

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

**2 September 2014**

**Report of the Director of Street Scene & Leisure**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 WASTE & STREET SCENE SERVICES UPDATE**

**1.1 DVLA Changes to Taxing of Vehicles**

- 1.1.1 As of 1 October 2014, paper tax discs will no longer need to be displayed on a vehicle windscreen. To drive or keep a vehicle on the road, owners will still need to get their vehicle taxed, and will receive a reminder from the DVLA when the tax is due to expire. Also as of 1 October, when you buy a vehicle any remaining tax will no longer transfer with the vehicle. Instead you will need to get a new tax before you can use the vehicle. Any surplus tax at date of transfer will be refunded to the vehicle's seller once details of the transfer or ownership have been received.
- 1.1.2 The impact of these changes for Local Authorities is expected to be minimal. This is because Waste Collection Authorities have a duty and powers to deal with Abandoned Vehicles, rather than those that are simply untaxed. The DVLA are responsible for dealing with untaxed vehicles, and the Police for uninsured and dangerously parked vehicles.
- 1.1.3 When determining whether or not we consider a vehicle to be "abandoned", the tax status is only one of several criteria that may be taken into account. In addition to the tax status, the condition and roadworthiness of the vehicle, how long it has been in position without moving and whether it contains waste are all part of the assessment in determining whether a vehicle is "abandoned".
- 1.1.4 However, untaxed vehicles remain a source of concern and irritation for private landowners such as Parish & Town Councils, as well as members of the public. Prior to 1 October it is easy to tell if a vehicle is taxed, if the tax disc is displayed in the windscreen. Following 1 October, this will not be possible and may generate additional enquiries to the Waste & Street Scene team.
- 1.1.5 In order to address this issue the DVLA are providing a search facility on their website which enables landowners and members of the public to check if a vehicle is taxed: <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax>. All that is needed is the registration and the make of the vehicle. The result will indicate not only if the vehicle is taxed, but when it expires/expired. If the vehicle is not taxed, the

landowner or member of the public can then report it to the DVLA, also via their website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-untaxed-vehicle>. These facilities will hopefully reduce the number of reports received by Waste & Street Scene Services, where vehicles are not actually abandoned but simply untaxed (or not displaying a tax disc after 1 October).

## **1.2 Love Where You Live**

1.2.1 The LWYL campaign was launched nationally by Keep Britain Tidy in September 2011. The campaign aims to:

- inspire and enable everyone to take action to reduce littering and improve the quality of local places;
- engage with people to change their behaviour and drive local action by fostering pride and understanding;
- raise the profile of the importance of caring for local places to improve individuals' quality of life; and
- encourage, support and bring together Leaders, Government, business, media and civil society to improve the cleanliness of the country.

1.2.2 Since the beginning of the national campaign, this Council has been an ambassador for Keep Britain Tidy, ensuring a wide variety of support in our communities and helping to improve the local environment.

1.2.3 Highways Litter campaign - 'Love Kent, Hate Litter': During this successful Kent-wide campaign that ran throughout June, the Council supported 28 related initiatives. These included Bash the Trash events with the Wateringbury Church Group and Fete Association; the 17<sup>th</sup> Tonbridge Air Scouts; Ditton Cubs, Beavers & Scouts; Brampton Field Residents Association; East Peckham with Kent Police; Snodland Coffee and Chat Group; The Beat Project Trench and Longmead Community Celebrations and Big Tidy Up. Tonbridge Canoe Club received their Gold "Love Where You Live" Award from the Deputy Mayor for their invaluable help during the post-flooding clean up. A radio advert was created for Heart FM and promoted across the county for the whole month. There was a strong social media presence with over 1 million people engaging and interacting with the campaign message.

1.2.4 In July, the Snodland Goes Cleaner group launched the 'Snodland Litter Code for Businesses'. Alan Keeley from Snodland Town Council with support from PCSO Kim Bashford and the Council recruited and signed up 34 businesses in the town. This is in addition to the original scheme already running in Larkfield, East Malling and Ditton, which between them have 25 businesses signed up. In June, the 5 businesses in Twisden Road, East Malling, received their certificates for maintaining 5 star standards outside of their premises consistently over a 6 month period.

1.2.5 In October we will be supporting Keep Britain Tidy as part of their diamond jubilee celebrations in partnership with Waitrose and John Lewis Partnership. The aim is to encourage groups to take part in as many big tidy ups across the country as possible. To mark this event, The Wombles will be coming out of retirement as part of the celebration of the Biggest Big Tidy Up. The Council will be working locally with Waitrose and the East Malling Wombles.

### **1.3 Responsible Dog Ownership**

1.3.1 The Council supported the national 'Big Scoop' campaign jointly with Dogs Trust and Keep Britain Tidy. The Cleaner Borough Team, in partnership with parish councils, Kent Community Wardens, Police Community Support Officers and dog walking groups, visited 10 dog fouling 'hotspot' sites in Snodland, Wrotham, Wouldham, Hildenborough, Larkfield, East Malling, Hadlow, Tonbridge and Burham. On 12 and 13 June, they cleared the area of dog fouling, by 'bagging & flagging', speaking to dog walkers and other park users, handing out free dog bags and badges for supporters and visiting Burham Children's Centre. The areas visited actually had particularly low-levels of dog fouling, averaging just 12 deposits per location. This is a vast improvement based on statistics logged since we first started 'Bag & Flag' initiatives in 2008, with average improvement levels being between 80 and 90% cleaner.

1.3.2 Following The Big Scoop, Leybourne Parish Council specifically asked the Cleaner Borough Team to do a 'Bag & Flag' across the village in August. We collected 62 bags in total which were left in situ for 24 hours, to raise awareness of the problem. The feedback from the public, including many dog walkers, was very positive and supportive of the efforts. We continue to encourage residents to report anyone spotted allowing their dogs to foul and failing to clean up. Any information received will enable us to target patrols and follow up with enforcement action when possible.

1.3.3 The Cleaner Borough Team worked alongside Circle Housing Russet, The Beat Project and the Dogs Trust on 13 August in the Winterfield Estate, East Malling, to promote responsible dog ownership. Circle ran a photographic competition with residents and their pets to raise money for the Dogs Trust. We promoted the 'Yellow Dog' scheme and gave away 11 ribbons for dogs that need space; as well as a large quantity of poo bags. Two members of staff from the Dogs Trust micro-chipped sixteen dogs for free and gave away four discounted neutering vouchers. Twenty residents also took part in a Love Where You Live bash the trash event with Kent Community Warden, Mandy Harris.

1.3.4 We followed the event with another 'Responsible Dog Ownership' morning on 20 August with Wouldham Parish Council. We offered advice on the new dangerous dog legislation; barking; fouling; provided free micro-chipping and neutering vouchers and promoted positive dog behaviour through promotion of the 'Yellow Dog' scheme.

## **1.4 Kent Resource Partnership – Communications Project Group Update**

- 1.4.1 The Kent Resource Partnership (KRP) has provided funding to all Kent districts to enable them to promote resource & recycling messages over the next two years. TMBC will use this funding to promote our recycling services; maximise use of the current services; improve the quality of material collected, reduce the amount of waste in the black bin, and where possible increase income received for the various materials. A detailed programme of initiatives, branded as “Slim Your Bin”, is currently being worked up by officers and updates will be provided to future Advisory Boards.
- 1.4.2 In addition to the district-led communications activities, the KRP Communications Group will be assisting in the delivery of two national campaigns across Kent. The KRP has been instrumental in developing the national campaigns and the groups has had significant input into the messages being developed for them.
- 1.4.3 The “Pledge4plastics” campaign is due to be launched in the Autumn. A toolkit of resources will be made available to local authorities so that they can tailor-make local campaigns and initiatives. The overall thrust of this campaign, rather than focussing on collection methods as originally planned, aims to raise awareness of the different types of plastics that can be recycled. For example, many residents know that they can recycle plastic drinks bottles, but don't know that a wider range of bottles can be recycled, such as bottles for washing up liquid, bleach, shampoo, etc, as well as some types of food containers. This campaign will assist TMBC in promoting our plastic bring site service, which now accepts a wider range of materials than previously.
- 1.4.4 The “Fresher For Longer” campaign is the result of a collaboration between the KRP and Marks & Spencer. A wider range of retailers are looking to adopt the campaign nationally, which will assist TMBC in raising awareness of food waste related issues. This will assist in reducing overall waste arisings from the black bin, and encouraging residents to use the green-lidded bin for any remaining food waste.

## **1.5 Legal Implications**

- 1.5.1 None

## **1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.6.1 The costs associated with these arrangements and initiatives are contained within existing budgets, with some supported by the Kent Resource Partnership and Veolia Environmental Services.

## **1.7 Risk Assessment**

- 1.7.1 The failure to provide effective and efficient front line and high profile services could result in criticism from residents and impinges directly on their view of the Council and their satisfaction with services delivered.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: David Campbell-  
Lenaghan

Robert Styles  
Director of Street Scene & Leisure