

Report

10

Report to:	Community Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	11 November 2008
Report by:	Executive Director (Community Resources)

Subject:	Clean Sweep - An Initiative for Tackling Environmental Crime
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ provide an update and further details in relation to the Clean Sweep Initiative.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the Clean Sweep Initiative Booklet and Action Plan, as detailed in (Appendix 1), be approved.

3. Background

3.1. At Community Resources Committee on 8 April 2008 a framework to deliver a range of measures to deal with litter, dog fouling, fly tipping, graffiti and abandoned vehicles was agreed.

3.2. Litter, dog fouling, fly tipping, graffiti and abandoned vehicles may represent, in relative terms, low level environmental problems which have perennially engaged councils in tackling these issues with varying degrees of success over the past 30 years. South Lanarkshire Council implemented a strategy to deal with these problems in 2000. It is fair to say that some aspects of the strategy have been successful whilst other parts have not achieved the objectives set. It is, therefore, important that we review and assess the current position and learn from past results.

3.3. The cleanliness of our streets is a statutory performance indicator where we continue to perform to a high standard. In 2007/08 South Lanarkshire Council achieved a score of 74, 67 being considered satisfactory.

3.4. The Clean Sweep initiative has been in place since May 2008 and a number of actions have already been undertaken in that time.

4. Current Position

4.1. The Initiative document and the associated Action Plan, attached as an appendix, details the current position in depth and is summarised below.

4.2. Awareness Raising

Experience has demonstrated that posters associated with specific local campaigns have a positive effect in raising awareness and changing attitudes. A range of promotional materials have been produced to reinvigorate and build upon the success of the previous "No Excuses" campaign. Display materials have been distributed to primary and secondary schools, libraries and other community buildings throughout SLC. Posters have been affixed to a significant proportion of litter bins and Refuse Collection Vehicles have been fitted with vehicle-mounted displays.

4.3. Significant progress has been made in Education Resources. The Sustainability Education Development Officer is working to incorporate litter and waste awareness into the Eco-School Programme. This will require Secondary Schools to deal with the issue of littering by pupils leaving the school campus at lunchtime and will positively affirm waste awareness and recycling within these learning communities.

4.4. To complement the education and awareness raising measures, it is essential to provide a steady flow of information to the public informing them of what is being done to tackle the issues. This will provide reassurance and in some instances will help to change public perception where there is a belief that little is being done to tackle the problem. Greater effort has been made to provide positive articles for inclusion in local media. On occasion, this has been linked to national campaigns such as the National Day of Action on Litter coordinated by Keep Scotland Beautiful.

4.5. South Lanarkshire Council employs approximately 15,000 people many of whom will be South Lanarkshire residents. The intranet, team briefs and Works magazine can be used to good effect to inform employees of the importance of making South Lanarkshire an area which is free of litter, dog fouling, fly tipping, graffiti.

4.6. Enforcement

During the interim period since the 'No Excuses' campaign there has been a number of significant changes in the legislation and operational procedures which will enable enforcement activities to be more effective. The introduction of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act and the amendments to the Environmental Protection Act have considerably enhanced the Council's regulatory capabilities by way of fixed penalty notices. A substantial number of Environmental Services and Land Services Officers have been authorised to issue fixed penalty notices. This has significantly increased our capability to enforce these powers. In addition, as a consequence of enforcement staff now working 7 days per week and the daily coverage extending to 3 am, the ability to tackle environmental crime has taken a significant leap forward.

4.7. The issue of lunch-time litter associated with secondary school pupils continues to be problematic and receives frequent media attention. During June, a joint operation was undertaken with Strathclyde Police to address littering at Westwood Square in East Kilbride. Pupils dropping litter were stopped and questioned by Police and Environmental Services Officers. As a result, warning letters were issued to the parents or guardians and a copy sent to the Head Teacher. It is intended to build upon the successes of this operation and target problem areas over the school term.

- 4.8. Progress is being made with respect to the use other legislative tools, such as street litter control notices, to exert a higher degree of control over fast food outlets by requiring them to remove litter from a specified area adjacent to their premises to the appropriate code of practice standard. This process will be extended to cover town centre and retail areas.
- 4.9. Covert surveillance equipment has been procured and is now being used to aid targeted enforcement of illicit dumping. Environmental Services continues to enhance our capabilities in relation to static and mobile surveillance.
- 4.10. Evaluation of the outcomes of the previous initiative and subsequent actions have clearly demonstrated the need to secure sound intelligence in order to enable the effective deployment of enforcement staff. Stronger links have been forged with key partners such as the Police, SEPA and the Community Warden Service. This will be an ongoing process and will help to substantially increase the sharing of resources and information.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. The initiative will capitalise upon the existing presence of regulatory staff who are presently working up to 3 am on a 7 day a week basis. The number of staff dealing with enforcement will be considered as part of the Best Value Review of grounds maintenance and street cleansing.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no immediate financial implications in that the costs of the proposals will be met from existing budgets.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. The initiative will have positive benefits in relation to the Sustainable Development strategy.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 8.2. Consultation has taken place with Stakeholders such as Community Councils, Residents Groups, Neighbourhood Watch Groups and Citizens Panels.

Norrie Anderson
Executive Director (Community Resources)

21 October 2008

Link(s) to Council Objectives and Values

- ◆ Sustainable Development
- ◆ Improve the Quality of the Physical Environment

Previous References

Report to Community Resources Committee on 8 April 2008

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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