

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 June 2016

## **LITTER STRATEGY 2016 TO 2020 AND LITTER AND DOG FOULING ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

- 1.1 To consider the 'Keep Blackpool Tidy' Litter Strategy 2016-2020, prepared in conjunction with Keep Britain Tidy.
- 1.2 To consider entering into a one-year pilot with 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions in relation to taking a more robust approach in litter and dog fouling enforcement.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

- 2.1 To agree to the adoption of the 'Keep Blackpool Tidy' Litter Strategy 2016-2020.
- 2.2 To agree to a one-year pilot working in conjunction with 3GS Environmental Solutions to carry-out cost neutral enforcement activity in relation to litter and dog fouling.
- 2.3 To authorise the Director of Community and Environmental Services, after consultation with the Chief Corporate Solicitor, to enter into an appropriate one-year contract with the company.
- 2.4 To authorise the Director of Community and Environmental Services, after consultation with the Head of Procurement and Development, to grant an exception to Corporate Procurement Rules under clause 10.11 to undertake a 12-month pilot with 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 Blackpool as a resort is resurgent, with in excess of 17 million visits being recorded last year. The catalyst being the significant investment in the promenade and attractions, in addition with the comprehensive events and activity programme the town has developed. Dealing with litter is becoming more challenging and it is important that we have a clear strategy and direction to deal with the issue(s).

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

Other alternatives which are more educational and participating and campaign led are being progressed with Keep Britain Tidy (KBT).

### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"

### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 Blackpool is the country's number one seaside holiday destination, with visitor figures far in excess of any other resort in the country; in excess of 17 million visits. Investment in the infrastructure and events programme of the town by the Council and private sector has certainly paid off. Although, this success must be seen against the range of challenges the town faces as a result of deprivation and transience, which in addressing with a diminishing resource and public purse is becoming more and more difficult.

5.2 Litter and waste is one such challenge, with the reduction in resources ongoing, it is now vital that a better way of working with residents and businesses is considered and turned into a plan of action. If all concerned can embrace the concept of a 'litter free Blackpool' and the aspiration to be the 'cleanest seaside resort' by 2020, then even with a diminishing resource we can improve the cleanliness of our town.

5.3 Therefore in October 2015 the Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs) agreed a Cabinet Member Decision to work in conjunction with Keep Britain Tidy in producing a litter strategy and plan for Blackpool to 2020.

5.4 In order to better understand the challenges Blackpool faces and identify key actions that could make a difference, Keep Britain Tidy has undertaken a number of data gathering exercises to help inform the strategy and identify potential solutions.

5.5 Keep Britain Tidy's research consisted of six elements:

- A street survey of 200 Blackpool residents
- An online survey that residents were invited to complete
- Focus groups where Keep Britain Tidy could understand better what local residents felt about the quality of the environment in which they live
- An opportunity for members of the Blackpool Business Leaders Group to share their views about what the business community felt about litter in the town
- Two workshops for elected members
- Consultation with officers from across the Council.

5.6 The research with residents revealed that cigarette litter and chewing gum were the key issues identified by those surveyed along with dog fouling, fast food litter and soft drinks litter. Residents also mentioned that they considered many of the litter bins were overflowing litter bins or there were too few bins provided by the Council. Respondents to the surveys also felt that enforcement was not sufficiently strong enough to deter people from littering.

5.7 Keep Britain Tidy also undertook a baseline environmental survey of a number of key sites in the town, including areas where visitors would most likely to visit including the town centre and its car parks, the Promenade, main road and rail entry points. Also surveyed were locations where residents are most likely to frequent such as Stanley Park and secondary shopping centres. The purpose of the environmental survey was to provide an independent assessment of the state of the town's environmental quality as of February 2016.

5.8 Although this is a one off view outwith the main holiday season, the key findings of the survey included:

- The overall cleanliness of the town was comparable with other towns
- Around 5% of sites have litter present
- The town centre was cleaner than the outer shopping centres
- Cigarette butts and chewing gum were the main items of litter recorded
- Dog fouling was low appearing on only about 2% of sites
- Only a few litter bins were recorded as overflowing
- Rubbish was found on approaches to both railway stations.

- 5.9 Based on the research to date, delivery against six strategic objectives have been highlighted, of which delivery against will, it is believed, substantially reduce littering in Blackpool:

**Objective 1 – Monitoring**

90% of Blackpool's public spaces will meet a Local Environmental Quality standard of B+ and be predominantly free of any litter.

**Objective 2 – Communication**

At any time, 90% of people living, working and visiting Blackpool are aware of the 'Keep Blackpool Tidy' campaign.

**Objective 3 – Design**

Litter traps have been identified and designed out where possible. Good quality, consistent styled bins are gradually rolled out, prioritising high footfall areas. There are no reports of overflowing bins.

**Objective 4- Education**

Every child in Blackpool has the opportunity to learn about the impacts of litter and to take part in at least one litter pick per year.

**Objective 5 – Engagement**

Individuals, communities and businesses across Blackpool take up voluntary measures to keep their areas clear of litter and loose waste.

**Objective 6 – Enforcement**

Proportionate, regular enforcement supports a growing perception with resident of Blackpool that action is being taken on persistent litterers.

- 5.10 The Blackpool Litter Strategy 2016-2020 is attached at Appendix 5a, with the 2016/17 Action Plan at Appendix 5b. The strategy will be managed by a Steering Group, which will sign off the 2016/17 action plan, which is indicative at this moment in time until the strategy is formally adopted.
- 5.11 In relation to the strategy, objective 6 relates to enforcement, which highlights the need for a wider enforcement strategy. However, in regards to litter and dog fouling, there is not the resource within the Council to focus on this. Therefore, discussions have been taking place with a company called 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions, who operate this service in conjunction with a number of local authorities, including Leeds City Council, Bournemouth Council, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council and Swansea Council.

- 5.12 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions delivers a comprehensive managed on-site based environmental enforcement service providing a professional cost neutral solution that focuses on the growing issue of street scene environmental crime.
- 5.13 The company provides a fully trained team of officers who oversee the administration and issuing of fixed penalty notices (FPN's)/penalty charge notices (PCN's), who would be under the supervision of the Council's Public Protection division and co-located with them.
- 5.14 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions would not only with the issuing of fixed penalty notices and penalty charge notices but also would play a key role in supporting the Council and Keep Britain Tidy in encouraging more businesses to sign-up to the campaign and also in the education process.
- 5.15 The service includes processing of issued fixed penalty notices and penalty charge notices, appeals and as required collation of prosecution files, using the Council's existing systems, equipment and protocols.
- 5.16 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions operates a Total Management Solution (TMS) bespoke back office software system, enabling them to fully automate and integrate other management and operation of all their enforcement activities, from issuing fixed penalty notices and penalty charge notices to payments to court if appropriate.
- 5.17 The TMS system is user friendly, adaptable and efficient and delivers an end to end service that includes:
- fixed penalty notices and penalty charge notices issued via fully integrated android devices
  - Automated reminder letter processing
  - Document archiving and case management
  - Detailed report templates
  - Centralised identification verification
  - Online viewing and payment portal.
- 5.18 In terms of the company's financial operating model, the Director of Community and Environmental Services has assessed this and is satisfied that it is robust and sustainable. The financial information considered is commercially sensitive and therefore forms an exempt background paper to this decision.

- 5.19 Dialogue and correspondence has also taken place with other authorities utilising the services of 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions, with positive feedback.
- 5.20 Therefore, it is recommended to agree to an exception to procurement procedures and enter in to a one-year pilot with 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions, which is cost neutral as services are funded through the issuing of fixed penalty notices and penalty charge notices and that the Director of Community and Environmental Services, after consultation with Legal Services, enters into an appropriate one-year contract with the company. The Head of Procurement and Development has been consulted and considers that in this situation it would be reasonable to allow a trial of the operation by granting an exception for a fixed period.
- 5.21 If the 12-month pilot is successful and the concept of enforcement activity in this area is proven, the Council would undertake a compliant procurement exercise to appoint a service provider for the longer term.
- 5.22 In relation to the pilot period, it is proposed that this will focus on the area covered by the Public Space Protection Order of the town centre and Promenade, with the area potentially extended if the pilot proves successful.
- 5.23 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 5.24 **List of Appendices:**  
Appendix 5a - The Blackpool Litter Strategy 2016-2020  
Appendix 5b- 2016/17 Action Plan
- 6.0 Legal considerations:**
- 6.1 An appropriate contract to be put in place for the one-year pilot in conjunction with Legal Services.
- 7.0 Human Resources considerations:**
- 7.1 The company will work in conjunction with the Council and be overseen by the Public Protection Division.
- 8.0 Equalities considerations:**
- 8.1 The Community and Environmental Services enforcement policy which takes account of vulnerable people will continue to be used.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 The strategy will be directed by a Corporate Steering Group with actions costed and managed within the Council's budget management process, applying for appropriate funding, in conjunction with Keep Britain Tidy, where possible and applicable.

9.2 The 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions service is cost neutral.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The company works in conjunction with other local authorities, therefore the key risk of business sustainability is minimised.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The service will aim to improve the quality of the town's environment and enforce against inappropriate behaviour.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Keep Britain Tidy has consulted local residents, businesses, officers and Councillors.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 Financial operating model of 3GS Environmental Enforcement Solutions (exempt).

**14.0 Key decision information:**

14.1 Is this a key decision? No

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**15.0 Call-in information:**

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed:

Date approved:

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1



