# FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

# REPORT TO:ENVIRONMENTOVERVIEW& SCRUTINYCOMMITTEE

#### DATE: WEDNESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2015

<u>REPORT BY:</u> <u>CHIEF OFFICER (STREETSCENE AND</u> <u>TRANSPORTATION)</u>

#### <u>SUBJECT:</u> <u>INTRODUCTION OF ZERO TOLERANCE FOR</u> <u>LITTERING</u>

#### 1.00 <u>PURPOSE OF REPORT</u>

1.01 To inform Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the proposals to refresh the zero tolerance approach to littering offences

#### 2.00 BACKGROUND

- 2.01 Littering of the public realm is a problem that faces every town and community in the Country. The cost of street and open space litter collections in Flintshire are approximately £300k per year and the amount is unsustainable in the current financial climate and the money could be better spent on delivering productive frontline services.
- 2.02 People who drop litter should expect to be punished if caught and this report provides details of the proposed strict implementation of a "Zero Tolerance" approach to littering which is to be applied across the County.
- 2.03 Reduced littering would allow the Council to then reduce the resources that are employed in every town on street litter collections each day.

#### 3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The Councils Cabinet approved the current Environment Enforcement Policy in 2013. The policy defined the Council procedures for dealing with each aspect of Environmental crime. **Appendix 1** provides details of the procedure and powers vested in the Council to deal with each aspect of Environmental crime
- 3.02 The policy shows that Littering offences are dealt with by the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) which would eventually result in prosecution, if the individual chose not to make the required payment,

within the prescribed period.

- 3.03 The review of the Councils senior management team and the subsequent realignment of services within the new portfolios, has brought together the Streetscene operational teams and the Councils Enforcement Officers, both of whom are now based in Altami Depot. The collocation of staff allows the Enforcement Officers to be targeted in areas of known littering (and other Environmental crimes) based on the intelligence of the areas requiring litter collections and from the general cleansing teams in Streetscene. In addition the Enforcement Officers from Car Parking and Environmental crime have been combined into a single role, providing an increased resource to manage all enforcement matters.
- 3.04 It was stated in the 2013 report that a zero tolerance approach should be taken against individuals either witnessed or reported to be dropping litter on Council land and this approach needs to be refreshed and applied consistently and in every case where littering is witnessed or where witnesses are willing to provide statement to that effect.
- 3.05 An Independent survey of the cleanliness of the Councils open space and public realm have revealed the Council to be one of the lowest performing authorities in Wales in this respect. A major factor resulting in the poor state of cleanliness of the roads and open spaces is the presence of a large amount of cigarette based litter, such as matches and discarded cigarette ends.
- 3.06 By a more vigorous application of a zero tolerance approach and better communications of the likely outcome of littering by individuals, it is expected that the number of staff required to clear litter in towns and villages can be reduced. This will assist the service to achieve its financial targets for the coming years.
- 3.07 Before the new approach is introduced, a wide ranging and County wide publicity campaign will be undertaken. The campaign will include the following
  - Positive press releases advising residents of the zero tolerance approach
  - Visits to T&CC's to explain the implications of the new arrangements and to gain their support for the proposals
  - Visits to every public house, betting shop and any other site where people congregate and littering is evident
  - Provision of cigarette 'stub out' plates on bins adjacent to the above premises or stub out plates to be provided, fixed directly onto the buildings
- 3.08 The visits to the selected businesses shown above will be undertaken by staff from across the Streetscene service during the autumn which

will allow the new arrangement to be introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

### 4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Scrutiny supports the proposed refresh of the Zero Tolerance approach to littering in the County.
- 4.02 That Scrutiny supports the proposed Communication Plan and infrastructure improvements planned, prior to the roll out of Zero Tolerance.

#### 5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The resources for the publicity campaign, the visits to local businesses and the improvements to waste containers will be provided from existing maintenance budgets.

#### 6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None identified.

#### 7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None identified.

#### 8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None identified.

#### 9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 The reduction in littering will allow a reduction in Streetscene and Transportation cleansing teams

#### 10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 With T&CC's
- 10.02 With targeted businesses as detailed in the report

#### 11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 With Cabinet Member

#### 12.00 APPENDICES

# 12.01 Appendix 1 - Environment Enforcement Protocol

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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