



Scrutiny Committee
5 November 2015

Report from the Chief Operating Officer

For Information

Scrutiny Task Group on Fly-Tipping

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This task group has been requested by the Scrutiny Members in response to communicated concerns from Brent resident's regarding increased fly-tipping levels.
- 1.2 The purpose of the task group is to analyse and understand the borough's knowledge, behaviour and understanding of fly-tipping, and, to review local fly-tipping policies and processes of the council and its partner's.
- 1.3 The review was concerned with reducing the levels of fly-tipping in Brent and ensuring clean and safe environments for Brent resident's; and as a result, a reduction in clean-up and enforcement costs. The review also focused on the borough priorities, such as working in partnership with citizens and building stronger resident's and council relationships.
- 1.4 'Making sure that Brent is an attractive place to live, with a pleasant environment, clean streets, well-cared for parks and green spaces' is an objective within the Council's Borough Plan. Ensuring that fly tipping is reduced and in the long term eradicated is a widely backed element within the context of our "Better Place" priorities.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee consider the contents of the Fly-tipping task group's report.
- 2.2 Members of the Scrutiny Committee approve the 26 recommendations made by the task group and support the development of an action plan across the council and partner organisations to take these forward.
- 2.3 The Scrutiny Committee agree to receive a progress report against the recommendations in six months time.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 With Member consensus on keeping our borough clean and reducing fly tipping, Members of the Scrutiny Committee requested a time-limited task group undertake a focused piece of

work on potential actions to change behaviours through education and reduce fly tipping in Brent.

3.2 The task group set out to assess the issue of fly-tipping in all of its aspects. In doing so the task group looked at the scale of the problem in Brent, how we compare to other authorities, why people fly-tip and what can be done about it. The review focussed on a top-to-bottom analysis of Brent Council's internal and external processes for dealing with fly-tipping. Key areas of focus were agreed during the work of the task group, these included:

- Knowledge
 - Behavioural and sociological research /information from other authorities on successful strategies
 - Why do we have the fly-tipping levels we do?
 - Increasing trends and possible links to the introduction of charging for the green bin (has this increased dumping of garden waste?)
- Education
 - Public communication
 - Education (at schools and through community / cultural groups)
- Enforcement
 - Current systems (to what extent is this proving effective?)
 - Success of enforcements
 - Deterrents (e.g. CCTV)
 - Trade waste and dumping
 - Landlord dumping
- Impact
 - Impact of new 'garden waste collection charge'
 - Impact of Landlord Licensing in reducing the issue
- Publicity
 - Success / failure of previous and current publicity campaigns
 - Analysis of the level of public awareness

3.3 In reviewing the areas outlined above, the task group invited a range of stakeholders to contribute through face-to-face meetings and discussion groups. The task group held four themed discussion groups, which reflected the key areas of the review. Local resident groups were invited to attend, along with officers and partners. A range of visits and meetings were carried out between September and October 2015. This was supported by consultation with other local authorities and government departments. The task group carried out an analysis of data and research relating to fly-tipping.

3.4 **Fly-tipping Task Group Recommendations**

Knowledge

1. The task group recommends that the term "Fly-tipping" should be changed to "Illegal Rubbish Dumping" (IRD) in communications with residents. Residents rarely refer to dumped rubbish as fly-tipping and there is apparently confusion among some residents about what "fly-tipping" actually means.

This is not a good basis on which to communicate with residents about the issue, therefore the task group recommends changing the language we use.

*We recognise that authorities and bodies outside of Brent will, for the time being, probably continue to refer to illegal rubbish dumping as “fly-tipping”, so we accept that we will have to use this language when communicating with them.

2. A named officer/s within the Waste Management service should be responsible for continuous monitoring of new methods to tackle IRD, keeping the council abreast of the latest developments and leading improvement practices; not just from other London boroughs and the UK, but from Europe and the rest of the world. The task group supports the behavioural studies that the council is currently participating in as part of the West London Alliance (WLA) and recommends that it should continue to build on this area of work.
3. Brent Waste Management service should review its internal benchmarking, looking internally at how we monitor our own performance and should report performance quarterly in public. It is recommended that this is communicated to residents and other councillors via the council’s website and Brent Magazine.
4. Brent Waste Management should liaise with neighbouring London boroughs to develop a benchmarking network. The West London Alliance (WLA) would be a good place to start as there are links already established. There should also be additional cross-border networking, feeding into intelligence with the aim of bringing forward more prosecutions for trade waste dumping.

Education

5. Constitutionally empower “Community Guardians” by appointing, through an agreed selection process, figureheads like the chair of Keep Wembley Tidy. Councillors can support this by identifying suitable candidates. These guardians are to be given a profile on the council’s web page, support and resources from the council and Veolia; to tackle illegal rubbish dumping in their appointed locations.

- 5.1. It was identified in the task group’s research that residents often identify with different place names than the wards in which they live. The task group is recommending that the community guardians structure in Brent is mapped in the following village localities and guardians are allocated to these areas:

Wembley	Dudden Hill	Kensal rise
Kenton	Neasden	Stonebridge
Queens Park	Sudbury	Kilburn
Harlesden	Alperton	Willesden

*This list is intended as a guide and residents are of course free to suggest the names for their own campaigns, as well as the areas these campaigns cover. Keep Wembley Tidy covers Wembley Central and Alperton wards, and it is suggested that campaigns should not overlap with one another. This approach should be integrated with the voluntary Community Action Groups.

- 5.2. Guidance and a code of practice for the community guardians and village areas should be drawn up and agreed by officers and residents. This should include action

days and identifying and evidencing illegal rubbish dumping hot spots. Village websites should also be linked to the council's waste management web pages.

- 5.3. It will be a priority of the community guardians, councillors, officers and Veolia to devise and produce a 'Brent Against Rubbish Dumping Charter', which Businesses, HMO Landlords and Estate/Letting Agents will be encouraged to sign up to and display publicly.
- 5.4. It will be a priority of the community guardians, councillors, officers and Veolia to engage with places of worship, youth clubs and sports clubs to engage and promote the Brent Against Rubbish Dumping Charter.
6. The process of reporting IRD should be clear and straightforward, so that both residents and officers know what is to be expected and how and when there will be communication between parties. This should be documented on the council's IRD web page.
7. Brent waste management and Veolia should liaise with Brent education and Brent schools partnership to ensure that there is a strategic anti-illegal rubbish dumping programme going into schools, aimed at both primary school and secondary school level. The programme should be continuous and target 100% of schools on an annual basis, encouraging schools to sign up to the Brent Against Rubbish Dumping Charter. Progress should be reported on the council waste management web page on a quarterly basis.
8. Business liaison should be part of an officer's role; this should include an evaluation of any non-monetary incentives that can be offered. Brent should encourage businesses to sponsor a bin or bins, as a result of which businesses will become certified and will be allowed to display a Brent Council sign stating that they are opposed to IRD.
9. Additional resources should be invested in to the Special Collection Service, so that items are collected sooner and the number of bulky items illegally dumped is reduced. Other alternative options for waste disposal and recycling should be promoted with direct links on the council's web page and offered on the phone when residents call to request Special Collection Services such as Freecycle and Freegle.

Enforcement

10. The task group recommends the formation of a strategic approach between Waste Management Enforcement services and the CCTV service to ensure more use of the current CCTV provision to monitor IRD hotspots. It is understood that this will require collecting evidence and providing a supported case for each camera.

*The task group endorses all of the recommendations on IRD made by the concurrent CCTV task group.
11. Waste management services, specifically trade and Environmental health services, must work together more strategically; sharing information and working on joint visits where there is clear intelligence that there are crosscutting priorities.
12. A strategic approach between Housing Enforcement and Waste Management Enforcement services via Veolia should be formed to ensure that HMO landlords are

educated as to their responsibilities regarding waste disposal for themselves and their tenants.

13. Enlist the support of night workers such as black cab drivers and night bus drivers to use the cleaner Brent app and report any perpetrators of IRD. This could be achieved by contacting taxi firms and Transport for London to explain our case and by asking them to cascade our request down to workers. The council would in turn be able to release positive press stories about these organisations.

14. We will look to pre-capitalise on new fly-tipping legislation, to be brought forward next year, by following a similar model to Ealing Council, as below:

‘The council has teamed up with Kingdom Security to provide dedicated teams of uniformed officers in the borough. Kingdom Security will work with the council’s environmental enforcement officers, providing a high-profile deterrent and issuing £80 fines. Operating initially on a one-year trial basis, Kingdom Security is working at no cost to the council. Instead they will take a share of the fines they issue’.

15. The Council should work with other local authorities and the National Fly-tipping Prevention Group to lobby the Government for more effective enforcement powers.

16. The selective Landlord licensing scheme should be reviewed annually and reported on publicly with statistics on how effective the scheme has been, where it has been effective, areas where the council can strengthen its enforcement and any lessons learnt.

17. The landlord licensing guidance should have more detail in the wording regarding waste & refuse, so that it is harder for landlords to avoid discharging their responsibilities effectively.

❖ The most referenced licensed scheme is that of Newham Council’s. Newham’s licensing condition in respect of waste simply requires that “No refuse shall be kept in the front or rear garden other than in an approved storage container for that purpose”.

18. Leaflets about Brent’s waste disposal policies should be inserted into the guidance so that landlords can give them to tenants. The leaflet/insert scheme should also be rolled out to estate & letting agents.

Impact

19. Further investigation is required into the impact of the garden waste collection charges. Cabinet should review its effectiveness from a cost and efficiency perspective, annually until 2018.

20. Owing to the lack of quantitative data to evidence the effects of the garden waste charge at this stage, officers should review and report the effects of its first year in operation. Officers should devise logical metrics against which it can compare its performance annually until 2018.

21. The number of Brent residents that have signed up, and continue to sign up, to the Garden waste collection service should be more widely publicised. The Brent website and Brent magazine should be the media for this.

Publicity

22. Future publicity about IRD should be continuous, mainly word-of-mouth and not confined to one-off PR campaigns. The last major PR campaign in 2013 involved large, difficult-to-read signs under which rubbish was dumped. It also saw photo opportunities to show the lead member was determined to deal with the issue, but officers confirm that it had little tangible impact on levels of IRD.

23. Officers, councillors and community guardians need to visit relevant local meeting places – whether they be religious meeting places, youth clubs or sports clubs – to pass on the council's messages about IRD and how communities can work with Brent to tackle it.

24. Leafleting campaigns led by the council and voluntary groups should be in multiple languages, appropriate to the socio-dynamics of the local area.

25. Any future communications should also be easy-to-read with no conflicting messages. This should be backed up with targeted local advertising. Brent London Underground and National rail stations are prime locations for such advertising.

26. The Cleaner Brent App requires further publicity, and probably a re-launch, as not enough people are aware it exists. There should be further publicity on the web and in the Brent magazine.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 Budget implications Brent Public Realm
Budget implications Brent Communications Department

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 The following Brent services and partners would be affected by the recommendations made:

- Brent Waste Management Services /Public Realm
- Brent Waste Enforcement Services/Public Realm
- Brent Housing Enforcement Services
- Brent Environmental Health/ and
- Brent Community Safety/Regulatory Services
- Brent Communications Department
- Veolia

Background Papers

Fly-tipping task group Scope and Terms of Reference (September & October 2015)

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