

Meeting Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Environment & Transport Portfolio Holder's Report –  
Councillor Nigel Christian**

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### **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

Following the success of the campaign last year to reduce fly-tipping at recycling bring sites after Christmas, we were pleased to note a reduction this year in the amount of waste dumped at the recycling sites. However, a number of people continued to deposit their waste illegally which is being followed through by our Civil Enforcement Officers.

Additional signage was installed with cameras operational at a number of the key sites. As a result, the Enforcement Team has so far issued:

- 78 caution questionnaire letters sent to residents requesting further information regarding the investigation into the illegal deposit of waste at the recycling sites. Residents who fail to respond will be invited for formal interview
- Issued 19 fixed penalty notices with fines ranging from £80 - £200. These are for cases where household waste was dumped or where there was clearly no intent to use the recycling bins correctly
- Issued 16 formal warning letters where it was felt the case did not warrant a fine being issued
- A further 95 formal warning letters are in the process of being issued

We have seen an increase in reports of fly-tipping, up by about one-third, for the same period (April to January), the Enforcement Team are continuing to work proactively with Councillors and Parish Councils and making full use of our deployable cameras supported by additional signage to deter and identify those responsible for littering and fly-tipping.

<b>NOTE:</b> April to January 2019-20	642 reports of fly-tipping
April to January 2020-21	865 reports of fly-tipping

Members may also be aware that the Enforcement vehicles are now 100% electric (three vehicles) and displaying very high-profile livery to further raise the profile of the service

and reinforce our commitment to keeping Carlisle clean. From mid-February, this fleet will include a very high-profile and fully electric camera van that will be deployed on key routes to tackle roadside litter.

**Note:** the switch to electric was possible following a 'fleet challenge' where the additional cost of the electric vehicles was made possible from savings from reducing the enforcement fleet from four diesel vehicles to three with no impact on service delivery. Our Fleet Manager is 'applying' the principles of the 'fleet challenge' when considering all future vehicle replacements to ensure there is a robust business case for replacement and when possible (cost / availability / performance /business need) to bring forward vehicle replacements and make the switch to alternative fuels such as electric supporting the Council's wider carbon reduction plans.

The programme of litter picking from the roadside verges is a few weeks behind schedule this year as resources from the Street Cleaning Team have been redeployed to support refuse and recycling collections to ensure that disruption for residents is kept to a minimum. Operational services have not been immune from the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and my special thanks is registered for the fantastic commitment and effort of all our front-line staff for maintaining priority services in very challenging services coping, ensuring our working practices are Covid-safe, managing significant increases in workloads (recycling +20% and refuse +13%) and at the same time managing staff absences due to the pandemic, as well as coping with the usual pressures of adverse winter weather which resulted in services being withdrawn on one day only this year due to the very icy and dangerous conditions on the road and under-foot for our staff.

I am pleased to report that staffing levels are returning to normal and we are now able to re-focus our attention on other service provision. The programme of litter-picking on roadsides will start from March. This activity is high risk with staff working close to high speed traffic and therefore needs to be planned properly with 'traffic management' controls in place to protect staff and other road-users. Street Cleaning staff have however been litter picking on some routes where full 'traffic management' is not needed. Additional resources will be brought in to support this task using the additional funding released by Council this year to support enforcement and clean-up activity.

**NOTE:** staff working on litter picking activity on highway verges need to be competent with relevant training. We bring in additional agency staff to support general street cleaning activity which then allows our smaller team of trained and competent staff to be released to support the work on roadside verges.

Clearly 2020 has not been a typical year but the Enforcement Team continues to build on its successes, providing advice and guidance to residents and business owners and continuing to provide patrols. Since April 2020 the team have issued 47 fixed penalty notices for littering, 4 for dog fouling and 17 fixed penalty for fly-tipping. 29 prosecution cases remain in the Court system awaiting a date but we are pleased to report a very

successful outcome where the offender was fined over £2,100 for two offences of fly-tipping, one at Rockcliffe and the other at Mossband.

**NOTE:** There are currently 29 cases sitting with the Magistrates awaiting action, these range from littering, breaching community protection notices, microchipping and failing to attend an interview.

## **GREEN SPACES**

### **The Swifts**

Site works at the Swifts will commence in early March with the thinning out of some of the wooded areas. Thinning these areas will create gaps within the canopy of densely planted areas and allow more light to penetrate to the ground, encouraging flowering plants and shrubs beneficial to native pollinating insects to flourish.

The next stage of this project will be the planting of new native flowering tree and shrub species in and around the existing wooded areas to increase overall tree cover and improve habitat for a wide range of birds, mammals and insects.

### **Melbourne Park**

The Melbourne Park flood defence scheme is nearing completion. Key footways have been opened and handed back to the City Council allowing better access for people around the park.

## **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

The winter maintenance programme is nearing completion with the team gearing up for the start of the mowing season.

The grounds team continues to support the Bereavement Services team with burials to ensure service continuity.

## **BEREAVEMENT SERVICES**

Government guidance continues to affect the provision of funeral services and we continue to have restrictions in place.

The team's priority remains provision of a meaningful funeral for as many mourners as possible, whilst ensuring the safety of the public and our staff.

Funeral services held at the Crematorium now have the option to be live streamed to enable as many people to be part of the service as possible. This service is being offered free of charge whilst the pandemic restricts access for mourners to the Crematorium.