

Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:
A.2

Meeting Date: 12th March 2015
 Portfolio: Environment and Transport
 Key Decision: Not Applicable:
 Within Policy and Budget Framework YES
 Public / Private Public

Title: CLEAN UP CARLISLE UPDATE
 Report of: The Director of Local Environment
 Report Number: LE08/15

Purpose / Summary:

Clean up Carlisle has been a Corporate priority since 2012 because people were noticing and complaining about the deterioration in the tidiness of Carlisle’s streets and parks. Temporary additional funding was found for two years to improve the enforcement, education and cleaning of the streets. This report summarises the work carried out over the last two years.

Recommendations:

To consider the report

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Local amenity and environmental quality remain a key priority for residents, Members and the Executive. The 2012 /13 budget setting process released additional annual funding of £155,000 for 2 years from the Reserves to make improvements in the cleanliness of Carlisle. This led to the “Clean Up Carlisle” campaign with its three key activities of improved cleansing, enforcement and education.
- 1.2 Over the last 2 years many of the planned processes have come to fruition; the coming on line of improved mechanisation; new programmes of street cleansing; the development of the Enforcement and Education Team, and partnerships and procedures with groups such as the Police and Housing Associations. This report provides a summary of the work carried out over the last two years under the “Clean Up Carlisle” campaign and looks at the impact that the cleaning, enforcement and educational activities have had on local amenity and environmental quality.

2. Enforcement

- 2.1 Levels of enforcement activity have been high during the “Clean Up Carlisle Campaign”. Table.1 details the number of fixed penalty tickets issued for environmental crime offences over the last few years.

Table.1. Number of Fixed Penalty Notices Issued

Year/Offence	2011 / 2012	2012 / 2013	2013 / 2014	2014/2015 (up to 26/02/15)
Dog Fouling	11	37	44	16
Dogs Off Leads	0	19	12	9
Littering	0	40	44	28
Waste Receptacles	0	11	5	4
Fly Posting	6	24	8	1
Total	17	131	113	58

In addition to fixed penalty notices 2012 / 2013 saw a total of 7 successful prosecutions for a variety of offences including the first fly tipping prosecution for a number of years.

In 2013 /2014 there were 7 successful prosecutions for dog fouling; 3 for dogs off leads; 2 for waste incorrectly put out for collection(waste receptacles) ; 1 each for littering, fly tipping and failing to ensure a dog wore a collar and tag. A total of 15 successful prosecutions were taken in 2013/14 . Two successful prosecutions have been taken in 2014/15 for littering and dog fouling with 2 prosecutions pending for littering and waste receptacles.

3. Prosecution Case Studies

Case Study 1

In November 2012 reports were received that household waste was being regularly dumped in a rear lane. The bags were then being ripped open and the contents scattered across a wide area. Evidence was obtained and the occupiers of a property were sent a Formal Notice. The problem continued and an individual was issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for failing to adhere to the notice. The FPN was not paid and while a prosecution file was being prepared a further offence was committed. In May 2013 the individual was found guilty of two offences of breaching the Formal Notice. He was fined £400 for each offence plus £200 costs

Case Study 2

A repeat dog fouling offender was taken to court after failing to pay an £80 Fixed Penalty Notice. He was found guilty and fined £200 along with £95 costs. As well as this a Housing Officer from Riverside has visited the man who lives with his mother and they have been advised that in accordance with their tenancy agreement they could have their right to keep a dog removed.

Case Study 3

In October 2013 a considerable amount of household waste was found fly tipped and traced to a house clearance company. The employee of the company alleged that the material was being left to create room in the van but had intended to pick it up later. The Magistrates imposed a fine of £660, costs of £350, compensation of £80 and victim support of £66, making a total of £1,156.

Case Study 4

A man allowed his dog to regularly foul in the same public lane to the annoyance of nearby residents. He was initially caught on a resident's private CCTV camera and officers from the Enforcement and Education Team eventually witnessed an offence themselves. The man was extremely abusive and walked away from officers. Further investigation was required and he was eventually traced; when the prosecution file was finalised it contained three separate offences (dog fouling, dog

off a lead and failing to give information) for which in February 2014 the defendant was fined £170 with £80 costs and a £20 victim support fine.

Case Study 5

Another dog fouling incident was witnessed occurring very close to a children's play area and football pitches in the Harraby area. As a result of officers witnessing the offence the defendant returned to pick up the fouling; however in February 2014 Magistrates agreed that the offence had been committed and that the defendant had only done this in response to being caught by officers and she was fined £200, with costs of £85 and victim support of £20.

Case Study 6

In August 2014, a woman who was originally convicted in February 2014 of failing to clean up after her dog fouled in a popular play park, challenged her conviction at Carlisle Crown Court, the lady who was originally fined a total of £285 lost her appeal and had to pay further costs of £1,400.

4. Complaints and Evidence of Improvement

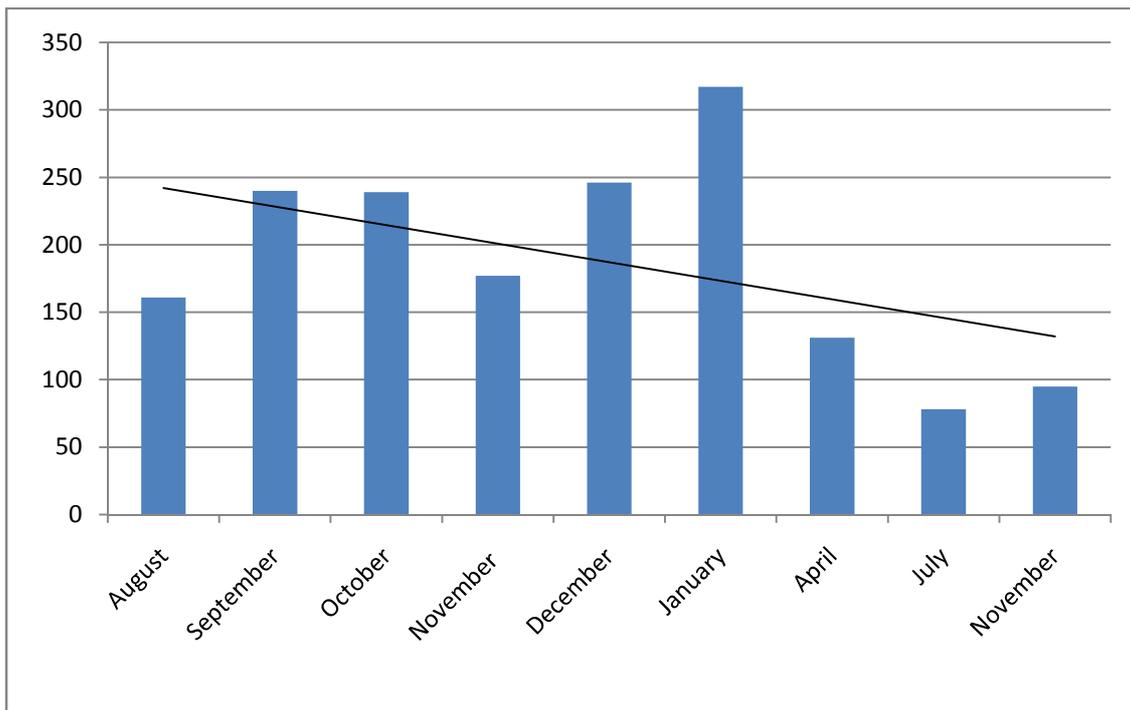
Table.2 Dog Fouling Complaints

2010 /11	2011 /12	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014/2015 (up to 26/02/15)
467	594	712	596	436

Table .2. details the number of service requests logged by the Enforcement and Education Team under the dog fouling category. The Clean up Carlisle Campaign generated a lot of publicity raising the profile of the work carried out by the Enforcement and Education Team, it is not surprising therefore that the complaints received by the Team increased during the Campaign. A better indicator of the success of Clean Up Carlisle would be a reduction in fouling visible on the streets.

It is pleasing that there has been a clear reduction and improvement of dog fouling in the areas monitored by the Education and Enforcement Team. The Team undertakes periodic counts on the same streets throughout the District and records the amount of fouling. In November 2013 the total count of dog fouling was 177, in November 2014 the total was 95, a 47% reduction. This reduction in total dog fouling visible is supported by graph.2.

Graph.2. Enforcement and Education Total Dog Fouling Counts August 2013 to November 2014



Graph.2. represents the total fouling counted during the monitoring period. A trend line confirms a significant trend towards less visible fouling on the streets monitored over the Clean Up Carlisle period. Historically dog fouling complaints and the fouling counts are greater in the winter months, probably due to the dark mornings and nights reducing the peer pressure which makes some dog owners pick up. Along with dog fouling the Education and Enforcement Team have been active in educational and enforcement work on littering and fly tipping. The case studies in section 3 and the number of fixed penalty notices issued reflects some of this work.

Table 3 Litter Service Requests to Environmental Health

Litter Complaints				
2010 /11	2011 /12	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014/2015 (up to 26/02/15)
42	70	85	98	65

Although the numbers of complaints have not reduced over the clean up Carlisle period, customer feedback from Council surveys has confirmed a 75% customer satisfaction rate with street cleanliness.

Table.4. Total Fly Capture Fly tipping Data

Total Fly Capture Fly tipping Data			
2010 /11	2011 /12	2012 /13	2013 /14
179	177	205	277

For fly tipping the complaints received during the campaign have risen (Table.4.). However, Table.5. shows (in column 4) a reduction in the amount of waste being picked up by the street cleaning team. There was an error in 2013 Bulky Waste and Street Cleaning figures due to a coding error on street cleaning vehicles containing street cleaning and a fly tipped item (e.g. a sofa or a fridge) as bulky waste. Actual figures are in brackets. The decrease in street cleaning shows that by keeping the streets regularly clean and tidy, people are less likely to drop litter themselves and place it into their own bin or recycling container.

Table.5. Waste Collected by Neighbourhood Services

	Refuse	Bulky Waste	Street Cleaning (including fly-tipping)	TOTAL
April – Dec 12	16,082	308	1647	18,037
April – Dec 13	15,948	826 (430)	1252 (1648)	18,026
April – Dec 14	16,147	342	1517	18,006

5. Education/Love Where You Live

- 5.1** The Enforcement and Education Team have been very proactive over the last two years and have visited many schools to reinforce the ethos of keeping our environment clean.
- 5.2** The Council embraced the Keep Britain Tidy's "Love Where You Live" campaign and has taken this campaign into schools; community groups and used it to generate media interest. One outcome of the Love Where You Live campaign was to have some community legacy at the end of the campaign. It was hoped that members of the community would act as champions and continue activities to encourage positive behaviours after the Enforcement and Education Team had left the area. The legacy from the community champions has been less successful. Although we can find people and groups to work with on initiatives, it is the Enforcement and Education Team who have had to drive the initiatives. Momentum is soon lost when that support is removed.

6.0 Improved Cleansing

- 6.1** The new equipment comprising the 5 Billy goats (for each of the mobile teams), hand blowers and footpath sweepers as well as the improved efficiency provided by the cleaning schedules have transformed and improved the quality of street cleansing; markedly reducing instances of detritus build up and improving the removal of dog fouling, littering and gum in the city centre. There has also been a huge improvement in the cleanliness of footpaths and pavements throughout the city. We are now able to transport the smaller sweepers to Brampton and Longtown and these areas are now included in scheduled programmes of work.
- 6.2** There has been a marked improvement in street cleansing, with the implementation of a blitz on the City Centre which was extended to the surrounding areas. This work will continue until all areas have been cleaned to an acceptable standard. Rural roads have also been included in improved programmes of street sweeping. Seven different types of street cleaning vehicles clean between 51 and 62 miles of streets per day within the District. Since the start of December 2014, a team of litter pickers have been picking up litter from the grass verges between Carlisle and Brampton, Brampton and Longtown, and Longtown to Carlisle.
- 6.3** Programmes of work have been developed for all three large mechanical sweepers and a programme of works has also been implemented for the mobile teams.
- 6.4** The rapid response team, established as part of the Clean up Carlisle project, provides a more reactive and invaluable service to requests from the public for cleansing between scheduled works. Priority is given to higher risk incidents such as dead animals, needles, blood staining, offensive graffiti, dog fouling and removal of fly tipping reported by the enforcement team. About 15 requests per day come through the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system for the rapid response team and are printed off by the team Leader –street cleaning and prioritised accordingly dependant on the zone, ie any requests for zone one –town centre are done with immediate effect this also includes removal of offensive graffiti dog fouling and fly tipping. For 2 months of the year the Rapid Response team are also employed to help with the leaf fall clean up when needed. The Rapid Response Team also help the existing teams where cleaning is difficult due to parked cars.

Asbestos reports are dealt with by Environmental Health in the first instance and removal is carried out by fully trained operatives.

- 6.5** Leaf clearance has been improved this year by providing extra emphasis on streets with lots of trees. Leaf fall is the main concern for street cleaning during October and November. At the end of the leaf fall season, the rapid response team manually removed leaves from between parked cars as it is difficult to get access to these leaves with a mechanical sweeper and parked cars are a particular problem in certain areas. The 636 sweeper that sweeps the city centre on a morning also swept the main roads around the city in an afternoon. This has resulted in no insurance claims relating to leaf clearance. An additional 3 electric blowers which allow easy access to leaves that get blocked between parked cars are on order to improve leaf clearance even further in Autumn 2015.
- 6.6** The majority of street litter bins within the city centre were replaced in 2013. 200 new litter bins have been ordered to replace damaged and plastic bins. The roll out for them to be fitted commenced at the end of January 2015. This includes new litter bins for the town centre with a gold beading rather than a gold transfer as these bins are washed more regularly and the transfer tends to wear off eventually. 10 of the city centre litter bins will also have advertising panels. The current city centre bins will be used to replace other damaged/plastic bins. All of these new bins have ashtrays on the top to improve the amount of cigarette litter.
- 6.7** The efficiency of the street cleaning and rapid response teams have been improved with the purchase of 5 Billy Goats which mechanically remove litter and detritus. Also the purchase of other equipment such as strimmers and blowers has enabled the rapid response team to 'back line' areas maintaining pathways and areas of vegetation that would otherwise be overgrown.

Due to the problems with seagulls and cats ripping the purple sacks and causing a mess with litter on the streets, it was agreed that to address the problem, the council would introduce gull-proof sacks. A decision was made to transfer as many of the 5,600 properties onto bins or euro bins (if flats) and introduce gull-proof sacks to the remaining properties who were unable to have a bin.

The new gull sacks are working well. There were initial problems with some householders just placing out black sacks and not placing them into their gull sack and some householder putting loose waste or multiple carrier bags directly into the gull sacks. Education and awareness raising has been carried out at households where gull sacks were not used properly or not being used at all. The number of properties not using gull sacks has now dramatically reduced and loose waste is no longer a problem due to education. Smaller 90 litre gull sacks (standard is 160 litre) are now available for elderly residents who request them or other householder who do not create as much waste. They can also be used for waste audits.

The aims of replacing the purple sacks to gull sack project have met overall savings, costs and improvements to the cleanliness of these streets.

- 6.8** All crews attended discussions and training in early January 2015 which included the importance of returning containers after collection and picking up any litter they drop or that is laying in the street. A design improvement was made in May 2014 to the plastic and card bags which now include longer handles so that both handles can be held in one hand to avoid the bags tipping when being handled by the customer and crews and a T-shape velcro to provide easier fastening for the customer and to avoid the bags blowing open and the contents blowing all over the streets in windy weather.

When customers ring in to request green bags or green boxes, they are being reminded to squash plastic and flatten card to avoid over-filling the plastic and card bags which will result in less recycling being blown onto the streets. Box hats for green boxes are now free of charge therefore there has been a larger demand for them over the last few months which will result in less paper, cans and broken glass being blown onto the streets. A further reminder will be going out with the calendars in mid February 2015.

7. Succession planning

- 7.1** 80% of the Clean Up Carlisle money has gone on improved mechanisation and street cleaning. The remaining 20% (approximately £32,000 per year) was spent on increasing working hours and educational materials and programmes within enforcement and education. By budget management the full time equivalent (FTE) of one of the Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers have been secured so this post will remain full time after the finance from Clean Up Carlisle has finished.

The extra money available for education has been invaluable in kick starting a cleaner Carlisle. One significant high profile campaign was the Love Where You Live posters on the back of the Council vehicles. This project cost approximately £2,000 for both the artwork and the vehicle fixings. Providing the advertising fixings on the Council's bins is another project funded through Clean Up Carlisle. Although the Enforcement and Education Team will use the advertising space for its promotional work the bin space will also be available for advertising income opportunities for the Council. The branding of Love Where You Live will continue over the next few years.

8. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1** There is a perception that since the Clean up Carlisle campaign started Carlisle is indeed cleaner. The evidence of the reduced dog fouling counts and the reduction in street waste collected by Neighbourhood Services during the campaign would support this perception.
- 8.2** Improvements in mechanisation and street cleaning has made the cleaning process more efficient and effective. Adding the cigarette trays to the waste bins has significantly reduced one principal source of littering in the City Centre.
- 8.3** Enforcement and Education has increased during the campaign with many notable successes. The true success of education and enforcement in changing behaviours over the longer term is difficult to assess but there are indications that it is working – less fouling and less street waste collected.
- 8.4** Some legacy from the Clean Up Carlisle campaign will remain. The joined up working between the three strands of cleanup, enforcement and education will continue, as will the policies and procedures developed within the City Council and with those external partners such as the Police and Riverside. During the Clean Up Carlisle campaign budget management has allowed the continuation of the staffing levels and information and training support for those staff to ensure we can continue to keep up the momentum achieved so far in educating and enforcing the cleanliness of Carlisle. It is the public who own dogs and those that handle litter who have the greatest impact on their environment. Changing these behaviours does require a continuation of the activities started during the campaign. At the start of the campaign highly visible high priority signage was used to great effect with patrols in Botcherby with a noticeable improvement in dog fouling, once the signage and patrols were targeted at other areas fouling again increased in Botcherby. One lesson learnt from the campaign is that the public needs to see, or perceive, the Council is active in tackling unacceptable behaviours.

9. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

9.1

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**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

Deputy Chief Executive –

Economic Development –

Governance –

Local Environment –

Resources -