Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	Tuesday 20 September 2016
Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?	**Yes**

Fly tipping Performance

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing and Environment Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Lead Officer and Report Author	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Classification	Public
Wards affected	No

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:
1. That the Committee notes the contents of this report relating to the fly tipping performance for Quarter 1 of 2016/17; and
2. All Members are invited to a workshop to demonstrate the mobile solution used to report and manage fly tipping and other responsive services.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:
• Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – Tackling fly tipping through enforcement action wherever possible and ensuring it is removed within two working days to reduce the detrimental impact on the environment

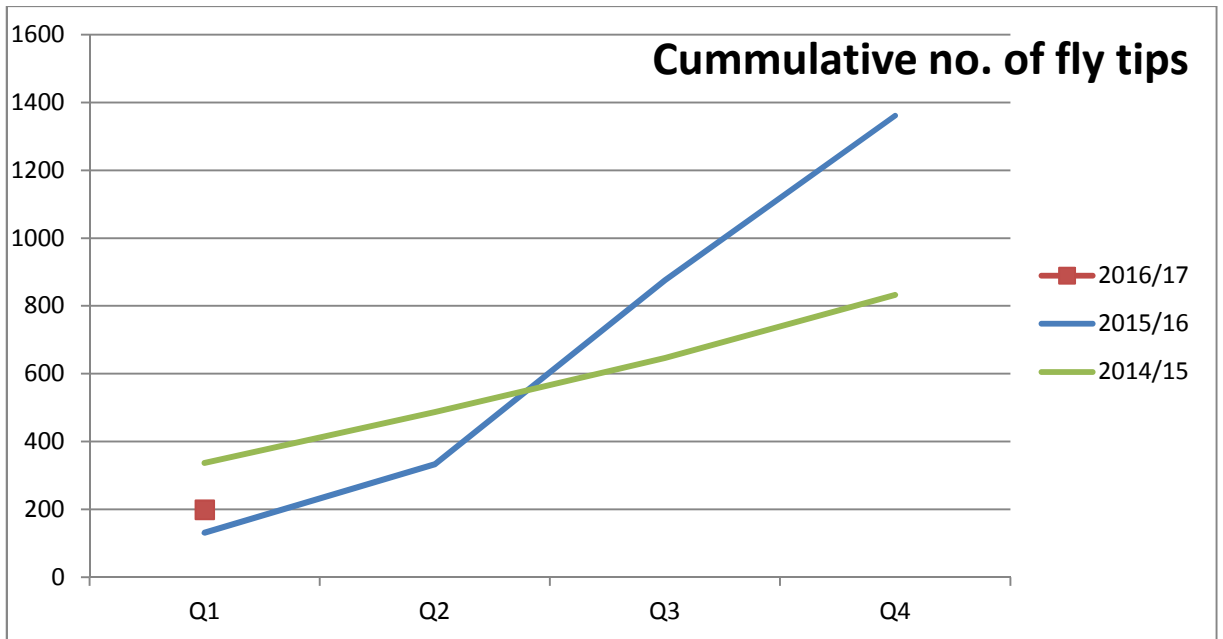| Timetable	
Meeting	*Date*
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	20 September 2016

Fly tipping Performance
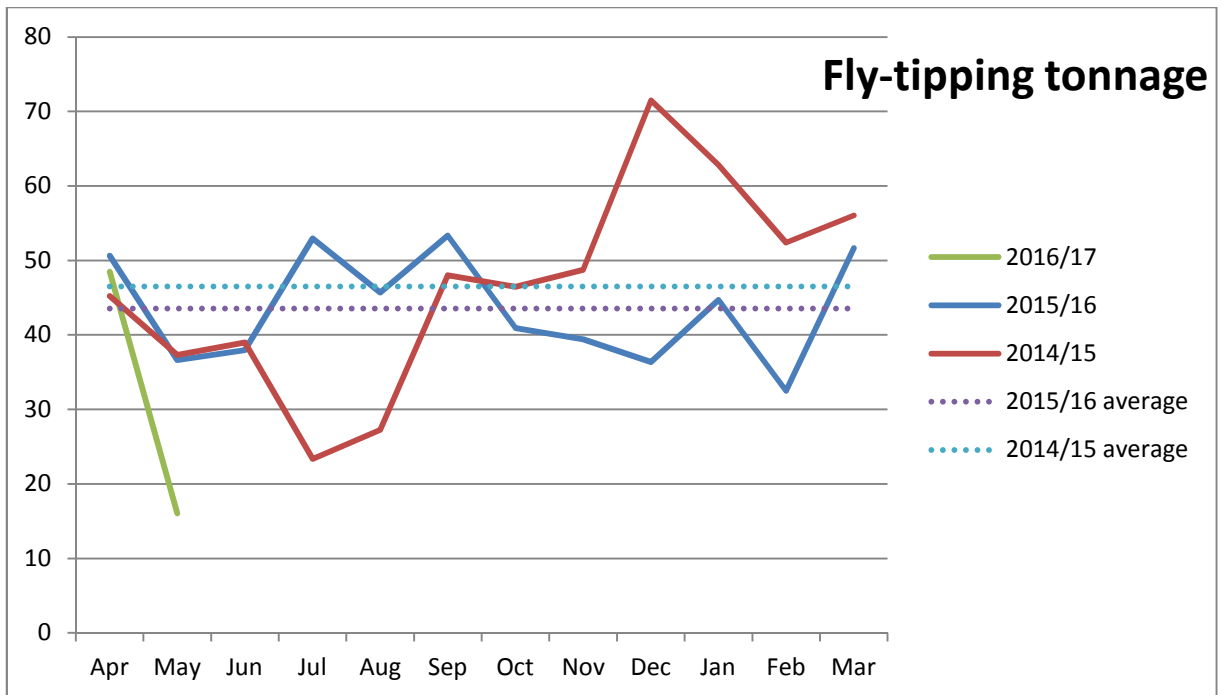
1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Quarter 1 2016/17 performance report which was submitted to Policy and Resources Committee contained information relating to the number of fly tips and the percentage removed within two working days.

1.2 The Committee raised concerns about the accuracy of this information due to the number of fly tips being lower than expected and the ability for residents to report them to the Council easily.

1.3 This report for the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee provides some context to the information presented to Policy and Resources for them to consider.
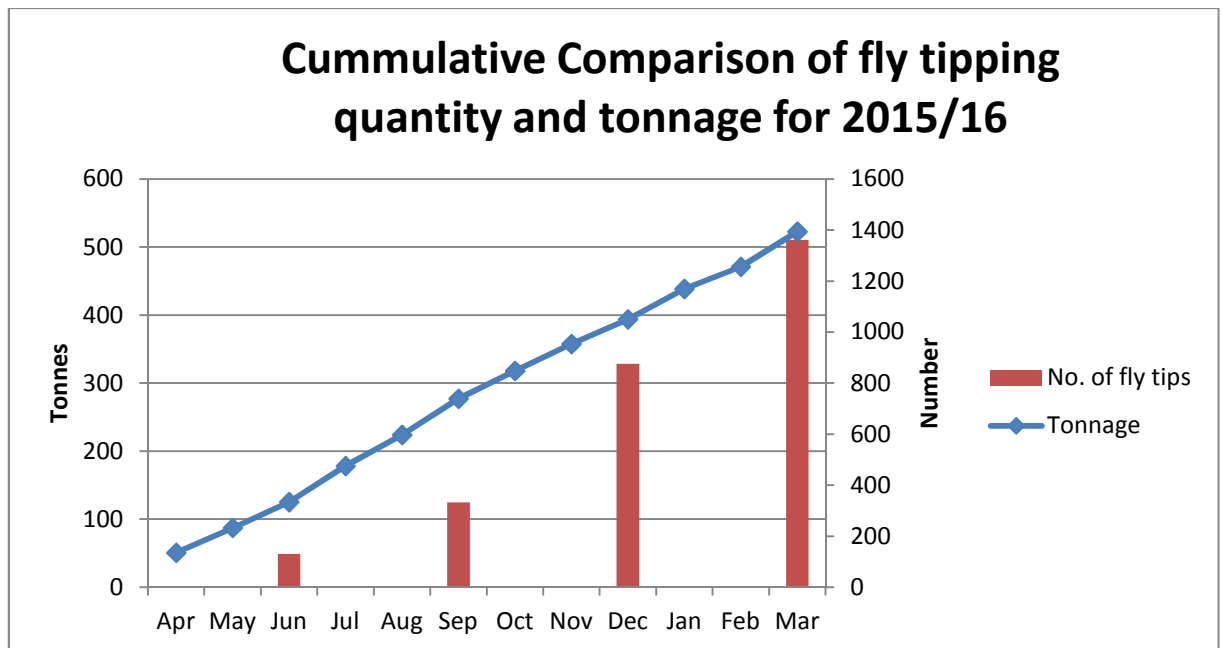
2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Fly tipping, the illegal dumping of waste, is a criminal offense which has a significant detrimental impact on the environment.

2.2 In Quarter 1 of 2016/17, there were 199 fly tips reported on the highway which Maidstone Borough Council has the responsibility for removing. Of these, 194 were cleared within two working days.

2.3 This information is captured through the Council's mobile technology solution which enables residents to report fly tipping online along with a number of other service requests including dog fouling, littering and abandoned vehicles.

2.4 The "Mobile Worker" system has significantly improved the information captured by the individual reporting the fly tip as well as enabling interrogation of the data by the Cleansing Team. It also enables fly tips which are removed by operatives before a resident reports them, to be recorded by the operative. Previously these would not have been recorded.

2.5 The system is designed to reduce the number of duplicate reports as residents are able to see previous reports and prevents reports being made on private land, offering residents the option to report these to Environmental Enforcement for investigation.

2.6 The graph below shows the number of fly tips reported over the past 2 years on the highway, and does not include private land. This shows that the number of fly tips reported in Quarter 1 of 2016/17 was higher than the same time last year, but was significantly lower than 2014/15.

Cummulative no. of fly tips

2.7 The tonnage of fly tipping collected is also shown below and indicates that in 2015/16 there was a 6% decline in tonnage collected compared with the previous year.

Fly-tipping tonnage

2.8 Due to the varying scale of fly tips, the tonnage rarely corresponds to the number collected. This can be seen in the graph below which shows the data for 2015/16.

Cummulative Comparison of fly tipping quantity and tonnage for 2015/16

Legend: No. of fly tips; Tonnage

2.9   The Council is required to capture and submit data relating to the size and location of fly tips to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

2.10 The breakdown of the this information shows that in Quarter 1 the majority of waste, 41%, was classed as "Other household waste" which is typically household waste not contained in black sacks such as mattresses or furniture. In addition 16% of fly tips were black sacks of household waste, meaning a total of over 50% of waste originated from households.

2.11 The Mobile Worker system has greatly improved the ability to interrogate and monitor responsive requests. Data preceding the implementation of this system was captured on paper records and included duplicates and reports on private land. This made it very difficult to interrogate and identify fly tipping hotspots.

2.12 It is recommended that a workshop is held with Members to fully demonstrate the Mobile Worker system and provide further reassurance about the data captured.

2.13 There have been some concerns about the private land exclusion on the system as it is difficult for residents to appreciate the different responsibilities for street scene issues. Further work is being undertaken to make the online form as clear as possible about waste on private land and ensure the Environmental Enforcement Team are able to respond to these.

2.14 It is clear that the visual appeal of the street scene is reliant on a number of stakeholders to play their part including Kent Highways, private land owners, landlords, housing trusts as well as Maidstone Borough Council.

2.15 Unfortunately the Council does not have the resources to remove fly tipping or waste accumulations from private land and therefore there is a requirement for a clear distinction between what action we can take in respect to cleansing and enforcement.

2.16 Whilst the Mobile Worker system has improved the back office management of the service and improved the transfer of information from residents to the frontline workforce, it is accepted that there are other platforms which offer a simpler customer experience.

2.17 Littergram, a privately developed App, was launched earlier this year and has been promoted by a number of authorities including the Kent Resource Partnership as part of the Love Kent Hate Litter campaign.

2.18 This app offers the customer a simpler way to report littering and fly tipping and for authorities who do not have an integrated back-office system, the app provides a method for data to be captured. However there are some constraints with the App, particularly with the improvements Maidstone's system has already delivered.

2.19 The main issue is that the App emails the information to the Council which means the data is not recorded within Maidstone's system and has to be manually assigned to the appropriate operative or would need to be re-reported using Maidstone's website. It also does not differentiate between issues on private or public land meaning it may provide unrealistic expectations to the person reporting the issue that the Council will remove the waste.

2.20 Operating two systems is not practical and will reduce the team's ability to respond quickly and efficiently. Whilst the App may reduce the time taken for the resident to report the issue by a minute or two, this is significantly outweighed by the increase in time it takes to be allocated and assigned to an operative and therefore ultimately the time taken to clear the waste.

2.21 The Council is currently exploring the possibility of integrating the Littergram App into the Mobile Worker system to enable residents to use it to report issues. In the meantime, Littergram users have been advised to report any issues through Maidstone's website so action can be taken.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 The Committee could note the information provided to them regarding the Quarter 1 fly tipping performance and agree that a Members' workshop is arranged to demonstrate the Mobile Worker system.

3.2 Alternatively the Committee could decide that further information is required.

3.3 The Committee could reject the proposal for a Members' workshop or suggest an alternative option is identified to engage Members with the Mobile Worker technology solution.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided relating to the Quarter 1 performance for fly tipping. This information is captured through the Mobile Worker system, which is significantly more accurate than the paper based system previously used.

4.2 The data presented relates to actual fly tips which were reported and removed from public land during Quarter 1 of 2016/17.

4.3 Given that the Mobile Worker system is relatively new and has undergone a number of improvements since it was first implemented, it is recommended that a Members' workshop is held to demonstrate the capabilities of the system and how it is being used by the workforce. This will provide reassurance to Member's about the system and enable them to provide feedback.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 Feedback from the Policy and Resources Committee in July indicated a concern about the level of fly tipping in Maidstone as well as the accuracy of the data captured through the Council's website.

5.2 It was felt that the Quarter 1 performance for 2016/17 was not representative of perception of fly tipping in the Borough and that it is a bigger problem that the data suggested.

5.3 In addition the Committee raised questions about the reporting function and improvements which would enable more residents to report problems more easily.

5.4 The Street Cleaning Team have been trialling the use of Littergram, a privately developed App for reporting littering and fly tipping and will continue to explore options with the developer to see how this could be integrated into the Council's existing platform.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 If agreed, a workshop will be organised in October for all Members to demonstrate the Mobile Worker system.

6.2 Quarter 2 performance will be reported at the beginning of October.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Tackling fly tipping through enforcement action wherever possible and ensuring it is removed within two working	Head of Environment and Public Realm

	days to reduce the detrimental impact on the environment	
Risk Management	Failure to manage fly tipping and responsive requests will have a reputational risk for the Council and negatively impact the environment and attractiveness of the Borough. The Mobile Worker system was introduced to ensure that the frontline team can react to issues as swiftly as possible, with customer reports being immediately directed to the cleansing operatives, and ensure the team can be held accountable for their performance. This will reduce the reputational risk to the Council for failing to act to responsive requests and ensure a high standard of cleansing is achieved.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Financial		
Staffing	Use of Littergram without integration into Maidstone's system would require additional admin support.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Legal		
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	No detrimental impact on the protected characteristics of individuals identified.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Environmental/Sustainable Development		
Community Safety		
Human Rights Act		
Procurement		
Asset Management		

8.   REPORT APPENDICES

None

9.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

None