

STREET SCENE ENFORCEMENT SERVICE REVIEW

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Karl Busch
Responsible Officer: Stuart Noyce, Waste & Transport Manager

Reason for Report: A Review of the Street Scene Enforcement Service has been undertaken over the last twelve months. This report outlines the findings of the review and gives members an opportunity to comment on proposed new ways of working and agree the priorities of the service going forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the PDG reviews the report and updated policy (Appendix A) and feed back any areas of concern or proposed changes to the Cabinet.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Street Scene Enforcement Service is a frontline service which works throughout the District ensuring cleanliness and attractiveness of our public realm through both education and enforcement.

Priority 4: ENVIRONMENT - Aim 3: Protect the natural environment.

Financial Implications:

A change in the working practices of the team will reduce the number of vehicles required from four to three. This equates to annual saving of £3,510 per annum.

Legal Implications:

The updated policy enables the service to enforce the following acts:

Traffic Management Act 2004, s82

Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978 s3

Environmental Protection Act 1990 s149(1)

Animal Welfare Act 2006

Animal Welfare Act 1995

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Street Scene Enforcement Service has undertaken an internal review of its current working practices. It was completed over a twelve month period by both staff and management. The team consists of One Manager (1 FTE), Four District Officers (3.8 FTEs), Two Administration Assistants (0.5 FTE) and One Administration Apprentice (0.5 FTE). The admin support team is shared with other Street Scene Service functions such as waste thus why only a total of 1FTE is charged to this service.

1.2 The review had three objectives:

- 1) Identifying smarter working practices which could help deliver efficiencies for the Council.
- 2) Ensure that its priorities beyond non statutory work match those of members.
- 3) Review of current policies and IT systems.

1.3 The team has been through a period of instability and change in recent years due to multiple management restructures and changes to the Councils responsibilities. An example is Devon County Council taking back responsibility for its On Street Parking

Enforcement. It was decided that with the services move to its new depot, an expected period of stability and the need to deliver efficiencies for the 2017/18 budget that 2016 would be an ideal time to review the services current working practices which had remained unchanged for some time.

2.0 Current Functions

2.1 The duties currently carried out by the service are outlined below. They can be grouped broadly into three categories:

Statutory – The authority has a legal duty to undertake this activity. This includes: Stray dogs; Dangerous Dogs; Fly tipping investigations; Abandoned Vehicle Removal.

Mandatory – Activity which if not undertaken could lead to a loss of income, service disruption or reputational damage for the authority. This includes: Car Parking Enforcement; Trade Waste Enforcement; Environmental crime investigation; Travel; HR activities; paperwork;

Discretionary – activity which the authority can to some extent choose how much or little it wants to do. This includes: Litter patrols; Dog Fouling Patrols; Cleansing Inspections; Compulsory Recycling; microchipping events.

3.0 Street Scene Enforcement Policy

3.1 During the review it was identified that some policies used were in need of review and updating. All policies have now been updated and included within one policy document. The detailed policy document can be found in Appendix A. The following policies are included within the document.

Section 1	Civil Parking Enforcement Discretion Policy
Section 2	Fixed Penalty Policy
Section 3	Fly Tipping Policy
Section 4	Compulsory Recycling Policy
Section 5	Abandon Vehicles Policy
Section 6	Stray Dog Policy
Section 7	Microchipping Policy
Section 8	Collar and Tag Policy

4.0 District Officer Working Pattern

4.1 The current working pattern for the District Officers in the service has been used for some time. Each full time officer is contracted to work 37 hours per week. This is worked over five days (Mon-Fri, 7.4 hours per day) and each officer also works six hours on a Saturday, once every four weeks on car parking duties.

4.2 A revised working pattern has been developed by management and staff during the review and will be introduced from 3rd April 2017. Under the new working pattern, officers will work four of six days (Mon – Sat) on a rota basis (9.25 hour days). The new rota is set out in Appendix B.

4.3 This new working pattern means there will be three officers working on each day. This will reduce the number of vans needed in the service by one. The savings from this reduction (includes vehicle purchase, maintenance, tax and insurance) are £3,510 per annum. A reduction in traveling mileage and thus fuel is hard to estimate at this time so will be reviewed after one year.

- 4.4 In addition to the financial benefits, the new work pattern will create other benefits. The period covered on Saturdays (increased from six hours to nine hours) will deliver more parking enforcement capacity on the busiest day which could protect parking income further. A move away from the traditional 9am-5pm working day will allow officers to undertake patrols (such as dog fouling) at earlier or later times. It will also give officers the ability to communicate with residents outside of traditional office hours if the resident is not available during the working day/week.
- 4.5 Due to the nature of the district, District Officers currently spend large parts of the day driving to and from site. The district is currently patrolled by three of the officers (District Split into three) which allowed the fourth to undertake either project work, such as compulsory recycling, be on annual leave or act as their rest day. The new working pattern will split the district into two areas, north and south (See Appendix C). Each area will have two officers assigned to it. This will allow officers to build up knowledge and history of ongoing issues, build local relationships such as local Council clerks and provide cover. On each week day, each area will have one officer assigned to it and the third officer will undertake project work. By each officer only traveling to and from site four times a week rather than five times a week, less time should be lost from travelling.

5.0 District Officers Activity

- 5.1 At present the activity for the District Officer Team is monitored by manual timesheets that are submitted by the officers at the end of each week. The summary of time spent on each activity for the past twelve months can be seen in Appendix D.
- 5.2 The District Officers aim to be out in the District as much as possible but some of the work requests that come in cannot be opened on their devices while on site. As the current IT system has limited reporting functions, such as which Officer has been allocated which requests it takes a long time to calculate accurate amount of time for each type of activity.
- 5.3 If the new IT systems that are currently being considered (see section 6) are introduced, then all work requests will be fed direct into the new system and then the admin team can allocate the work out directly to the District Officers mobile devices while on site. This new system will also have built in time recording, saving time from District Officers not recording time sheets and reports can then be run direct from the system.
- 5.4 If the amount of time spent on statutory and mandatory duties remains unchanged this leaves approximately 300 hours per quarter to be allocated to discretionary duties. This time allocation has previously been officer led but it is proposed that going forward this time is allocation by members and its outcomes reported back to this PDG. This will allow members to allocate resources to their perceived issues and priorities.
- 5.5 The table below is a suggested allocation of time for discretionary duties for the first six months of 2017/18 but welcome feedback from members of the PDG.

Duties	Allocation of Remaining Time	Duties	Allocation of Remaining Time
Compulsory Recycling	40%	Condition Survey of Litter/Dog Bins	10%
Cleansing Inspections	10%	Dog Fouling Patrols	20%
Litter Patrols	20%		

6.0 IT Systems

Work Flow Recording & Allocating System

- 6.1 Work requests from the public for the team are recorded on the corporate CRM system. Through the review it was identified that the current CRM system is not suitable for the District Officers who are out on site for the majority of the time. Information that comes into Customer First cannot always be communicated to the District Officers so is sent to Street Scene Services Admin team who then in turn try to contact the District Officers. This is often inefficient and could delay the dealing with requests. The recording and reporting of information from the system (e.g. Fly tipping information) is often not suitable and not easy to analyse.
- 6.2 Working with IT, a system that is already being used by Environmental Health has been identified that will enable the service to carry out better mobile working. This should reduce paper usage, duplication of data entry and deliver a more efficient way of reporting and assigning work to the District Officers. This new system will develop more opportunities for customers to “self-serve” and develop the content of the website to increase customer online contact and move customer contact away from face to face and telephone. The introduction of the new system will require some existing staff time to implement but the overall on-going cost should be similar to the current system.

Parking Enforcement System

- 6.3 The current system used for off street car parking enforcement was inherited from DCC in 2008. At present the District Officers patrol all MDDC pay & display car parks on a daily basis and the amenity car parks monthly. The current hand held devices that are used are no longer supported by the manufacturer for the software or hardware, so any repairs or updates would come at a cost. There are no GPS facilities on the hand held devices or panic alarm facility. District Officers currently need to come back to the office at the end of each day to download all Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) issued throughout the day. This means if a member of the public calls into pay or challenge the PCN on the day of issue the Council cannot process this as there is no information in the back office system until the download.
- 6.4 A new parking enforcement software system has been jointly procured with other Devon authorities in line with the Councils procurement plan. The new system that will be introduced in quarter one of 2017/18 will enable the customers to view their PCN's online to challenge or pay. It will also allow the customer to purchase virtual permits. The permit will be registered to the vehicle and will not require window permits. This should save on paper, postage and admin time.
- 6.5 The new system will also allow the District Officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for environmental crime such as littering on the devices.
- 6.6 The system works in real time and will download information securely straight to the cloud. Meaning any PCN and FPN issued by the District Officers will be visible to the members of the public straight away. The members of the public can then view all the details of the notice that has been issued including all pictures taken so they can then pay online or make a challenge online.

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1 That the PDG reviews the report and updated policy (Appendix A) and feed back any areas of concern or proposed changes to the Cabinet.

Contact for more Information: Jan Norman, Environment and Enforcement Manager Ext.4601

Circulation of the Report: Cllr Karl Busch, Management Team