



PRESS RELEASE

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THE REAL ISSUE IS LITTER – NOT STREET CLEANING

In criticising the cleanliness of our streets, the GSD appear to have jumped on the Chamber of Commerce bandwagon by targeting the workforce of Master Service, without first going to the root of the problem.

Last year, it was precisely to improve the cleanliness of our streets that the Government embarked on an extensive review of the cleaning programme, the main elements of which were then included in an Invitation to Tender. As a result of the review, various different proposals are currently being considered by a tender board, a board which is independent of Government ministers and which is painstakingly going through the process in order to come up with the best possible outcomes.

In terms of cleaning, Government is doing much more than developing higher standards of cleanliness in the new cleaning contract. It is working with the Chamber of Commerce to change the system of collecting business rubbish and on extending or creating new refuse enclosures in order to further improve the situation.

But, not for the first time, the GSD are targeting the wrong problem. If there is litter in some of our streets, the root cause is not a failure to clean the streets, it is the willingness of people to discard the litter in the first place. Master Service do not create litter, it is the public, many of whom are visitors, who create much of the problem. Government will shortly embark on a double-edged programme of increasing the number of litter bins in public places, along with a public information campaign aimed at reducing the amount of litter that is dropped in our streets.

It is also interesting that the GSD also seem quick to criticise Government for the number of dilapidated buildings. Most of these are in private ownership, thus making it very difficult for Government to carry out the much-needed renovations. The GSD seems to have a selective way of looking around Gibraltar, otherwise they would have noticed the number of bright, new attractive buildings, fewer dilapidated public buildings and the extent of urban renewal, especially in the Upper Town.

Clearly there is no over-arching GSD strategy: there is merely a short-term tactic of opportunistic point-scoring.