

Extract of the Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 September 2008.

57. Litter Update

The Chairman welcomed the Environmental Services Manager, Mr Malcolm Wells, the Street Scene Manager, Mr David Hitchings and the Waste Management Education Officer, Ms Alison Sollis to the meeting. Following a brief introduction from the witnesses regarding the initiatives to prevent littering, the Committee discussed the following topics:

- Street litter signage, highlighting the importance of appropriate positioning;
- Problems with litter on railway land. Following the initial work undertaken by Clean Kent, officers had been placing pressure on the various railway authorities to clear the litter from their land;
- The damage caused by the high power cleaning jets when used to clean pavements to the substructure of block paving laid on sand. Mr Wells highlighted that this was a national problem but that officers were investigating alternative methods;
- The Education Officer's work in schools to discourage littering included initiatives such as, 'Litter and You', 'Street Wise' and litter picks;
- Enforcement with regard to under 16s. This highlighted that Head Teachers had been supportive in dealing with repeat offenders;
- Offenders litter picking in Maidstone as part of the Community Payback scheme; and
- Missing bins from Mote Park following the Radio One Big Weekend. Members requested that this be addressed.

Members suggested the following ideas:

- The possibility of schools using litter picking as a form of detention. However, Members agreed against this as it may conjure up negative associations and instead students should be encouraged to take pride in their environment;
- The possibility of creating a schools littering league table, displaying the total weight of the litter collected from outside each school in a week. However, it was felt that the results may be disputed given the close proximity of some schools to each other;
- Encouraging schools to get involved with litter picking by offering incentives such as a league table shield, financial benefits or passes for leisure activities; and
- The Council undertake a time-limited period of zero tolerance and give on spot fines to individuals who litter cigarette butts.

The Chairmen thanked the officers for attending.

The Web cast from this session is available at <http://clients.westminster-digital.co.uk/maidstone/archive.aspx> (00.06.00 to 01.10.00).

Resolved: That

- a) Officers produce and submit to the Committee a report on the success of enforcement with regard to litter;
- b) Officers investigate and replace any missing bins from Mote Park;
- c) Investigate the possibility of providing incentives to encourage schools to litter pick, such as financial benefits, free access to leisure services or a league table of amount of litter collected; and
- d) The Council undertake a well publicised time-limited period of zero tolerance and give on the spot fines to individuals who litter cigarette butts