

For Consideration: Littering and Fly Tipping Review

Committee name	Residents, Education and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee
Officer reporting	Neil Fraser - Residents Services
Papers with report	None
Ward	All

HEADLINES

Following discussion with the Chairman and relevant Cabinet Members, the subject of 'Littering and Fly Tipping' has been suggested as a topic for the Residents, Education and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee's next review. This report provides an introduction to the topic. Members are requested to consider the suggested topic and determine whether to commission a review into the subject.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

- 1. Considers the subject of Littering and Fly Tipping and determines whether these subjects should form the basis of the Committee's next review.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Fly tipping and littering is a major issue, both for residents of Hillingdon and across the UK, and affects residents, wildlife and the wider environment. Reviewing the number of enquiries logged by the Council's call centre, it shows that over the past 12 months, Members and residents have made 17,164 enquiries on these matters, and such issues include fly tipping on Borough highways, fly tipping on Council owned land, drug-related litter, and refuse on street paths and highways.

This report sets out some brief information regarding the subject, as well as some paths that any potential review could take. The following information will be expanded upon in a subsequent scoping report, should the Committee choose to commission the review.

Fly Tipping

Fly tipping is a criminal offense, under section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. For the 2017/18 year, local authorities in England dealt with 998,000 fly-tipping incidents, a slight decrease of 1% from the 1,011,000 reported in 2016/17, following annual increases since 2013/14. The most common place for fly-tipping to occur was on highways, which accounted for almost half (47%) of total incidents in 2017/18, and the most common size category for fly-

tipping incidents in 2017/18 was equivalent to a 'small van load' (33% of total incidents), followed by the equivalent of a 'car boot or less' (28%).

In 2017/18, 34,000 or 4% of total incidents were of 'tipper lorry load' size or larger, similar to 2016/17. For these large fly-tipping incidents, the cost of clearance to local authorities in England in 2017/18 was £12.2 million, compared with £9.9 million in 2016/17. Local authorities carried out 494,000 enforcement actions in 2017/18, an increase of 18,000 actions (4%) from 2016/17. The number of fixed penalty notices issued in 2017/18 was 69,000, up 20% from 2016/17. This is the second most common enforcement action (after investigations), and accounted for 14% of all enforcement actions in 2017/18.

The Committee will recall that at its meeting on 5 November 2018, officers from the Council's ASBET team presented an information report detailing fly tipping within the Borough. At that meeting, it was highlighted that the number of individual fly tipping instances reported to the team in 2018 was close to 1,000. Officers confirmed some of the steps being taken to address fly tipping, and while an improvement had been seen from previous years, officers conceded that the matter remained an issue. Since that meeting, the Council has further invested in additional Street Scene Enforcement capacity.

Littering

The act of leaving litter, whether from a person or a vehicle, could also be determined to be an offense under section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. In Hillingdon, the Fixed Penalty for dropping litter has recently increased from £80 to £100.

Instances of littering and fly tipping can result in a perception that the Borough is untidy or unsightly, and has significant implications for the wellbeing of the environment, including the Borough's wildlife. In 2016, the RSPCA received over 5,000 phone calls about litter-related incidents affecting animals.

For the Council, there will also be a significant cost implication to address such concerns. According to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, in 2016/17 it cost local authorities £682 million, or £29 per household, to keep the nation's streets clean.

During the Great British Spring Clean (3-5 March 2017) spearheaded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) 3,226 items of litter were recorded on mobile phone apps, and included food and food packaging, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, smokers litter, and other items.

Potential Review

If approved, the subject would be further elaborated upon by way of a scoping report. While the scoping report would set out in greater detail the Terms of Reference to any review, as well as avenues of enquiry and potential witnesses, such a review could include exploration into:

- The full scale of the issue, nationally and within Hillingdon
- Causes of littering and fly tipping
- Current and future actions being undertaken to address the issues

- Current enforcement action and fines.
- Impact on the wildlife and the environment as a result of littering and fly tipping
- Best practice and initiatives from other authorities
- National policies and practices that could be adopted by Hillingdon.

A primary focus for this review would be to look at other local authorities and organisations to see if any practices or further actions could be adopted here in Hillingdon.

Implications on related Council policies

A role of the Policy Overview Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

None at this stage, though any subsequent review may make recommendations to Cabinet improve the environment for Hillingdon residents.

Financial Implications

None at this stage. Generally, Committees should seek to ensure any recommendations are cost-effective or save the Council money. However, any early findings or recommendations by the Committee which may result in a call on Council budgets should be discussed at the earliest opportunity by the Chairman with the relevant Cabinet Member and Leader of the Council to assess viability. Such matters would ultimately be determined by Cabinet as part of the Council's broader budget planning process.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.