

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services)

Community Safety & Environmental Services Committee: 13 June 2007

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Council – Litter Awareness Campaign

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of a forthcoming Litter Awareness Campaign which is being arranged to promote continuous improvements to the local environment.

2 Background

- 2.1** In 2003 the Council recognised that there was a need to make improvements to the environment of West Dunbartonshire and a Litter Control Strategy was introduced to identify and deliver enhancements to the existing Street Cleaning Service and reduce levels of Litter, Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping and Graffiti.
- 2.2** The Litter Control Strategy resulted in the integration of the Street Cleaning Service with Grounds Maintenance, significant financial investment and the introduction of two Litter Control Officers who have responsibility for promoting the Litter Control Strategy.
- 2.3** The Litter Control Officers are responsible for educating and increasing public awareness via talks and presentations to community groups, schools, etc. together with the enforcement and legislative aspects of Litter, Dog Fouling, Fly tipping and Graffiti via Fixed Penalty Notices. The Litter Control Officers also assist with Community Clean-ups and street cleanliness monitoring in partnership with 'Keep Scotland Beautiful' (KSB).
- 2.4** Work undertaken to date includes the introduction of a "Three Pronged Approach" to tackling Dog Fouling issues.

(1) Free 'Biodegradable Poop Scoop' bags are distributed to various outlets throughout West Dunbartonshire to encourage responsible behaviour by dog owners with more than 1.2 million bags being issued since the introduction of the strategy.

(2) Over two hundred **additional** dual purpose Litter/Dog Waste bins have been installed throughout the authority.

(3) Additional signs have been placed on lampposts throughout the area highlighting the terms of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.

2.5 An Education Programme for Schools incorporating a DVD entitled “The New Adventures of Binman” along with associated quizzes and a board game have been developed and rolled out to primary schools in the West Dunbartonshire area with over 45 visits having taken place.

2.6 Since implementation of enforcement powers in May 2005 there have been 22 Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Littering and Fly Tipping incidents. There have also been 15 Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Dog Fouling. Through regular monitoring, enforcement action and increased publicity the public are becoming more aware of their requirements in relation to the legislation on littering and dog fouling. It has been noted that more and more dog owners are taking heed of their responsibilities and are noticeably cleaning up after their dogs, however there is still some way to go to eradicate dog fouling from our streets.

2.7 The Grounds Maintenance Section works closely with the Anti Social Behaviour Task Group to ensure a partnership approach to dealing with litter issues affecting the Community. The annual Anti-Social Behaviour survey carried out in 2006 showed a positive reduction from 2005 in residents reporting that litter and dog fouling was commonplace in their neighbourhood. (6.4% reduction in dog fouling and 10.3% reduction in littering).

2.8 Grounds Maintenance also works in partnership with the Police, Community Wardens and Housing Enforcement Officers to resolve issues relating to Litter, Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping and Graffiti.

3 Main Issues

3.1 In order to further promote the Litter Control Strategy and the work of the Council in this regard, a Litter Awareness Campaign will be launched in mid-June and will run over the summer holidays.

3.2 The campaign will include an updated package of advertising material which will be distributed to libraries, community centres, housing offices, Police offices, medical centres and other public venues. Publicity stands will be set up within some of the above locations and also within local supermarkets and retailers. The advertising campaign will also include coverage on local radio and in local newspapers to stimulate greater awareness within the community.

3.3 The Council will invest in giveaway items to compliment the present Binman DVD input in local Primary Schools. Suggested items include pencils, sharpeners and rulers which will promote the Litter Awareness Campaign.

- 3.4** The campaign will include supporting a National Fast Food Litter Campaign which is aimed at making owners and customers of fast food outlets more aware of litter problems in the area and encourage the public to use a bin at all times. Anti-litter posters are being provided to these outlets by the Council.
- 3.5** In recognition of the requirement to devote resources to the Council's priority of creating a better environment two Litter Control Assistants have recently been appointed to assist the Litter Control Officers. This is a partnership arrangement with the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force. In addition, 6 Community Wardens will be given authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and dog-fouling as a pilot exercise in partnership with the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force.

4 Personnel Issues

- 4.1** The Litter Awareness Campaign is being co-ordinated by existing Grounds Maintenance staff, particularly the Litter Control Officers.
- 4.2** The Litter Control Assistants recently engaged will have a significant input into the campaign however the creation of these two posts was not as a direct result of the Litter Awareness Campaign. Their posts will focus on enforcement of existing legislation.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1** Costs incurred in delivering the Council's Litter Control Strategy, including the forthcoming Litter Awareness Campaign are met from the Grounds Maintenance Revenue Budget and from the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force budget.
- 5.2** The two newly introduced posts of Litter Control Assistant will be funded by the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Task Force budget.

6 Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There is no requirement to undertake a Risk analysis of the issues contained within this report.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** Since the implementation of the Litter Control Strategy in 2003 the condition of the environment within West Dunbartonshire has shown steady improvement. This is due mainly to the introduction of additional street operatives, mechanical sweepers, employment of two Litter Control Officers, provision of bio degradable poop scoop bags, provision of signage and additional street bins and an overall increase in public awareness. It is believed that partnership working between the integrated Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning Service together with internal and external agencies has provided a more efficient service to the public.

7.2 It is believed that the recruitment of a further two employees, along with a focussed Litter Awareness Campaign, will lead to a further reduction in offending behaviour by some members of the public and will result in continuous improvements to the environment.

8 Recommendation

8.1 The Committee is invited to note the content of this report which highlights additional resources being employed in the fight against Litter, Dog Fouling, Fly Tipping and Graffiti.

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Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All

Appendix: None