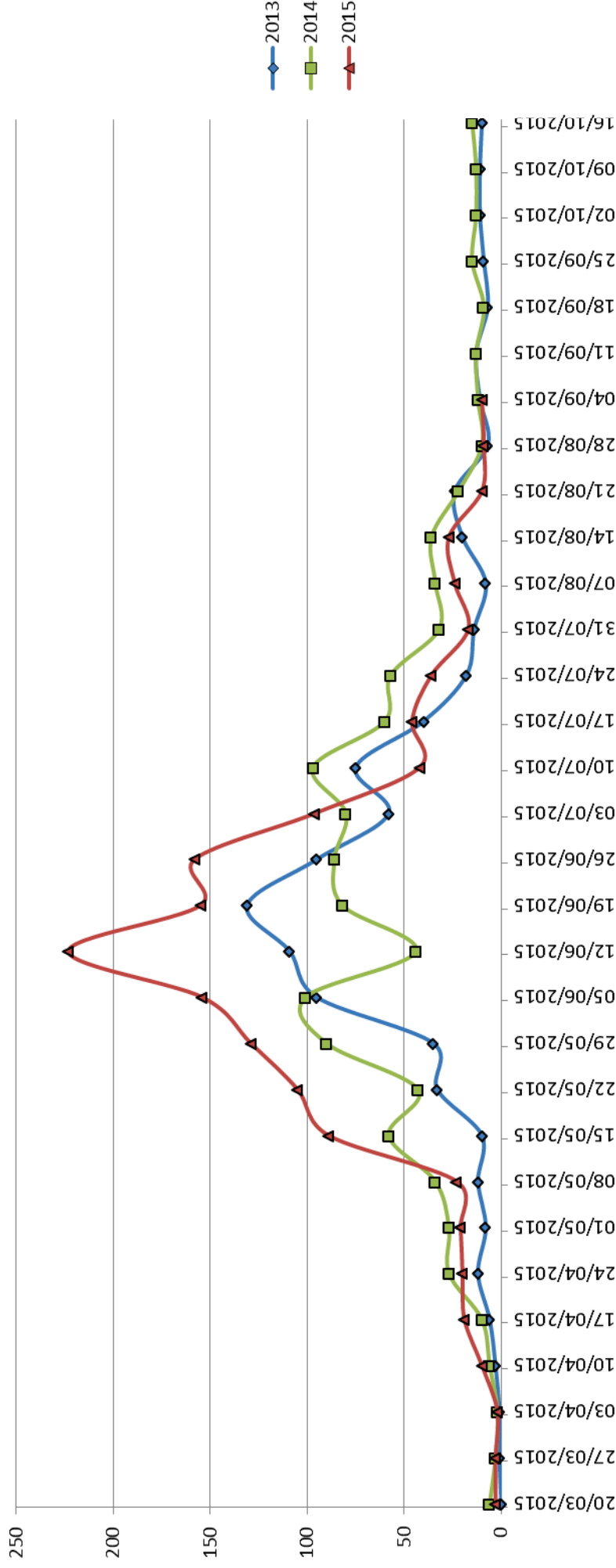
- Highway authority responsible for maintaining highway safety – cuts grass for safety reasons, not amenity or aesthetic reasons.
- Highway Maintenance Policy unchanged but application of policy changed to:
 - Urban verges up to 9 cuts per annum
 - 2013 – 7 cuts (4 week cycle – 8 gangs)
 - 2014 – 6 cuts (4 week cycle – 8 gangs)
 - 2015 – 5 cuts (6 week cycle – 5 gangs)
 - Rural verges 2x1m swaths plus visibility splays
 - Ad hoc additional cuts may be provided, if appropriate i.e. for safety (generally relates to rural)

2015 grass cutting

- No change to rural grass cutting
- Reduction to 5 urban cuts potentially saving of £145,000, contributing to the total £400,000 annual saving from ‘Environmental Maintenance
- Cut on a standard 6 week cycle, irrespective of growth (grass growth tends to peak in June/July)
- In house service in North West, Charnwood, Melton, Harborough and Hinckley and Bosworth.
- BDC cut Blaby and Oadby and Wigston.
- Local agreements with Approximately 30 parishes.

Issues - enquiries peak

2013/2014/2015 Grass Cutting Enquiries Comparison (Week by Week)



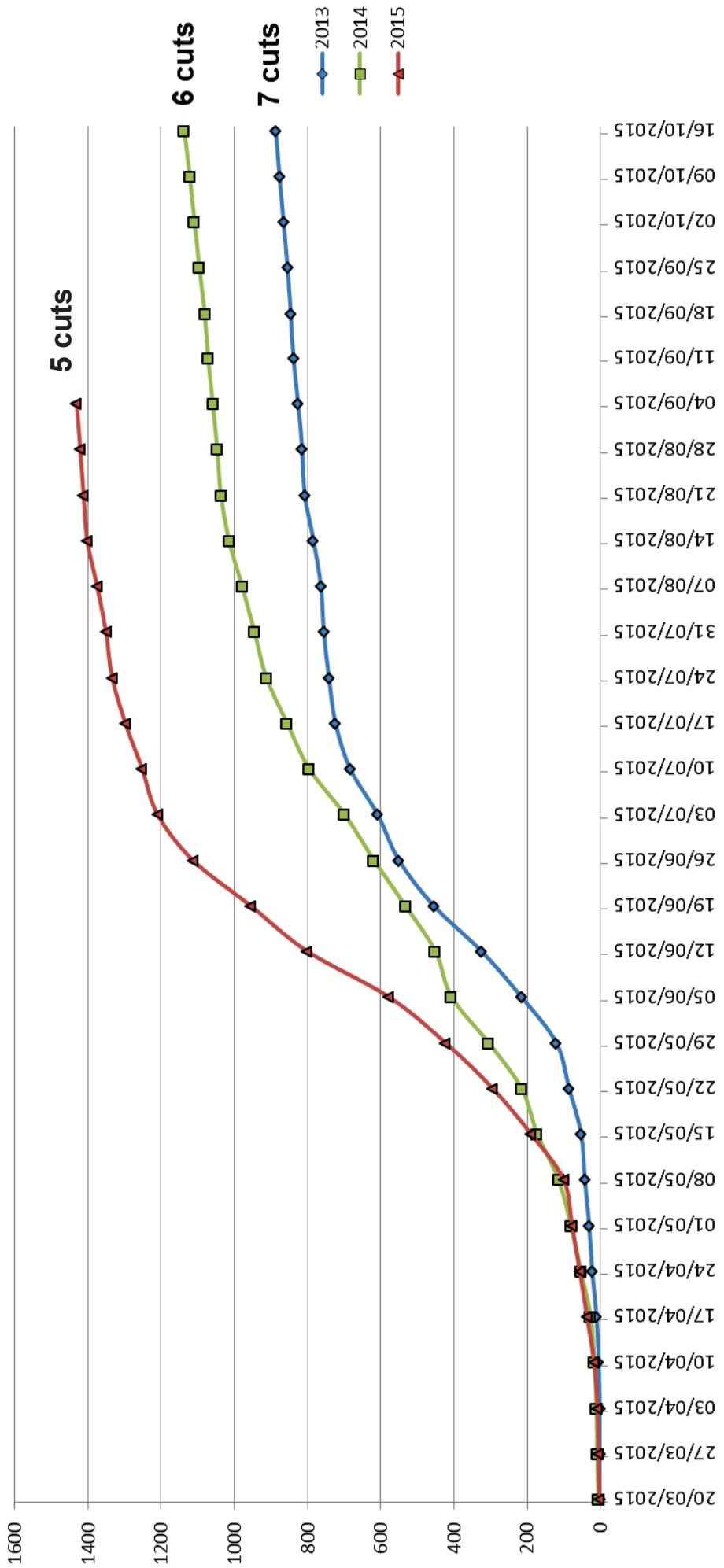
There was a significant increase in grass cutting enquiries in the period between mid May and the end of June.

Following interventions enquiries since mid July have reduced significantly to levels at or below previous years.

Issues - enquiries by year / no. of cuts

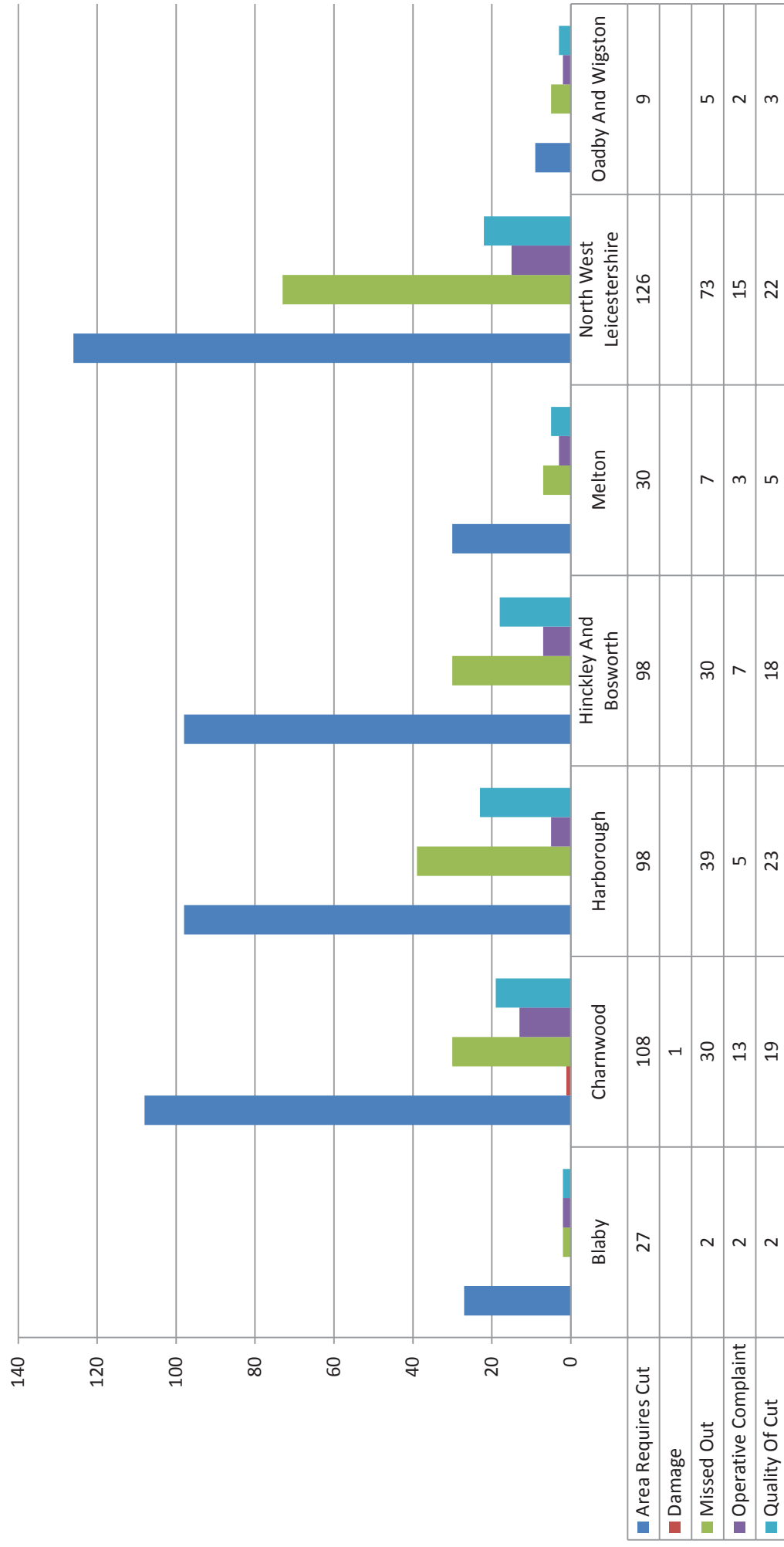


2013/2014/2015 Grass Cutting Enquiries Comparison (Cumulative)



The number of enquiries appears to be influenced by the number of standard cuts.

Service requests by district and reason



Issues – service requests by area

Service Requests to 4 September 2015	Population (2011 census)	m ² grass cut (LCC ONLY)	Service Requests to 04/09/15	Service Requests per 100k population	Service Requests per 100k m ² grass cut	Notes
<i>Blaby</i>	93,915	<i>See notes</i>	33	35.14	4.59	100% Blaby DC
Charnwood	166,100	651,568	171	102.95	26.24	m ² = 75% of total
Harborough	85,382	554,558	165	193.25	29.75	m ² = 81% of total
Hinckley & Bosworth	105,078	523,917	153	145.61	29.20	m ² = 86% of total
Melton	50,376	480,130	45	89.33	9.37	m ² = 91% of total
North West Leics	93,468	520,574	236	252.49	45.33	m ² = 88% of total
<i>Oadby & Wigston</i>	56,170	<i>See notes</i>	19	33.83	8.64	100% Blaby DC
County (Excl BDC & O&W)	500,404	2,730,747	770	153.88	28.20	

Parish

Blaby (inc O&W)

74,903*

150,085

543,060

938,335

18

52

24.03

34.65

3.31

5.54

Notes

Blaby grass cut = 718,335m²

Oadby & Wigston grass cut = 220,000m²

Service requests relating to parish cut grass have been removed (total 18)

Figures relate to urban grass only

* ONS data - Value derived by aggregating data supplied using the Neighbourhood Statistics Geography Hierarchy

- 6 week cycle takes no account of growing season and is inflexible.
- Longer grass slows productivity and increases cost
- Lower productivity not built into schedules or budgets
- Changes to cutting areas - operatives working in unfamiliar areas reduces productivity
- Cut 2 particularly difficult – cuts behind schedule particularly NWL
- Equipment damage / breakdowns attributed to cutting longer grass
- Travelling time reduces grass cutting productivity
- Weather, contributing to significant growth
- Reduction in cuts = diminishing returns

A revised approach is recommended for 2016

- Increase the number of standard urban cuts from 5 to 6
- Introduce a variable cutting frequency, to deal with the early season peaks in grass growth (6,4,4,4,6,6)
- £85k cost to introduce over and above 2015 budget but lower risk.
- Funded by reducing revenue contribution to capital and rebalancing structural, reactive and environmental maintenance.
- Reduction in structural maintenance of £85K but carriageway condition improving – aim is to keep it constant.
- Environmental Maintenance budget needs to be considered in a similar manner to Winter Maintenance and will be weather dependent.

Recommendations (cont)

- Introducing a more proactive approach by introducing a live ‘dashboard’ to monitor enquiries and service delivery with improved management information.
- Considering distributing mowers and gangs to improve productive time.
- Considering shift patterns and or 7 day working to minimise cost
- Improve response to safety concerns (visibility splays) by directing straight to control room for action
- Investigating technology fix's to minimise missed cuts
- Considering SME's for additional summer resource
- Additional Parish Councils requesting to take on service – but will incur £10k extra cost – do we allow?
- Not possible for LCC service to offer a flexible cut frequency.