

Report of the Bradford West Area Co-ordinator to the meeting of the Bradford West Area Committee to be held on 18th January 2023

R

Subject:

Neighbourhood Wardens and Environmental Enforcement Officers

Summary statement:

This report provides information on the work of the Neighbourhood Wardens and Environmental Enforcement Officers in the Bradford West Area.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

The service works across the many diverse neighbourhoods and communities that make up the Bradford District. This report outlines some of the community engagement and development work that Neighbourhood Wardens carry out in all neighbourhoods, including those suffering from the effects of poverty and deprivation. The work of the service makes a positive contribution to improving the environment, and to making neighbourhoods safer, stronger and more active places to live and work.

David Shepherd
Strategic Director of Place

Portfolio:

Neighbourhoods and Community Safety/
Healthy People and Places

Report Contact: Arshad Mahmood,
Amjad Ishaq.
Phone: 01274 43 2597
E-mail: ash.m@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate/Regeneration and Environment

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides information on the work of the Neighbourhood Wardens and Environmental Enforcement Officers in the Bradford West Area.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Environmental Enforcement Officers deal with waste-related issues affecting the environment and our neighbourhoods. They primarily deal with complaints (known as service requests) received from the public. The types of issues they deal with include:

- Fly tipping
- Rubbish in gardens
- Business waste
- Litter from businesses
- Dog Control Offences
- Deployment of CCTV
- Business and Householder Duty of Care Offences
- Seizure of vehicles involved in fly tipping
- Pro-active enforcement – stop & search
- Pest Control – rats & mice

2.2 There are currently 3 Environmental Enforcement Officers in Bradford West. In addition, the Neighbourhood Warden Team Leader is undertaking environmental enforcement training to further support the team.

2.3 In the last 12 months the total number of service requests dealt with by the Warden and Enforcement Service was 10,437. The number of service requests in Bradford West was 2,788 (27 %). The number of service requests by Ward dealt with over the last 12 months is given on the table below:

Service requests	Ward
Manningham	630
Toller	453
City	862
Heaton	341
Clayton & Fairweather Green	249
Thornton & Allerton	253

2.4 Service requests are allocated to Enforcement Officers via the Council Contact Centre. In addition, there is a dedicated email address for the Environmental Enforcement Team (nsadmin.bradford.gov.uk) where complaints are received and allocated to the Team.

2.5 Once a complaint is received the investigating officer is required to make contact with the complainant to discuss the problem in detail and confirm if a site visit is required. Throughout the investigation the investigating officer should keep the client updated with progress and also provide an update on actions taken at the conclusion of the case – subject to the restrictions placed upon staff by Data Protection regulations.

- 2.6 In addition to dealing with complaints from the public, Enforcement Officers also receive referrals from Neighbourhood Wardens, Councillors, Ward and Assistant Ward Officers and are responsible for undertaking pro-active initiatives such as multi-agency stop & search operations and deploying CCTV at emerging fly tipping hotspots.
- 2.7 Neighbourhood Wardens play a critical role helping to manage the high demand placed upon the Enforcement Officers. Enforcement Officers triage their work and delegate some work to Wardens who are able to do door knocking to speak to residents and promote responsible waste management practices such as raising awareness about recycling, the bulky waste service and using the household waste recycling centres. This approach allows Wardens to focus on engaging with local residents to bring about positive behaviour change without the need for formal enforcement action. It also enables Enforcement Officers to focus their work on more serious cases or where Wardens' interventions are not having the desired outcome.

3.0 Deployment of Neighbourhood Wardens

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Wardens and Environmental Enforcement Officers are managed by a Warden and Environmental Enforcement Manager. In Bradford West this position is currently vacant and recruitment to the post will be imminent. Management cover is being provided by the Neighbourhood Warden Team leader and a Environmental Task Force Senior Enforcement Officer. When the team is fully staffed there are 10 FTE Wardens allocated to Bradford West. Currently there are 8 Wardens and we will be looking to recruit early in the New Year.
- 3.2 Staff are generally deployed on a Ward-basis with dedicated staff given the lead responsibility for a Ward. However, staff deployment can change on a daily basis, depending on the numbers of staff on that day and service demands for the area as a whole.
- 3.3 The desired notional allocation of one Warden per ward is not always possible as the teams may have commitments that require Wardens from other Wards to assist e.g. days of action, community clean ups, gully cleaning or to provide cover for sickness or holiday absences.
- 3.4 Ward Officers and Assistant Ward Officers play an important role working with the Warden and Enforcement Managers, Enforcement Officers and Wardens to help shape deployment and raise issues affecting their Wards, and to ensure the community engagement role of the wardens is balanced with their environmental role.
- 3.5 This locality-based approach to service delivery will not in itself bring about behaviour change. Good local leadership encourages positive behaviours with local communities and it is therefore essential that Wardens and other officers continue to support Members in their community leadership role.

3.6 Community Engagement Work

- 3.7 In addition to tackling environmental issues, the Neighbourhood Wardens have a key role to play in supporting communities and helping to influence behaviour change. Wardens have also continued community engagement work Bradford West. Wardens have supported Gully Cleans in every ward of Bradford West this has involved poster dropping

engaging with residents asking for vehicles to be moved to allow access for the Gully Team and engaging with residents regarding litter issues and organising further litter picks. Every year Wardens have a key role in supporting the Great British Clean up every year, working with local community groups across Bradford West and partners such as local businesses to support local clean-ups. Wardens have also supported a number of consultations event and surveys across Bradford West ensuring local people have a voice and are engaged with local developments and initiatives, such as localities surveys, Active Travel Neighbourhoods proposals, JUMP consultations, Re-cycling initiatives etc. Wardens also supported the successful City of Culture bid by ensuring Lister Mill and surrounding area's environment was clear for the judges visit. Wardens have supported schools across Bradford West providing presentations about re-cycling and talking children to do litter picks around schools. Wardens have been supporting vulnerable local residents by sign posting them to local services such as the Family Hub, Well-being Hub and local community groups. Across Bradford West Wardens have supported the Task Force Team in clearing grot spots and over grown vegetation, engaging with local residents to support sustainability of the area once it has been cleared.

3.8 Enforcement Actions – January 2022 to December 2022

3.9 Over the last year the team dealt with 10,437 service requests. The table below highlights some of the actions by the Enforcement Team in relation to waste offences:

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TAKEN	District Wide	Bradford West
Total Service Requests Received (SRs)	10,437	2,788
Community Protection Warnings (CPW)	891	147
Community Protection Notices (CPN)	238	78
Other Statutory Notices issued	213	69
Fly tipping Fixed penalty Notices (FPNs)	68	21
Other FPNs issued	127	33
Prosecutions & Cautions	14	0
Vehicles seized	8	3

3.10 Fly Tipping - Use of CCTV

3.11 CCTV cameras continue to play a vital role in tackling fly tipping offences. In Bradford West 37 fixed CCTV cameras have been deployed at 19 locations. The team has started to use CCTV to tackle litter from takeaways and cameras have been placed at 2 locations in Bradford West resulting in 85 fines being issued to people for dropping litter from vehicles. In addition, the team also has 15 re-deployable cameras that are agile and can be moved to emerging fly tipping locations.

3.12 The use of re-deployable cameras at rural locations in Bradford West has been very effective at capturing offences at some remote sites. This year 10 fly tipping incidents have been caught using these cameras resulting in one vehicle being seized and further offences being investigated. The team has recently purchased new 4G cameras that are more powerful and where possible will be placed at locations where previously it was not possible to deploy fixed cameras.

3.13 The team has invested in a bespoke CCTV review suite based at Sir Henry Mitchell House that allows direct access to review and download footage of litter from vehicle and fly tipping offences caught on camera. This had resulted in 350 litter from vehicle fines being issued and 100 fly tipping Fixed Penalty Notices being issued, with a number of prosecutions pending court dates.

3.14 Additional funding to support environmental work

3.15 £150,000 Council capital funding over 3 years was allocated to the Environmental Enforcement Team to invest in CCTV cameras. In addition, a further £200,000 of budget allocated to the Environmental Task Force was used to increase the Enforcement Officer resource within the team.

3.16 The £150,000 funding has allowed the Enforcement Team to purchase, deploy and maintain a range of fixed and re-deployable CCTV cameras that are and will be used to target fly tipping and littering hotspots and capture images of environmental offences. To date this has resulted in 50 re-deployable cameras being purchased and 60 fixed cameras being deployed at 45 fly tipping hot spots.

3.17 The Task Force budget has resulted in 2 Senior Environmental Enforcement Officers and 2 Environmental Enforcement Officers being appointed.

3.18 The additional Enforcement Officers have provided valuable support to the team with Senior Enforcement Officers providing advice and support to managers and officers on complex cases, taking the lead on some proactive enforcement initiatives such as seizing vehicles, stop and search operations to target illegal waste carriers and helping officers to prepare prosecution files. The seniors have also been providing training and developing procedures to better equip existing Enforcement Officers to do their role.

3.19 The additional Enforcement Officers have provided much needed support to the existing teams and over the last 18 months have been involved in 10 vehicle seizures and 30 Stop and Search operations. The improved performance around the use of CCTV and corresponding detection of offenders has been greatly enhanced by these additional resources, as it has allowed one of the Senior Enforcement Officers to dedicate time on the deployment of CCTV and monitoring of CCTV footage.

3.20 The funding for the additional Enforcement Officers resource will come to an end in June 2023.

3.21 As well as the investment in environmental enforcement, the Task Force is working on a number of projects to identify sustainable solutions to waste-related problems such as litter and fly tipping and to increase public awareness of the problems and to promote positive behaviour change. Some of the projects in process are outlined below:

- Reducing littering from vehicles by publicising the fines and promoting how to report offences, using social media and other innovative awareness-raising campaigns, including the use of CCTV at litter hotspots.
- Managing takeaway litter by introducing a 'Code of Practice' for businesses which supports them to reduce and manage the litter and waste around their business. This includes a toolkit to be used by Council Officers which provides information and advice on how to work with businesses. The Task Force will use this toolkit to

develop the engagement activity and train officers on how to both manage and reduce waste from businesses. The toolkit will ensure consistency of approach on how Officers engage effectively and change the behaviours of business owners.

- Tackling back streets with longstanding issues such as litter, fly tipping, contaminated recycling bins and untidy gardens. A Clean Street Award has been created to encourage residents to take responsibility for their street. The toolkit created for Council Officers provides information and support on how to deal with these issues which includes a number of templates and signs to use. This will be used to train existing staff on the approach to dealing with this issue using the toolkit to make significant change in neighbourhoods. The aim is to build the knowledge and confidence of Officers and enable them to deal with these matters in a consistent manner.
- Working in partnership with landlords and tenants to ensure they are managing waste from their properties effectively and responsibly and maintaining acceptable environmental standards. A Voluntary Agreement (similar to a contract) between all parties has been created which includes an information booklet to be issued and made available for both landlords and tenants. The Task Force will provide support to Enforcement Teams, Housing Standard Teams and Area Coordinators' Offices on the use of these documents.

3.22 Training and Workforce Development

3.23 This year all Neighbourhood Wardens undertook extensive training to ensure they are skilled and equipped with the knowledge to undertake their role. The training focussed mostly on their environmental role however additional training to support their community engagement role is being arranged. This will include training on Domestic Violence, Adult & Children Safeguarding, Child Sexual Exploitation, Adult Mental Health Awareness and the "Prevent" agenda.

4.0 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 There are no specific financial and resource appraisal issues to highlight.

5.0 RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 There are no specific risk management and governance issues to highlight.

6.0 LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no specific legal appraisal issues to highlight.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Increased local decision-making has the potential to create more sustainable solutions to local issues.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no specific issues greenhouse gas omission impact issues to highlight.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

The work of the service makes a positive contribution towards improving community safety in the Bradford West Area.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.

7.5 TRADE UNION IMPLICATIONS

There are no trade union implication issues to highlight.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

The work of the service contributes towards priorities in each of the wards in the Bradford West Area.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

The work of the service contributes towards addressing a number of priorities in the Bradford West Locality Plan 2022-25.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The work of the service makes a positive contribution towards improving the lives of children and young people living in the Bradford West Area. There are no known implications with regard to corporate parenting arising from this report.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

No issues.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

There are no not for publication documents.

9.0 OPTIONS

9.1 To accept the recommendations in full.

9.2 To reject the recommendations in full.

9.3 To make amendments to the recommendations.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Bradford West Area Committee notes the progress of the Environmental Enforcement & Neighbourhood Warden Service.
- 10.2 A further report detailing the progress of the Environmental Enforcement & Neighbourhood Warden Service is brought to the Area Committee in 12 months' time.

11. APPENDICES

None

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None