

Report

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Report to:	Community Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 June 2015
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Enforcement Improvements - Campaign Update
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- update the Committee on the 'Wanted' style Campaign activities and improvements made to the enforcement of legislation in relation to litter and, in particular, dog fouling which were agreed by Committee in September 2013.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

3. Background

3.1 On 3 September 2013, the Community Services Committee approved the implementation of a more targeted approach to deal with dog fouling.

3.2 The Committee agreed that the Service would introduce a 'Wanted' style campaign targeted at areas where there had been a high incidence of dog fouling. The campaign would consist of the following 3 stages:-

- Stage 1 – Signs put up in an area encouraging members of the public to report dog fouling.
- Stage 2 – Patrolling the campaign area regularly for a few weeks.
- Stage 3 – Replacing the first signs with 'Thank you' signs, thanking the public for their assistance in tackling dog fouling.

3.3 The aim of the 'Wanted' campaign is to have an enhanced and very visible presence in an area for a few weeks and to change the behaviour of irresponsible dog owners. During the enforcement stage of the campaign, Environmental Services would also support responsible dog owners by providing them with free bags. The 'Wanted' campaign would then move on to another area and repeated there.

3.4 The vacant posts were filled to give Environmental Services the ability to deploy three planned patrols to tackle litter and dog fouling.

4 Current Position

- 4.1 The ability to dedicate officers to enforcing litter regulation has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of dog fouling patrols conducted. The table below details the number of patrols carried out over the last four years.

Year	Total Patrols
2011-2012	758
2012-2013	760
2013-2014	1194
2014-2015	1778

- 4.2 Some of the patrols are intentionally highly visible, to act as a deterrent and the presence of enforcement staff actively trying to catch irresponsible dog owners has been positively received. This has not resulted in less complaints relating to dog fouling as yet, however, it is hoped that the increased enforcement presence will gradually bring about a change in the behaviour of irresponsible dog owners.
- 4.3 There has been an increase in the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued as follows:-

Year	Number of Dog FPNs Issued
2011	40
2012	35
2013	35
2014	64

- 4.4 The FPN is a £40 fine, rising to £60 if it is not paid within 28 days. Cases for non payment of fines are routinely referred to the Procurator Fiscal (PF). This has provided an opportunity for closer liaison with the Procurator Fiscal service to ensure consistent reporting and enable the Service to encourage the PF to recognise that these seemingly low level antisocial crimes are of importance to the general public.
- 4.5 Initially, two pilot exercises of the Wanted Campaigns were carried out to ensure that the approach could be delivered effectively. Since February 2014, there have been a further 14 targeted Wanted Campaigns across the Council area, using a resource targeting strategy of selecting the locations based on the highest reported complaints about dog fouling.
- 4.6 The Wanted Campaigns have been a useful tool to focus enforcement activity in known complaint hot spots. Patrols have also taken place outwith core hours on the strength of intelligence provided on irresponsible dog owners' dog walking habits.
- 4.7 The litter enforcement team has also engaged with Community Groups. Several localised initiatives have taken place, with some tied into Wanted Campaigns, others where extra patrols were made to catch offenders or be more visible in the area.

5. Future Enforcement Activity

- 5.1 Dog Fouling continues to be a concern for the public. This was highlighted in the Household Survey during 2014.

5.2 In addition to responding to individual dog fouling complaints, Environmental Services will continue to operate the Wanted Campaign style approach to dog fouling to raise awareness of the enforcement activity with the public and to encourage the public to provide the Service with information to target our resources.

6. Employee Implications

6.1 There will not be employee implications as the work is being carried out from existing resources.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The cost of publicity material is met from the existing revenue budget.

8. Other Implications

8.1 The dedicated resources to take enforcement action against environmental civilities will help address an issue which communities regularly comment on in surveys and consultations. It will also enable the service to strengthen its contribution to the Council's Sustainable Development Strategy and in particular the objective: 'The quality of local environments contributes to the wellbeing of local communities'.

8.2 There are no implications for risk in terms of the information contained within this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

9.1 This report does not introduce a new approach, policy or procedure therefore, no impact assessment is required.

9.2. There is no requirement to undertake any consultation arrangements.

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

29 May 2015

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- Improve Quality of Physical Environment

Previous References

Community Services Committee 3 September 2013

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Craig Brown Environmental Services Manager

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