

MEETING:	REGULATORY COMMITTEE
DATE:	SEPTEMBER 2012
TITLE OF REPORT:	REPORT ON ACTIVITY OF COMMUNITY PROTECTION TEAM
REPORT BY:	SHANE HANCOCK, COMMUNITY PROTECTION MANAGER

CLASSIFICATION: Open.

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note the main activities of the Community Protection Team for the period 1st April 2012 – 31st July 2012 (the reporting period).

Recommendation

THAT: the report be received and noted

Key Points Summary

The report provides the Committee with an update on the activities of the Community Protection Team in respect of its key roles in dealing with:

- Fly-tipping
- Other environmental anti-social behaviour – litter, graffiti, fly-posting, & dog fouling
- Abandoned vehicles
- Stray dogs

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options relevant to this information report

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The report provides the Committee with information about the main activities carried out by the Community Protection Team and gives the opportunity for Members to ask for any additional information they require.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Shane Hancock, Community Protection Manager on (01432) 261752

Report on Activity

3 Fly-tipping

- During the reporting period there were 204 incidents of fly-tipping recorded. This compares to 240 in the corresponding period in 2011, representing a 15% reduction. This reflects the continuation of an ongoing reduction over the last 4 years in the number of recorded incidents of fly-tipping. Recording practices have remained unchanged during this period and as such it is felt that this is a true reduction.
- In the reporting period 102 duty of care inspections were carried out, designed to ensure that the producers of commercial waste have appropriate arrangements in place for its correct disposal.
- Operation Bounty has been running throughout this reporting period. This is an operation carried out at household waste sites across the County in response to concerns that significant amounts of commercial waste are being deposited at these sites. This work has led to a large number of users of the sites being challenged when suspected of depositing trade waste and allowed awareness of correct disposal methods to be raised.
- Five (5) Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for failing to produce waste transfer notes when required to do so.
- In April 2012 Dawn Ruth SHURMER who claimed to have given her fly-tipped waste to two unknown men in a van who happened to be passing by and who agreed to dispose of her waste free of charge was convicted for failing to exercise a proper duty of care in respect of the waste. She was fined £100.00 with £100.00 costs awarded.
- Also in April a similar set of circumstances resulted in Stewart John GRIFFITHS being convicted for failing to exercise a proper duty of care when he allowed two unidentified men to take his waste away, waste which was fly-tipped. He was given an absolute discharge, but required to pay £434.00 costs.
- In May Adrian COLLEY, a scrap metal dealer, was convicted on two charges of carrying waste in the course of his business without a licence to do so and on one charge of failing to produce a waste transfer note in respect of the disposal of waste he had picked up in the course of his business. He was fined £100.00 on each charge and required to pay £381.00 costs.
- In June Terence John PRITCHARD was cautioned for fly-tipping trade waste at the household waste site in Hereford and for carrying waste in the course of his business without having a waste carriers licence. This offence was detected as the consequence of Operation Bounty.
- In June Shaun STEELE and Mehran KHEDERHAZEH were cautioned for fly-tipping.
- In July a Timothy Dean STANLEY was convicted at Magistrates Court of dumping waste at three separate locations across the County. He was fined £320.00 with £335.00 costs.
- In July Nicola STANLEY was issued with a written warning in respect of a technical offence of fly-tipping connected to her trade waste.

4. Other environmental anti-social behaviour

- During the reporting period the team recorded and responded to 212 complaints falling into the 'other' category of environmental anti-social behaviour, namely litter, graffiti, fly-posting and dog-fouling.
- In response to these complaints 205 targeted patrols were carried out, 33 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued in respect of litter offences, 6 for dog fouling offences, and one for fly-posting. One written warning in respect of littering was also issued.
- In July Tracey MORRIS was convicted of a litter offence having failed to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice. She was fined £100.00 with £115.00 costs.

5. **Abandoned vehicles**

- During this reporting period 37 reports were received about abandoned vehicles. These were all resolved without the need for seizure.

6. **Stray Dogs**

- In the reporting period a total of 137 dogs were seized as stray. Of the 137 seized 87 were returned to their owner and 50 were re-homed.

Requests for Service

7. In this reporting period the total number of requests for service to the Community Protection Team was 1002 with 95.2% of these being dealt with within the 5 day response target.

Other activity

8. Outside of these reactive matters the Community Protection Team has been involved in the following proactive initiatives between April 2012 and July 2012 –

- Community Dog Warden scheme in Ross-on-Wye - this scheme was launched on 2nd July following a number of public meetings. The initiative was the idea of Councillor Andy Atkinson in response to the ever present problem of a small proportion of dog walkers failing to pick up after their dog has fouled. The scheme is led by the Town Council working in partnership with Herefordshire Council's Community Protection Team. There are currently 8 volunteers, identified by an arm-band, essentially dog walkers who whilst out about act as local 'ambassadors' and challenge and educate irresponsible dog walkers. The desired outcome is responsible behaviour by all dog walkers and a cleaner, better environment free of dog mess.

Where appropriate details of offending dog walkers can be passed to the Community Protection Team for follow up enquiries and it is possible that this could result in the issue of a £80.00 Fixed Penalty Notice. Importantly the information fed back by the volunteers can be used by the Community Protection Team to better target patrols by its own enforcement officers.

The scheme has already attracted interest outside of Ross. The Community Protection Team has had a meeting with Ledbury Town Council and with Leominster Town Council and both areas are looking to roll the scheme out over the next few months.

- Stop the Drop Litter campaign – Whilst this campaign was designed to increase awareness of the ongoing issue of litter there were two specific elements to it. In April/May the focus was on highway litter. At the commencement of the campaign significant quantities of litter were cleared by Amey from some of main arterial routes. The

Community Protection Team then looked to enforce litter offences, particularly litter coming from vehicles. It was always acknowledged that this was going to be difficult due to the limitations of existing legislation, but it nevertheless demonstrated that some action can be taken, rather than the issues ignored. The follow up enquires made in circumstances where a registration number was available largely proved successful with a number of fixed penalties notices being issued. Alongside the enforcement a schools 'poster' competition was run with a good standard of entry; the winning 'design' is now on Amey vehicles, again raising the profile of littering.

In June the campaign specifically addressed the problem of littering in public open spaces. Proactive patrols were carried out at Castle Green, Cathedral Close, Yazor Brook, Aylestone Park, Queenswood, Wilton (Ross-on-Wye), The Grange (Leominster) and Bridge Street (Leominster). The very poor weather during the month had an impact on this in terms of the numbers of people using these open spaces for leisure purposes. Two Fixed penalties issued for littering offences.

Community Impact

- 9 The report provides information about those matters which have an impact on the public, specifically the environment and animal welfare.

Equality and Human Rights

- 10 In its enforcement role the Community Protection Team works to the principles of the councils Enforcement & Prosecution policy which acknowledge equality and human rights issues.

Financial Implications

- 11 There are no direct financial implications regarding the information set out in this report.

Legal Implications

- 12 The Community Protection Teams activities are undertaken within the scope of the relevant legislation and Council policies.

Risk Management

- 13 There are no particular risk management matters associated with the contents of this report.

Consultees

- 14 None

Appendices

- 15 None.

Background Papers

- None identified.