

## PRESS RELEASE

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**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**Immediate Release**

**Attention: News Desks, Industrial and Political Correspondents**

### **CASTLE MORPETH HAD NORTH EAST'S DIRTIEST STREETS: WANSBECK AND WEAR VALLEY HAD REGION'S CLEANEST STREETS**

**Councillors should be clear that for street cleaning, as for other public services, "you get what you pay for" GMB Congress in Southport is told**

The North East's dirtiest streets were in Castle Morpeth while the cleanest were in Wansbeck and Wear Valley according to the latest available official figures from the Audit Commission. The figures are contained in a regional league table, set out below, which was compiled by GMB and was published today at the GMB Congress in Southport. (See Note 1 below for details on GMB Congress).

In Castle Morpeth **19%** of relevant land and highways assessed had deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level while **3%** also had unacceptable levels of litter. (See Note 2 below on definitions and standards). Next in the league were North Tyneside and Teesdale where **16%** of relevant land and highways assessed had deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level. **10%** of streets in North Tyneside and **3%** in Teesdale also had unacceptable levels of litter.

Wansbeck and Wear Valley had the cleanest streets in the region. **1%** of relevant land and highways assessed in Wansbeck had deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level while 4% had unacceptable levels of litter. For Wear Valley the figures were 2% and 2%.

For all 345 councils in England 12% of relevant land and highways assessed had deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level while 5% had unacceptable levels of litter. 3 councils in the region had streets dirtier than the national average. 12% of Sedgefield's streets were dirty and as were 9% in Darlington, Easington, Stockton-on-Tees and Tynesdale.

The figures for each of the 23 North East councils for 2008/09 are shown in the table below. (See Note 3 for sources).

#### **LEAGUE TABLE ON CLEAN STREETS FOR 23 COUNCILS IN THE NORTH EAST**

Rank	England	The % of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level	The % of relevant land and highways assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level
1	Castle Morpeth DC (Former District Council)	19	3

2	North Tyneside MD	16	10
3	Teesdale DC (Former District Council)	16	3
4	Sedgefield DC (Former District Council)	12	7
5	Darlington UA	9	8
6	Easington DC (Former District Council)	9	7
7	Stockton-on-Tees UA	9	5
8	Tynedale DC (Former District Council)	9	1
9	Hartlepool UA	7	8
10	Blyth Valley DC (Former District Council)	7	5
11	Chester-le-Street DC (Former District Council)	7	4
12	Redcar & Cleveland UA	7	4
13	Durham City DC (Former District Council)	7	3
14	South Tyneside MD	6	4
15	Sunderland MD	5	4
16	Newcastle upon Tyne MD	5	3
17	Derwentside DC (Former District Council)	4	8
18	Middlesbrough UA	4	7
19	Berwick-upon-Tweed DC (Former District Council)	4	1
20	Gateshead MD	3	2
21	Alnwick DC (Former District Council)	2	5
22	Wear Valley DC (Former District Council)	2	2
23	Wansbeck DC (Former District Council)	1	4

Tom Brennan, GMB Regional Secretary for the North East speaking at Southport said **“There is an alarmingly high and dangerous level of dirty streets and pavements in far too many places. On average the 12% of streets that are officially classified as unacceptable is bad enough but there are 3 councils in this region that have a higher proportion than that which is totally unacceptable.**

**Local communities deserve clean and healthy environments. GMB know that clean streets are perfectly feasible everywhere, it’s just a matter of ensuring there are enough properly trained and equipped street cleaners employed to do the job.**

**Councillors should be clear that for street cleaning, as for other public services, you get what you pay for. The next thing that failed politicians may come out with is that people, as well as paying their council tax, should clean the streets themselves.”**

End

**Contacts:** Tom Brennan, GMB Regional Secretary on 07812 166642 or Colin Smith , GMB Senior Organiser on 07870 176723 or GMB Press office: Steve Pryle 07921 289880 and Rose Conroy on 07974 251823 GMB delegates and officers are available for interview via the GMB Press Office

**Notes to Editors:**

1 GMB Congress 2010, which comprises up to 1,000 delegates and workplace representatives from all over the UK, is being held at the Floral Hall Southport Convention Centre from Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June to Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June. GMB is Britain’s third largest union with 611,000 members who work in every industry in the UK economy. You can watch GMB Congress 2010 Live on GMB Congress TV at [www.gmb.org.uk/congresstv](http://www.gmb.org.uk/congresstv)

2 Definitions and standards

1) Detritus comprises dust, mud, soil, grit, gravel, stones, rotted leaf and vegetable residues, and fragments of twigs, glass, plastic and other finely divided materials. Detritus includes leaf and blossom falls when they have substantially lost their structure and have become mushy or fragmented. A significant and avoidable source of detritus is uncollected grass cuttings that have started to decompose.

2) Litter includes mainly synthetic materials, often associated with smoking, eating and drinking, that are improperly discarded and left by members of the public; or are spilt during waste management operations. Litter may also include putrescible or clinical wastes, or faeces such as dog, bird and other animal faeces.

3) How relevant land and highways is assessed and what are the levels of detritus and litter that fall below an acceptable level is set out in website <http://cleanliness-indicator.defra.gov.uk/>

3 Source: The league table was compiled by GMB from the National Indicators 2008-2009 for which the source is the Audit Commission and the data is from National Indicator Set 195a & b Improved street and environmental cleanliness.