

REPORT TO:	CABINET 30th June 2014
AGENDA ITEM:	6
SUBJECT:	Cleanest and Greenest Borough in London
LEAD OFFICER:	Jo Negrini, Executive Director Development & Environment
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Stuart Collins. Cabinet Member' Clean and Green'
WARDS:	'All'

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:

The Administration has a commitment to make Croydon the cleanest and greenest borough in London.

The condition of the streets, in relation to issues such as fly tipping and dog fouling have a negative effect on people's quality of life. The priority for this new initiative is to improve local environments to make Croydon a more pleasant place in which to live, work and visit and ensuring that local communities are involved at every opportunity in tackling environmental crime issues.

This approach is very much a partnership between the Council; its staff, partners and residents to keep our Borough clean and Take Pride in Croydon.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are a range of interventions described in this report that will be delivered as business as usual, following a change of approach and service delivery.

There are a number of interventions that will require negotiation with Veolia, our waste contractor, to provide additional capacity within the contract, such as the 3 new fly tip removal vehicles and additional waste bins in district centres.

The communications strategy has been costed and if accepted in its entirety is an additional cost of £37K.

Introducing a programme of community pride clear ups, supported by the introduction of community champions has been assessed as requiring an additional full time resource to deliver.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: 1283

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Agree the new Clean and Green approach, implementing the 'Don't Mess With Croydon; Take Pride' campaign as detailed in the report.

1.2 Agree that, subject to the delegation in 1.3, the Cabinet Member 'Clean Green' in consultation with the Executive Director of Development and Environment be delegated authority to approve the implementation of the proposals in this report.

1.3 Agree that the Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Director of Development and Environment and the Council Solicitor, be delegated authority to approve any contractual variations necessary to implement the proposals in this report.

1.4 Agree an increase in the Fixed Penalty Notice fee from £75 to £80, which is the maximum allowed.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The new Clean and Green approach is designed to make Croydon the cleanest and greenest borough in London, which will be achieved through the development of a new strategic and operational approach to tackle the issues of fly-tipping, recycling, street cleanliness and environmental enforcement supported by a new publicity campaign, '**Don't mess with Croydon: Take Pride**'

2.2 This will require new approaches and solutions to issues that have been an ongoing problem, together with the continuation of those interventions that have proved successful here and elsewhere. The actions identified in this report will be developed and delivered over the first 100 days of the new administration.

2.3 The approach will be very much a partnership between the Council; its staff, partners and residents with the aim of keeping our Borough clean and for everyone to Take Pride in Croydon. The report highlights short, medium and longer term interventions under the key areas of education, enforcement and ease of using the services and ease of reporting.

3. Introduction

3.1 The 'Don't Mess with Croydon: Take Pride' campaign is an integral part of the new approach to make Croydon the cleanest and greenest borough in London. This will be achieved through the introduction of a new strategic approach and focussed actions, which will tackle the issues of fly tipping, recycling, street cleanliness and environmental enforcement, which are areas that have been highlighted by Croydon's communities as those that need urgent attention.

3.2 The approach, which will be supported by a new publicity campaign, is based on the following:-

Education – By educating and informing Croydon residents of the full range of services making it clear that the council will catch and prosecute fly-tippers. Also making it clear it is a duty and a partnership between the council, residents and traders to keep their communities clean.

Enforcement – Make catching fly tippers a priority, gathering statistical evidence and intelligence of hot spots and the times and days that incidents occur. Making use of covert CCTV to catch offenders and encourage residents to report offenders, informing them of our successes. Performance indicators will be used to encourage better performance from our contractors and impose penalties when they are not met.

Easy – Make it easy for residents to use our services and to take away the excuses for fly-tipping. Consult with residents and traders to find out what works and what doesn't work in their communities such as recycling arrangements and landfill collection. The council will also make it easy and affordable to dispose of bulky waste for residents and landlords.

4. **Education - priorities**

4.1 It is an integral part of the approach that Croydon residents will be fully aware of our full range of services, to enable them to report issues to us in the confidence that the Council will attend to their concerns immediately. Part of the process of improving those confidence levels is ensuring that residents realise that the council is serious when it says it will catch and prosecute fly tippers. This will be achieved through communicating clearly and quickly when action has been taken.

4.2 It is important that the focus on catching and deterring fly tippers is seen as a partnership approach by making it clear that it is a duty as well as a partnership between the council, residents and traders to keep their communities clean, by them 'Taking Pride' in their community. In addition to reporting and enforcing, that partnership approach also extends to residents and businesses taking responsibility for keeping the borough clean and doing what they can to improve the look and feel of their surrounding area, including engaging in community clear ups and ensuring that businesses comply with their trade waste responsibilities.

4.3 Currently environmental crime can be reported in a number of ways; by phone to the council Contact Centre, by email to 'Contact the Council', reporting directly on to the council's website and through the 'report it' Croydon App. By making it easier for residents to make reports and ensuring those reports are used to create an intelligent picture of the issues, will allow for a fast deployment of resources to remove and enforce. This will feature strongly in the initial and ongoing communications to support this new approach.

5. **Education - immediate actions**

5.1 The following sets out the key actions that will be delivered over the first 100 days of the administration and beyond in respect to the education strand:-

- ◆ Conduct a high profile borough wide launch of the 'Don't Mess With Croydon:

'Take Pride' campaign. This will include advertising (press, buses and trams) merchandising and branding of vehicles. This will involve not just Council staff but also our contractors, to ensure we have a consistent message. An integral part of the campaign would be the need to raise awareness through involving different groups such as schools, community projects taking account of accessibility issues by making sure the information is available. The total cost of running this campaign over the next 3 months is estimated at £37,000. If the campaign continues after that period, additional cost will accrue but at a lower level.

- ◆ Secure council wide support for the campaign and ensure that all staff involved in the campaign make use of the branding in communications. This will involve the re-branding of existing messages on and offline, such as the email strap line for officers in the Environment division and the existing signs, flyers and notices in use currently. This will require a small budget of approximately £2k.
- ◆ Make use of 'Quick comms' communications, which will provide quick and targeted information to residents of the action taken to deal with fly tipping; removal and prosecutions following conviction. This will be accompanied by the use of various media, e.g. Decaux boards and council advertising space, the Your Croydon residents' e-newsletter, branding of Veolia and council vehicles, street signage, Croydon.gov.uk website, press releases, and local media including a local newspaper 'wrap'. The 'Quick Comm' approach will be met within existing resources.
- ◆ The overall communication approach will be evaluated at the end of the first 100days to assess impact, identify successes and highlight areas for improvement.
- ◆ Secure a media partner and make use of social media networks to increase the scope and reach of our communication. We will encourage the local Business Improvement District teams in Croydon Town Centre and New Addington to adopt the campaign and focus their efforts to help make Croydon cleaner and greener. This is expected to be achieved within existing resources.
- ◆ Link the campaign to other litter / recycling campaigns to educate children, adults and business in the borough to encourage civic pride, individual responsibility and behavioural change. This is expected to be achieved within existing resources.
- ◆ The council will, working with local residents who are at the heart of our approach, recruit and involve local community champions, getting neighbourhoods to own the issues and champion cleanliness. Together with Veolia, our contractor, 'Community Pride clean ups will be introduced, in conjunction with residents associations and other community organisations. They will be supported to not only assist in removal of fly tips and litter but also to do so in a way that encourages increased recycling. Work will be undertaken to ensure that this is inclusive and as such residents and communities involved will include those from specialist and protected groups. Residents and businesses will also be encouraged to take responsibility for ensuring that their streets are litter free. The 'Community Pride' scheme will require additional capacity that does not currently exist; a coordinator post in the region of Grade

10. For the purpose of this report a figure of £10k has been included to cover the length of the pilot scheme.

- ◆ Launch the ‘Eyesore Garden Project’ through the identification of problem roads spoilt by littered, overgrown and untidy gardens and will deal with these through a combination of education and enforcement. Where this relates to private land enforcement officers will identify ownership and responsibility and serve the relevant notices and enforce where appropriate. The first priority will be to speak to owners informing them of the services the council provides and the importance of taking pride in the area they live. This will be met from within existing resources.

6. Enforcement - priorities

- 6.1 For too long the borough has been blighted by fly-tipping, especially in certain areas. It is not enough to simply remove the fly-tips once reported, the council needs to ensure that those that blight our borough are caught and the community need to see that the council is taking strong action.
- 6.2 The number of fly tip reports in the borough remains high and is showing an increase on the number of incidents during 2012/13. The total number of fly tips recorded has increased by 26% from 11,150 in 2012/13 to 15,108 in 2013/14. Approximately 75% of all fly-tips are in the north of Croydon. The wards with the highest levels are Thornton Heath, West Thornton, Woodside, South Norwood and Selhurst.
- 6.3 The volume of fly-tip reports is in part due to changes in recording processes and there is evidence of duplicate records being entered on to the system, however, it is clear that fly-tips remain a significant challenge and continue to cause financial pressure to the council as well as reputational concerns.
- 6.4 There has been an increase in FPNs for fly-tipping issued. Between April 2013 and March 2014, 243 FPNs for fly tipping have been issued. This compares to 22 fly tip FPNs for the whole of 2012/13. The number of fly-tipping FPNs per month in 2013/14 is as follows:

Results	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Fly-tipping FPNs	2	14	1	5	5	0	6	15	12	46	65	72

- 6.5 There is a large range of powers available. This includes the ability to fine and/or prosecute for:
- Dropping litter or allowing litter to accumulate on land;
 - Dumping waste in public areas;
 - Not making proper arrangements for the disposal of commercial waste;
 - Letting a dog foul the pavement, and not clearing it up;
 - Unauthorised distribution of free printed matter;
 - Failing to comply with notices issued by the Council to rectify environmental infringements;

- Failing to rectify Highways Obstructions notified by the Council
- Not using appropriate containers for waste/recycling.

These will be set out in the Council's new Environmental Enforcement Policy, which is being finalised.

6.6 The clean and green approach is also consistent with the proposal to introduce a selective private landlord licensing scheme in Croydon, which is subject to a separate report. There is a perception that poorly managed private rented housing is having a negative effect on Croydon's neighbourhoods and communities and this perception is increasing. Private rented housing has increased significantly in the borough and the introduction of selective licensing of private rented properties would ensure the council has a comprehensive licensing regime to effectively manage issues of anti-social behaviour (ASB), fly-tipping and other environmental nuisance.

7. **Enforcement - immediate actions**

7.1 The following sets out the key actions that will be delivered over the first 100 days of the administration in respect to the enforcement strand:-

- ◆ Make the identification and prosecution of fly-tippers an absolute priority. To assist in that it will be necessary to ensure that sufficient statistical evidence and intelligence of hot spots is gathered, including when offences take place to ensure resources are targeted effectively and efficiently, through the development of IT systems and on street devices, through the implementation of a 'virtual control room' approach, linking the customer's call through to the tasking of resources and eventual feedback to the customer on action taken. Through the introduction of in cab technology by Veolia, officers will be in a position to provide feedback to a customer, who has reported a fly-tip through the reporting hotline (and left contact details), that the report has been received, tasked and removed.
- ◆ Increase the Fixed Penalty Notice fee from £75 to £80, without an early payment discount, to ensure that the penalty for fly tipping and littering fully reflects the serious nature of the offence. Responses received from the survey undertaken as part of the Environmental Enforcement Policy, showed that there is significant support for taking necessary action against those who drop litter in the street and against those who are not cleaning up after their dogs, by issuing Fixed Penalty Notices – 76% and 84% respectively (combined results of both survey types, online and face to face). Only 7 comments were received on the theme of the fine being too high; which indicates that only a very small minority consider it a barrier. It is therefore recommended that the flat fee for FPNs is increased to £80 with no early repayment discount. The effect of this decision will be that there is a different approach for litter fine repayments than for fines issued elsewhere in the Council where an early repayment option still exists e.g. parking penalty charge notices. Based on the in-house enforcement model, this could generate a further £5k p.a. The police have been consulted on this potential rise and have no objections. It brings it into line with the penalties they already impose.

- ◆ Create a basket of performance indicators, which will be used to encourage better performance from our contractors and we will impose penalties when they are not met. See para 10.1.
- ◆ Review the current approach to patrol and response and ensure the Area Enforcement Officers work closely with the three 'Fly-Tip Reaction Team's, including joint patrols where necessary to ensure any investigative opportunities are not missed.
- ◆ Deliver a regime of multi-agency enforcement led operations, tackling fly-tip hot spots in the borough; these will be both intelligence led and partnership based. These will be delivered through existing resources.
- ◆ Areas targeted will include those wards that have the highest number of recorded fly-tips. The focus will be on businesses ensuring they fully comply with their trade waste agreements, targeting key hot spot areas. Any message or notice will be consistent showing the new logo supported by the following; 'Fly-tippers will be prosecuted' and 'CCTV in operation'.
- ◆ Increase the number of prosecutions, through the use of CCTV both overt and covert and ensure all enforcement officers have the ability to take action against those witnessed committing these offences, leading to more investigations and prosecutions. More officers will be authorised to use a wider range of powers to enforce against businesses, private land owners and residents to tackle a range of issues include trade and residential waste and fly tipping. This will be delivered through existing resources. Where repeat fly-tippers are identified, consideration will be given to escalate to court action rather than FPN, to allow the courts to impose higher fines than allowed by the FPN route.
- ◆ Encourage residents to report offenders to enable us to take action. It is important that residents know what action is being taken and inform them of successes.
- ◆ Encourage neighbourhoods to own the issue and the cleanliness of their areas through the development of neighbourhood champions and introduce 'Community Pride Clean Ups, in conjunction with residents associations and other community organisations.
- ◆ Introduce a mechanism for all council staff who patrol streets to report environmental crimes where they witness them. A number of staff already have the ability to use My Croydon app and there is an increasing roll out of personal digital devices to support their work, which can be used to report fly-tipping and associated issues. In addition to council staff, contractors will also have a duty to report fly-tipping and fly-tippers. Under this approach the various Veolia teams will clear any dumped waste and record details on council databases.
- ◆ Introduce a feature within the My Croydon app to enable residents to report fly-tippers and litter louts by capturing offences on camera and reporting them the council for us to take action.

- ◆ Link this approach with the introduction of a refreshed Environmental Enforcement and ASB policy, together with strengthened working arrangements with Registered Social Landlords.

8. **Easy - priorities**

- 8.1 To support this approach it is necessary to ensure residents find it as easy as possible to report their concerns. It will be made easy for residents to make use of council services for reporting fly tips and take away any excuses they may have for fly-tipping.
- 8.2 The council will consult with residents and traders to find out what works best for them and identify those aspects of the current approach which doesn't work and gets in the way of recycling and disposing of waste properly. This will require a review of the recycling arrangements, bulky waste and landfill collection services.

9. **Easy - immediate actions**

- 9.1 The following sets out the key actions that will be delivered over the first 100 days of the administration in respect to the easy strand:-

- ◆ Work with Veolia, council waste contractor, to introduce an improved fly-tip collection service to remove all fly-tips within 48 hours, focussing on priority areas. There will be 3 new 'fly- tip' reaction teams. These teams will patrol known fly-tip hot spot areas and will react to fly-tip reports from our hotlines. These collection vehicles will be clearly branded to reflect the new priority. Indications from Veolia are that the costs will be in the region of £280k p.a. An amount of £70k has been included in the summary to cover the costs of the pilot.
- ◆ Launch the 'Don't Mess with Croydon: Take Pride' fly tipping hotline to complement the Council App. This will take the form of a dedicated telephone number and email address 'flytipping@croydon.gov.uk' and work towards an improved system where residents receive updates on their reports. This will be met from within existing resources in the initial stages and will be reviewed to assess the increased demand on customer services through the new phone number.
- ◆ Simplify processes to enable a fly-tip to be removed more quickly and without the need for unnecessary works orders.
- ◆ Review the frequency of street cleaning and street bin provision. This will focus on the fly-tip hot spots in the borough and our district centres. Road sweeper schedules will be reviewed to ensure increased presence in district centres at times of greatest need such as the beginning and end of the day and look to increase the provision of street bins, where this will make most impact. The schedules will take into account what days and times landfill and recycling collections take place. The provision of additional bins, including emptying, will require additional funding. An increase in the street cleaning schedule will also require additional funding. . Based on previous service reviews where reduction focused on district centre service provision it is

estimated that additional expenditure of £500k p.a. will be required. A figure of £125k has been included in the summary to cover the period of this pilot.

- ◆ Continue reviewing the performance of the council waste contractor through monthly performance meetings and joint site visits, specifically of areas identified through complaint monitoring.
- ◆ Pilot the removal of charging for the bulky waste collection service in one or more fly-tip hot spot areas and review to assess the potential of rolling this out across the borough. There is such a removal service already in operation in New Addington and Fieldway, which will provide useful information on a further roll out of this approach. The removal of a bulky waste charge will result in a loss of income which is currently budgeted for. It is assumed that if the pilot covered a quarter of the borough the annual loss of income would be approximately £40k. For the purpose of this pilot, it has been assumed that the loss of income for the period would be £10k.
- ◆ Require the new contractor of the management and operation of household reuse and recycling centres to provide opportunities for diversion of household waste items for reuse in partnership with a third sector group operating the recovery and reuse service. This is in the process of being procured and will be operational in September 2015.
- ◆ Improve the facilities for recycling in flats by tackling those flats/areas where residents have limited recycling facilities e.g. flats above shops through such things as the provision of secure areas to store waste and recycling and gating schemes.

10. **Performance Measures**

10.1 There will be a review of the monitoring and measurement arrangements to take account of the range of interventions above. This will include;

- ◆ Recycling rates – increased performance standard, specifically in priority areas
- ◆ Number of reports on line
- ◆ Number of fly-tip prosecutions – increase %
- ◆ Increased number of fly-tip operations
- ◆ Number of FPNs for fly-tipping
- ◆ Number of fly-tips
- ◆ Removal of fly-tips within time

11. **CONSULTATION**

11.1 The main thrust of this approach has been clearly documented in 'Ambitious for Croydon' which has been widely publicised.

11.2 Consideration was also given to the 'Croydon North Streets – Independent Commission', which consisted of a number of public meetings and received feedback from questionnaires circulated widely to residents and community groups; covering the following areas:

- ◆ Street cleaning services and litter removal
- ◆ Bin collection services
- ◆ Recycling services
- ◆ Levels of fly-tipping
- ◆ Graffiti

11.3 As part of the work on the Environmental Enforcement Policy, which is subject to a following report, public consultation was carried out between 24 September and 23 December 2013. This took the form of an online questionnaire and a face to face survey. 331 people took part in the survey with feedback summarised as follows:

- ◆ The responses received from the survey show there is significant support for taking necessary action against those who drop litter in the street, by issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
- ◆ The main themes that people felt should also receive fines were spitting, fly-tipping, chewing gum spat out on streets and urination on streets.
- ◆ Further comments requested clear ways to mitigate offences, such as the need for more bins and improved signage. Some comments also highlighted the importance of fines being issued fairly.
- ◆ Findings on equalities data showed that all main ethnic groups agree with Croydon Council taking action against those that commit enviro-crimes. Also, where disability data was provided by responders, there was overwhelming agreement with the need to enforce.

12 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 There are interventions described above that will be an increase in what we are doing currently and some that will be business as usual or can be accommodated within existing resources.

1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000
Revenue Budget				
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	244			
Income	5			
Budget impact	249			

Capital Budget

Effect of decision from report

Expenditure

TBC

Budget impact

2 The effect of the decision

As stated above, some of the actions can be delivered within existing budget resources and some will require additional funding which for the period of the pilot phase will be met by using earmarked reserves. Indicative additional costs of delivering these actions during the pilot phase are estimated as follows:

<u>Additional expenditure</u>	£'000
Comms campaign	39
Community champion coordinator	10
Fly-tip reaction teams	70
Additional street cleansing	<u>125</u>
	<u>244</u>
<u>Income</u>	
Additional income from FPNs (annual income)	(5)
Removal of bulky waste charges	<u>10</u>
	<u>5</u>

A longer term commitment to these options, following the pilot phase, will need to be considered alongside the 2015/16 budget requirement.

3 Risks

There is a risk that the costs could be higher, as they are only indicative.

4 Options

These are the considered options required in order to deliver the commitment.

5 Future savings/efficiencies

There are no identified savings or efficiencies at this time. However if the pilot were to be extended it could result in a reduction in the current fly-tipping pressure.

6 Approved by: Dianne Ellender, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

13. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

13.1 The Council Solicitor comments that the use of covert CCTV will require authorisation from the Magistrates Court and to support such an application the

supporting evidence of problems with fly-tipping will be essential.

- 13.2 Where proposals in this report may require new arrangements with provider's advice will be provided on the specific contractual arrangements and how this can be achieved.
- 13.3 Section 88(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended) provides authority for Council's, through their own officers or contractors, to issue FPNs in respect of litter. The maximum amount that can be set being £80. DeFRA guidance strongly recommends that local authorities consult the police when setting penalty levels.
- 13.4 Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor, Head of Corporate Law on behalf of the Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 14.1 There are no known human resources impacts.
- 14.2 Approved by Adrian Prescod, HR Business Partner, for and on behalf of Interim Director of Human Resources, Chief Executive department.

15. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 15.1 An initial equality analysis was undertaken as part of the development of the environmental enforcement policy. This covers the actions that we are proposing to make Croydon a cleaner and greener borough. The initial equality analysis indicates that the actions arising from this report are unlikely to directly affect equality groups that share a "protected characteristic". The direct impact will be upon anyone who is caught committing an environmental offence rather than any particular group.

The initial equality analysis is currently work in progress and will be reviewed and updated as the education and enforcement actions arising from this report are planned and delivered. A number of specific equality issues around involvement of local community groups and the provision of accessible information have been identified and will be addressed in the implementation stage. For instance, we will ensure that different equality / community groups and schools are engaged in the campaign to educate and raise awareness of the clean and green agenda and any communication / information that we produce is accessible. We will also work with local community organisations and the Council's community partnership team to identify local community and neighbourhood champions and ensure they represent the diversity of the community and work in partnership to seek community involvement in clear ups.

16. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 16.1 The recommendations of this report impact significantly on the environment as they are specifically designed to address enviro-crimes such as fly-tipping and littering. They will send clear messages that the Council will not tolerate these

offences, should change attitudes to fly tipping and littering and ultimately will make the borough a safer and cleaner place to live, work and visit.

17. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 17.1 The recommendations of this report will impact on crime and disorder in that they are intensifying the Councils approach to identifying and prosecuting people for fly-tipping and littering. These are offences that the Council has powers to enforce.

18. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 18.1 It is recommended that the Council adopts the Clean and Green approach and range of interventions, which is consistent with the developing 'Environmental Enforcement Policy', which clearly sets out what the Council's position is regarding action to tackle fly tipping, littering and other offences. These are consistently reported as being a high priority for the public.

19. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 19.1 The range of interventions described above take the existing powers the council has together with the role of enforcement, combining them under a new strategic and operational approach within the Clean and Green strategy. There are options to introduce this approach without including contractors, business, residents or staff but that would undermine the 'inclusive' nature of this strategy and would lead to an approach which did not have partnership at its core.

CONTACT OFFICER: Tony Brooks, Director Environment

BACKGROUND PAPERS - none