

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 1 November 2017

Subject: Environment

Portfolio Holder: Councillor W Breare-Hall

Recommending:

That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted.

Waste Management

I have previously reported that the Council has been successful in securing funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for a Recycling Reward Scheme. The purpose of the Scheme is to improve recycling performance and positively influence resident behaviour towards recycling.

The scheme consists of recycling incentives for up to 100 blocks of flats across the District consisting of around 1600 properties. Since the launch of the Scheme on 26 September Officers have completed the publicity material and web portal in preparation for the wider project roll out. During November, for a four week period, a team of experienced Recycling Advisors will visit residents in the relevant blocks of flats providing information on the Scheme along with advice and guidance on recycling.

The Scheme will encourage households in the selected group of flats to recycle more and recycle better in return for special offers or discounts with local business. So far we have secured the support of over 45 local retailers, with an expectation that a further 30 businesses will register to support the Scheme before the end of December this year.

Residents also have the opportunity to vote for one of their favourite charities to benefit from an annual donation. This year's Recycling Rewards charity partners are Epping Forest Community Transport; Epping Forest Food Bank; Chigwell Riding Trust, and Safer Places. Each will receive a share of the donation.

While these charity partners have been set for the first year, the Scheme continues until October 2019. We would, therefore, like to hear from other local charities and community projects that want to get involved in the scheme in the future.

Fly-tipping prosecutions

At Chelmsford Magistrates Court on 14th September, R & A Waste Removal Limited, Alfie Smith and Richard McGuire, were prosecuted by Epping Forest District Council for waste offences relating to the deposit of waste on Unit 4, Pick Hill, Waltham Abbey. On 20 February 2017, an Environment and Neighbourhoods Officer for Epping Forest District Council investigated an allegation that excessive waste was being stored at their site. The officer found waste piled higher than the perimeter fence and that well in excess of 10 tonnes of waste appeared to be stored at the site, including significant quantities of non-recyclable waste that was not covered by the exemption.

The defendants each pleaded guilty to depositing waste on the site without a permit or in accordance with an exemption administered by the Environment Agency. R & A Waste Removal Limited also pleaded guilty to failing their waste duty of care. They were fined £2,000 and ordered to pay a contribution towards the Council's prosecution costs of £1,000 and a Victim Surcharge of £170. Alfie Smith and Richard McGuire were each fined £1,000 and ordered to pay a contribution towards the Council's prosecution costs of £500 and a Victim Surcharge of £120.

Rachel Cooper, of Lushes Road, Loughton, pleaded guilty to handing over approximately 10 bags of household waste to someone who then fly-tipped them at the junction of Bushfields and Parkmead, Loughton. She was fined £120 for handing over the waste without checking that the person was authorised by the Environment Agency, and £50 for not attending an interview with Council's Environment & Neighbourhood team required under Section 108 of the Environment Act 1990. She was also ordered to pay the Council's prosecution costs of £1281.33.

The bags could have been taken to an Essex County Council Recycling Centre for Household Waste or sorted correctly, recycled and disposed of using the normal doorstep collection provided by Epping Forest District Council.

“Fly-tipping - It's a crime not to care”

The Rachel Cooper case is another example of a costly mistake by a resident who failed to take responsibility, comply with their household duty of care and protect themselves from action when their waste was fly-tipped.

Short films produced by the Cleaner Essex Group as part of the “Crime not to care” campaign are now available online. Essex County Council has hosted the videos on their YouTube channel available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFy1ts6U_xA&t=19s The videos have also been posted on this Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Noise nuisance

The duty noise officer has recently been called out to noisy music events at the Sun Inn, Nazeing Common, and Woolston Manor Golf and Country Club, Abridge Road, Chigwell. The noise from both sites was judged to be excessive. Noise abatement notices have been served to control the volume of music and amplified sound in the future.

A resident of Brickenden Court, Waltham Abbey, has also been served with a noise abatement notice after an officer witnessed music coming from her property causing a nuisance, despite a previous warning.

More information on the Council's noise call out service can be found on the Council's website at: <http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/residents/your-environment/crime-safety/out-of-hours-noise-service>