

Subject: Government Litter Strategy 2017

Report to: EMT 25th May 2017
Environment Committee 12th June 2017

Report by: Paul Shucksmith, Senior Environmental Ranger
Jane Beck, Director of Customer Services

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides background information in respect of the new Government Litter Strategy which contains a number of proposals to curb litter through enforcement, education and good infrastructure.

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides a summary for Members about the Government's Litter Strategy for England which was published in April 2017. The strategy acknowledges the impact of litter and the implications it causes in taking up cleansing resource. The strategy highlights the Government's current work and future proposals that it will seek to implement before 2020 to create cultural change to reduce littering.

2. MAIN PROVISIONS

Measuring litter

The strategy acknowledges measuring the extent of littering in a given area is not always straightforward. The nature, size, quantity and type of litter can all affect how much impact there is on visual amenity but other factors including location and how often the area is cleansed must also be taken in account to measure the extent of a problem. A working group has been set up to develop a baseline and methodology to assess the extent of littering in England and to consider the feasibility of litter reduction targets for specific littered items.

The strategy also wishes to make recycling more openly available to small businesses and to ensure that residents are able to easily dispose of D.I.Y waste. The Government proposes to work with WRAP and local authorities to explore managing Household Waste and Recycling Centres to review charging practises and to facilitate access for waste streams, other than household waste, at a proportionate cost.

Education and Awareness

The Strategy highlights the current work and proposals seeking to changing behaviour through education and awareness. These include:-

- A working group has already been set up to deliver a national anti-littering campaign.
- Work will be done with teachers to review teaching resource on the subject and make sure they are easily accessible.
- Work will be done with youth associations to raise awareness of the environmental and economic costs of littering
- To continue to support and endorse national clean up days
- A working group has been set up to look at the barriers to engaging and involving citizens in tackling litter
- To support and encourage Councils and landowners to aspire to high levels of environmental quality and have them recognised through national award schemes.
- To encourage all business's to work in partnership with the local community to address littering near their premises
- To establish a working group to consider voluntary and/or regulatory controls to improve recycling and reuse of packaging
- To promote the role packaging artwork and the design of the packaging itself could have in reducing littering and littering behaviour

Improving Enforcement

The strategy acknowledges that to back up its education and awareness measure's it will also need appropriate and proportionate enforcement. These proposals include:-

- A consultation will be carried out on whether littering fines should be increased
- To make regulations to allow issuing of a Penalty Charge Notice against the keeper of a vehicle from which litter has been thrown
- Promote the use of new powers such as flytipping penalty notices and Community Protection Notices to improve local environmental quality and provide guidance to enforcement authorities on the use of its powers.
- To encourage local councils to communicate their enforcement activities more effectively
- To explore opportunities with Probation Services to promote activities involving removing litter and flytipped waste

Better Cleaning and Infrastructure

The strategy identifies how important it is for Councils to maintain cleanliness in order to attract business and potential investment. It states local authorities will need

to improve their cleansing and work more effectively with neighbouring authorities and Highways England to keep highways and roads into town clean. Proposals include:-

- A working group has been established to explore and understand the practical barriers in keeping roadside clear of litter and promote best practise in roadside litter prevention.
- To commission and publish an independent assessment of road cleanliness and publish cleanliness reviews by authority with a view to setting a deadline for improvement by underperforming authorities. A proposal to reallocate responsibility for cleansing activities from any authority that is not fulfilling its statutory duties on the road network and consider how to recover the cost of these activities from the local authority.
- To update The Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse, to clarify its standards and review the mechanism by which councils and land managers can be held accountable to the standards set out.
- A working group has been set up to explore and identify best practise in 'binfrastructure' with a view to providing guidance on design, number and location of public litter bins.

3. **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL**

The strategy does not have any immediate implications for the Borough Council but should proposals go ahead the strategy may strengthen enforcement powers and educational work regarding littering. A review of the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse and a focus on highway cleansing may mean more accountability with regard to litter and its removal with the potential sanction of having the cleansing duty, and budget, on main roads **removed from the Council**.

4. **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are recommended to note the report for information.

5. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Litter Strategy for England – April 2017

Areas of consideration:

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	No
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	No
Existing Council Policies:	No
Financial Implications:	No
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No
Risk Implications:	No

Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	No
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No