

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Chairman of OSC T&F Group - Councillor Terry Jermy

To: Overview & Scrutiny 31 January 2019

Author: Sarah Simpson – Contract & Compliance Team Leader; Riana Rudland – Breckland Place Manager

Subject: Findings from the OSC Task & Finish Group – Impact of Fly-tipping

Purpose: To inform the Commission of the findings from the Task & Finish Group.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That Members note the contents of the report and the findings of the task and finish group.
- 2) That Members help promote the Fly-tipping campaign as set out in Appendix A

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Commission requested on the 12 July 2018 to form a Task & Finish Group to consider ways on educating residents and to look at campaigns with schools to encourage re-cycling.
- 1.2 The Group met on three occasions during the autumn of 2018 considering the following Terms of Reference:
 - Determine the present situation with regard to fly-tipping across Breckland and consider hot spot areas;
 - Explore opportunities to reduce fly-tipping from best practice within other local authorities;
 - Provide recommendations where possible for intervention to reduce the number of fly-tipping incidents.
- 1.3 The Head of Waste from Norfolk County Council (NCC) attended the meetings giving detail on the County's approach to fly-tipping and that a county-wide campaign would be introduced early 2019. Further detail on the Norfolk campaigns can be found in Appendix A. Officers were able to confirm that all Councils across Norfolk were working together to tackle fly-tipping and that the materials being used for the county wide campaign had been based on best practice in other counties. Members also learnt that the Norfolk Waste Enforcement Group (NWEAG) had been tasked with increased activity and sharing of best practice around enforcement of fly-tipping and that a Breckland officer is a member of this group. Officers presented figures on the numbers of reported fly tips since the change of policy at Recycling Centres had come into force. This was then compared with the same period last year. The figures highlighted an initial spike in reported fly tips but that this had fallen back down to expected levels.

NCC discussed the actual changes in policy relating to Recycling Centres and it was agreed that this may not be fully understood by the public.

Members also learned of the Norfolk wide 'SCRAP' campaign highlighting peoples responsibilities associated with disposing of their waste. They discussed helpful information for residents about their duty of care and the questions they should be asking when having waste removed from their premises.

- 1.4 Members were presented with maps generated by Breckland Councils Environmental services software which showed a geographical overview of fly-tipping 'hot-spots' throughout Breckland. The new software was able to show Members data that had been broken down to street level within Market Towns which proved useful local information for ward members. It was suggested that the District wide information could be shared quarterly with the Overview & Scrutiny Commission. An example of the data shared with members can be found in Appendix B.
- 1.5 Members received a presentation from the Countryside Land Alliance (CLA) on the issues they experienced with fly-tipping on private land. The CLA had devised a five-point plan to tackle the blight of fly-tipping and were using it as a lobbying document with Local Authorities across the Country. A copy of the 5 point plan can be found at Appendix C.
- 1.6 Members learnt that there was a corporate approach to enforcement that covered a number of services across the Authority and heard about some of the tools of enforcement that could be used. For example, members were informed of a success approach to a fly-tipping hotspot in Watton where the approach had been to use posters and visual aids in the vicinity to educate residents on the potential penalties they could face for fly-tipping. In other cases the Council was able to issue warning letters or perform interviews under caution. In a cited case in Thetford, an individual had been interviewed under caution and confessed to the offence, they then rectified it by cleaning up the fly tip and issued an apology to the landowner. Members were made aware that the process to take forward a prosecution is complex and that evidence needs to be robust in order to satisfy the courts whilst being mindful that the actions of the Council should be proportionate to the offence. Members were informed of other powers which the Council hold in terms of the ability to issue fixed penalty notices, warning letters, clean up notices, Community Protection Notices etc. They also discussed cases where CCTV had been used, and where the installation of additional signage in hot spot sites had had the desired outcome.
- 1.7 Members welcomed the information which had been provided by Officers and agreed that further promotion of the work of the team could be supported by Ward Members. Officers presented a communications plan to the group which set out a range of actions which would be completed during 2019 to help combat fly-tipping. This was supported by Members and a copy can be found in Appendix D.
- 1.8 Members were informed of new processes which the team had been working on to assist residents with reporting fly tips. One of the examples used was the 'report a fly tip' function on the website which had been improved to allow residents to upload photos and further information, as well as map locations to make locating and dealing with the fly tip more efficient but also allowing the resident to receive feedback on their report in live time. This is currently being rolled out and Members were asked to use the function and provide feedback to Officers for potential improvements. The team reports that they had increased the speed at which fly tips were responded to, in one instance it was removed within 20-minutes of being reported. The functionality also allows Officers to direct resources where there is believed to be evidence which could be used to pursue an individual for the offence.

2.0 **OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 The report is for information for Members to note the contents of the report.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 By working in collaboration across Authorities and supporting the Norfolk County Council 'SCRAP' Campaign will reduce the fly-tipping across the District.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 Working in collaboration across Authorities will improve the Environmental impact fly-tipping has across the District.

5.2 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 Supporting Breckland to develop and thrive; Providing the right services in the right way at the right time.

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All Wards

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 CLA - Countryside Land Alliance
NCC – Norfolk County Council
NWEG - Norfolk Waste Enforcement Group

Background papers:- N/A

Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post: Sarah Simpson – Contract & Compliance Team Leader
Telephone Number: 01362 656201
Email: sarah.simpson@breckland.gov.uk

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Breckland Fly-tip Briefing January 2019
Appendix B Maps
Appendix C CLA Fly-Tipping Plan
Appendix D Approach to Fly-tipping Communications