

Briefing Note – Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Environmental and Waste Crime Enforcement

Background

At its meeting on the [17 October 2023](#), the Committee started the review into Environmental and Waste Crime Enforcement.

The scope is attached to this briefing note.

During the discussion, the below suggestions and/or requests were made by the Committee and/or Officers.

- A. To liaise with Medway Council to encourage assistance to voluntary litter picking groups
- B. To review an amended work programme for the annual high speed road cleaning programme
- C. The Provision of contact details (including for housing and housing management associations) to Council Members and Parish Council, to report concerns
- D. Increased Communications on successful enforcement measures
- E. To have an in-depth discussion with the Committee concerning budget pressures and possible opportunities for mitigation
- F. Officer views on the above (see section for further details), and how responsibilities are prioritised
- G. To look at how to make Social Media work for the Council, as part of educating residents about fly-tipping.

In response, the Head of Environmental Services and Public Realm was consulted to provide further information for consideration within each point.

Where further information needed, a **REQUEST** has been included in each section.

A. To liaise with Medway Council to encourage assistance to voluntary litter picking groups

This could be expressed directly by Members, such as through a letter written by the Committee to the relevant Cabinet Member at Medway Council.

B. To review an amended work programme for the annual high speed road cleaning programme

This could be provided in the future, after the work programme is reviewed for the next year.

There is an expense to be considered in undertaking street cleaning, particularly on high speed roads, such as staff time including shift patterns, prioritisation of

tasks, cost and communication with Kent County Council as the highway authority.

C. The Provision of contact details (including housing and housing management associations) to Council Members and Parish Council, to report concerns

These details can be re-circulated to Borough and Parish Councillors, and the Waste Crime team will continue building working relationships with Housing Associations and Management Companies.

REQUEST: For the Committee to highlight any particular areas of concern to the team, such as the DVLA Site on Albion Place?

D. Increased Communications on successful enforcement measures

Requested by the Committee, to include a spotlight on waste crime in the next borough insight magazine, covering litter picking difficulties, households duty of care to the local environment and the updated fixed penalty notice fines.

This could be possible but is dependent in part on the Communications team's availability, as the next Borough Insight Magazine will be sent out in around 5 months.

E. To have an in-depth discussion with the Committee concerning budget pressures and possible opportunities for mitigation

The Waste Crime Team has recently expanded and has strong officers in place. The impetus moving forward will be on how to support that structure efficiently and sustainably, as opposed to solely increasing the budget and/or number of officers (including specific grades) available.

REQUEST: To review the suggestions below.

Areas of support could include:

- Increased presence and coverage on social media, to reach out and educate residents alongside information gathering to identify fly-tippers, and continual improvement of working relationships with relevant organisations (such as HAs).

These could be supported through an additional post, offered on a part-time position, fixed term position, as a secondment opportunity, additional working hours and/or weekend shifts. The other officers within the team could then prioritise their time and resources into other areas, such as enforcement, which should be intelligence based.

- Capital funding to support technology provision

The use of technology supports enforcement activity, but opposing technology is also being developed which impacts the effectiveness of the technology in use.

The Street Cleansing Team have a consistent fund available to support equipment purchases, could a similar fund for the Waste Crime Team be considered?

F. Officer views on the above (see section for further details), and how responsibilities are prioritised

REQUEST: For the Committee to give feedback on

1. How the service prioritises tasks, such as:
 - Engagement
 - Proactive enforcement
 - Fly-tipping (in town centre & rural areas)
 - Communication and Education
 - Individuals Duty of Care to the local environment
2. Improvements to the website on Waste Crime information provided – what would the Committee like to be provided?

Information currently provided includes:

- Reporting Fly Tipping, Litter or an issue in a Park or Open Space

This can be accessed by visiting the MBC Website Street Care and Cleaning page and then choose the relevant webpage from those displayed:

[Street care and cleaning | Maidstone Borough Council](#)

G. To look at how to make Social Media work for the Council, as part of educating residents about fly-tipping.

The Waste Crime Team is currently putting together a case for external funding to support an officer in promoting the Council's Waste Crime presence of social media. This would include engagement with local groups to promote the service generally (such as collection of goods) and the requirements.

There has also been an increase in fly-tippers unknowingly hired by members of the public through social media, particularly for scrap metal, which is a cause of concern. Reviewing how the Council increases its social media presence could reduce fly-tipping.

REQUEST: How does the Committee think its Social Media usage could be improved?

Example of the online reporting function on the Council's Website (littering).

[Home](#) > [Street care and cleaning](#) > Litter, bins and street sweeping > Report Litter

Report Litter

Depending on where the litter is, specific actions will be taken:

Public or our own land:

- We'll try to clear the litter within 48 hours of it being reported.
- Larger litter or those needing specialist equipment to clear will take longer.

Golding Homes or Kent County Council owned lands:

We'll send your report on to them anonymously to clear.

Network Rail owned land:

We'll phone your report through to them anonymously to clear.

Privately owned land:

We'll send to our Waste Crime Team to investigate further.

[Start >](#)

[Back to top ↑](#)

Register

[Home](#) [Services](#)

Report Some Litter

Where

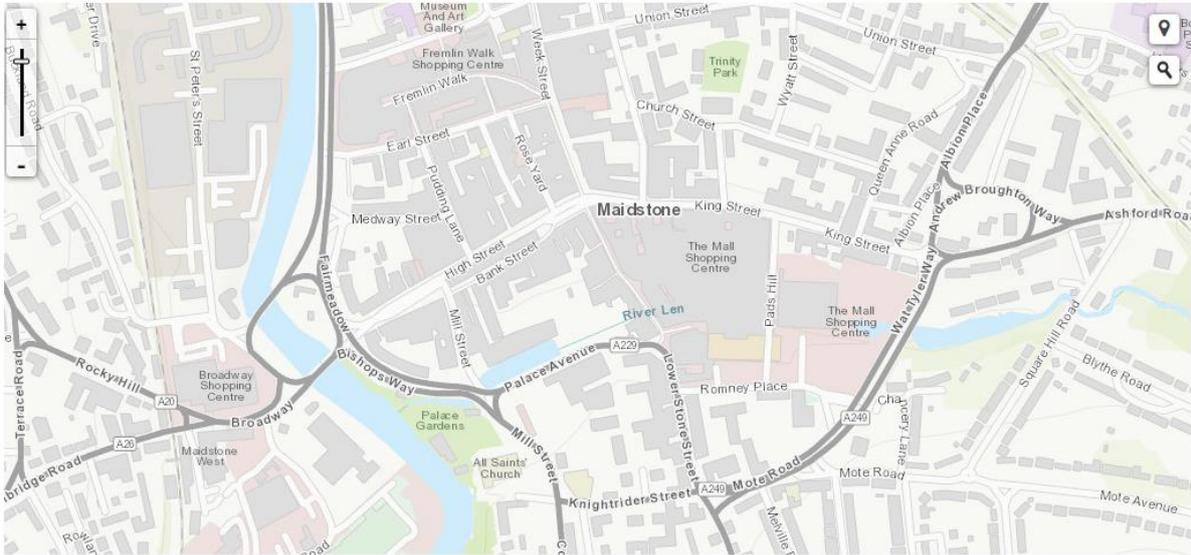
Where's the litter?

- On public land
- On Golding Homes or Kent County Council owned land
- On Network Rail owned land
- On privately owned land
- I don't know

Depending on the option chosen, different information will be displayed, but all options offer the option to select the location on a map before submission.

Using the map

- Pinpoint the litter by tapping or clicking its location
- You can report anywhere within the area outlined in red
- Allowing your device to use your location should make it easier to find



✕ Cancel

✓ Submit