



## INFORMATION NOTE

### Private Sector Environmental Enforcement Option

Amongst the key priorities for Fylde Council is to create clean, safe and healthy communities and maintain high quality parks and open spaces. This means ensuring that the environment remains clean and free of litter and dog fouling. The Operational Services and Parks staff do an excellent job of keeping the area clean with regular praise from residents and visitors. There are over 700 litter bins across the borough which are emptied daily, with increased frequency during the warmer weather and events season. There are also 40 bins located on the beach to encourage people to dispose of their waste responsibly. In addition to the bins, there are also several mobile litter pickers and street sweepers who move around cleansing the area and collected discarded rubbish. The cleansing team also respond reactively to reports of litter and dog fouling to ensure that the borough remains clean and tidy and the Dog Wardens inform, educate and enforce dog related environmental offences through Public Space Protection Orders.

Despite all this, there are continued challenges to delivering a clean borough, with irresponsible individuals choosing to carryout anti-social behaviour such as littering, dropping cigarette butts and chewing gum, failing to pick up after their dogs or letting their dogs run out of control or off the lead in restricted areas. These types of environmental street scene issues are emotive and cause concern for residents and businesses alike, with the desire for clean streets and action against irresponsible dog ownership common themes on social media platforms. Traditionally, officers have followed an informative and educational approach with campaigns aimed at highlighting environmental crimes and encourage prevention through responsible waste disposal and dog ownership. However, residents still regularly express concern and have expectations that are beyond what can be delivered within current resources, particularly the expectation to see more enforcement action, or 'stick' along with the 'carrot'. Councillors have asked Officers to investigate alternative means of combatting anti-social enviro crimes, with greater emphasis on enforcement.

Looking at best practice elsewhere it is evident that the private sector can complement the services of Local Authority Officers by offering a more targeted approach. A private sector company called District Environmental has been operating in several Lancashire districts that could potentially work in collaboration with the council to tackle these issues. The company have the same commitment to addressing environmental issues and crime as Fylde Council and are keen to support the council in creating a cleaner, greener Fylde.

Initial discussion held with District Environmental has identified the opportunity to explore further the opportunity to secure a resource that can deliver high rates of enforcement as well as engaging with the local community. District offer an **"end to end"** cost neutral environmental service funded through the income generated from fixed penalties with no upfront payment by the council. Patrols are dedicated to the core offences of general littering, vehicle litter, dog fouling and the enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders with support to parks and green space patrols and investigating dog fouling complaints, alley-way dumping, and fly tipping. The engagement work with public would include handing out leaflets, carrying out surveys and presenting to local schools.

District Environmental will be invited to an Elected Member Learning Hour in February to provide detailed information on the service they can offer and respond to any queries. Following this, a decision item will be brought before the March Operational Management Committee recommending a 12-month pilot scheme of a specialist enforcement service to address environmental crime issues such as dog fouling, littering and other dog control measures under the Public Space Protection Orders, to be informed by the dialogue between now and the March committee.

**FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM**

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