

Title: Environmental Enforcement update
Lead Officer: Zoë Court 01926 456314
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rhead
Wards of the District directly affected: All

Background

Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested an update on the shared environmental enforcement service, previously undertaken with Rugby Borough Council. Due to Covid, enforcement by Rugby Borough Council was stopped. At the same time closer working relationships were developed with the Street Scene Team within Stratford District Council. The following information is an update as requested from the last briefing note in February 2021

Update

The Street Scene Team at Stratford District Council (SDC) now support the WDC Contract Services Team as required. Both are managed within Environmental and Operational Services, of which Julie Lewis is the joint Head of Service. Some early training commenced by SDC staff who were more experienced in areas of enforcement with the longstanding aim of enforcement being undertaken by one joint team. At this time, it was announced that the Environmental and Operational Services team would be the first team to go through the joint council integration.

Waste Enforcement training was put on hold pending this Service Area restructure, which will bring the Warwick District and Stratford District teams together into one integrated team. The restructure started on February 11th, later than originally anticipated. The restructure has carefully considered the issue of enforcement going forward, balancing the objectives and aims of the restructure, of entire service delivery, resources, and savings. The business case for the restructure recommends that flytipping enforcement is examined in detail once the key officers are in place. No additional resources are available to expand the current team to deal with fly tipping. Once different options have been considered a committee report will be presented to both councils.

Fly-tipping is environmental vandalism – it's unpleasant, unnecessary, and unacceptable. Sadly, like many local authorities we must spend money each year tackling litter and fly-tipping. There will always be those that think it is acceptable to dump rubbish somewhere else, blighting other residents' areas. These fly tippers are anti-social people committing a criminal act, but prosecution is expensive, not often successful, and rarely effective. Proposals for the future need to be carefully considered as there is no one simple solution. Officer time to carry out investigations leading to possible prosecution can frequently exceed 30 hours which equates to costs of over £700 with no guarantee of a successful conviction.

Idverde become the Street Cleansing contractor in April 2021 the contractor responsible for the removal of fly tips from Warwick District Council (WDC) owned land. Improved use of technology and an integrated software outlined in the previous

briefing note has started. The new method of reporting flytipping via the website went live in Summer 2021, with reports being logged directly onto a new system called Sales Force (Arcus). Work is ongoing with Idverde to integrate this system with their system called Acorn to allow service requests to upload directly to operatives handhelds enabling real time information being received and sent with minimal officer intervention.

Reported fly tips have continued to be cleared quickly, generally within two working days. Crews look for evidence and officers have issued over 50 warning letters in the past six months. Working with experienced officers at Stratford has enabled our officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) as required.

Additionally, a trial of redeployable CCTV cameras (purchased for the Commonwealth Games) is currently being undertaken in Sydenham, which involves WDC staff working with the local Safer Neighbourhoods Team (Police) and local ward councillors.

Next Steps

A summary of the results of the CCTV trial will be shared in April 2022 and it is hoped that after the Commonwealth Games the team dealing with waste enforcement can make more use of these cameras for future enforcement work.

The team is exploring running a similar initiative to Keep Britain Tidy's Better Streets programme, which they recently worked in partnership with at Newham Council to tackle flytipping. There were various interventions, one includes using crime investigation tape and social impact temporary stencils at flytipping hot spot areas. This had a positive impact at Newham Council and flytipping reduced by up to 73%.

Ahead of the new 123+ waste collection contract going live on 1st August 2022 the team are monitoring the locations and quantities of household waste being fly tipped. The redeployable CCTV cameras can then be set up in any 'hot spot areas' identified by the team. There has been an ongoing issue across the district with a small amount of household waste being left next to certain litter bins, which is also classed as flytipping. To try and reduce these issues, notices are being added to these litter bins advising that leaving additional waste is classed as flytipping and if the household is struggling to cope with their waste to get in touch with the team. A closer relationship has also been established between the waste collection contractor and the street cleansing contractor to co-ordinate collections of excess waste and reduce collection costs.

As part of the new Environmental & Operational Services structure the new Operational Development Manager will be tasked with developing enforcement processes for areas such as fly tipping, exploring alternative ways of delivering enforcement including implementation of agreed solutions. This role can report back to the committee by the end of 2022.

Please see Appendix 1 for flytipping data since 2019 to January 2022, postcodes are recorded, we do not currently have broken down by ward.

Briefing Note Information Sheet

Please complete and submit to Democratic Services with Briefing Note

Committee/Date		
Title of Briefing Report	Environmental Enforcement Update	
Consultations undertaken		
Consultee *required	Date	Details of consultation /comments received
Ward Member(s)	N/A	
Portfolio Holder WDC & SDC *	22/2/22	Cllr Rhead approved content
Financial Services *	N/A	
Legal Services *	N/A	
Other Services	N/A	
Chief Executive(s)	N/A	
Head of Service(s)	22/2/22	Julie Lewis approved
Section 151 Officer	N/A	
Monitoring Officer	N/A	
CMT (WDC)	N/A	
Leadership Co-ordination Group (WDC)	N/A	
Other organisations	N/A	
Contrary to Policy/Budget framework		No
Does this briefing note contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?		No
Does this briefing note relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?		No
Accessibility Checked?		File/Info/Inspect Document/Check Accessibility