

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 30 September 2014

**Subject:** Environment

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr W Breare-Hall

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Waste Management**

Handover arrangements from our current contractor Sita to Biffa are being finalised to ensure the smooth commencement of the new contract on 3 November this year. I held the last formal Partnership Board meeting with Sita on 15 August. I would like to thank Sita for their good work over the life of their seven year contract with us and wish them well for the future.

As part of the transition from Sita to Biffa, a range of mobilisation activities are taking place, namely: arrangements to relocate from Langston Road Depot to Biffa depots in Waltham Cross and Edmonton; the purchase of a new vehicle fleet, and preparation for a four day waste and recycling collection service next year. An information campaign will run over the coming months to ensure residents are aware of the changes and improvements to their service.

## **Flooding and Drainage**

Localised heavy rainfall in late July and early August, particularly in the Waltham Abbey area, gave rise to some surface water flooding incidents with a number of properties flooded internally. Officers have been liaising with residents and other external organisations to investigate the causes of flooding. Steady progress is being made in identifying responsibilities for taking action despite the varied urban drainage infrastructure and diverse ownership of assets. I am aware that some residents have been frustrated with the response of the relevant utility companies but officers are, unfortunately, restricted in the help and assistance they can provide in such instances.

## **Environmental Health and Neighbourhoods**

### **Fly-tipping/Duty of care**

Over recent months the Environment and Neighbourhoods officers have dealt with a number of instances of illegal dumping of rubbish. These fall under two general headings: fly-tipping, and a failure in the duty of care which is placed on every householder to ensure that people removing waste from their premises are authorised to do so.

In a recent case in Chelmsford Magistrates Court, Mr. Lexi Mukoyi, of Copperfield, Chigwell, pleaded guilty to an offence in relation to some fly-tipped waste found in Copperfield. He had dumped furniture and other items in a known fly-tipping hotspot around 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Mr Mukoyi was fined £200 and ordered to pay the Council's prosecution costs of £529.43, together with a Victim Surcharge of £20. Similarly, Mr Anthony Baptiste, of Harries Court, Waltham Abbey, was fined £167 and ordered to pay a contribution towards the Council's prosecution costs of £150 after he pleaded guilty to fly-tipping two doors in a known fly-

tipping hotspot in Caneland Court, Waltham Abbey. He attended Colchester Magistrates Court on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

A long running investigation which involved observations by officers and the use of CCTV resulted in the prosecution of Mr D Reynolds, of Newmans Lane, London. He had regularly fly-tipped in a garage area in Pyrles Lane, Loughton. At Court Mr Reynolds was fined £500 and ordered to pay the prosecution costs of £916.96, which included £160 towards the clear up costs of the fly-tipped waste. He attended Colchester Magistrates Court on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 and pleaded guilty to failing in his duty of care, with respect to disposal of waste from his building jobs.

### **Essex Litter campaign**

The Environment and Neighbourhoods team participated in an Essex-wide litter campaign in June. Officers visited Epping, Loughton and Ongar, together with Cllr Mary Sartin and Cllr Tony Boyce and life-size versions of the campaign material designed to educate people and deter littering. Initial findings suggest the campaign had a positive impact and that littering did decrease.

Officers also spoke to over 1700 children across the whole of Essex as part of the Crucial Crew week, challenging them to “make the right choice” regarding litter and other issues.

### **Noise**

At a sentence hearing on 14 July 2014, Ms Chrissie Holyoak, of 36 Bosted Close, Buckhurst Hill, was sentenced to 10 weeks imprisonment, suspended for one year, after being found guilty of antisocial behaviour due to music noise from her property. Ms Holyoak was ordered to pay a proportion of the Council’s prosecution costs at the rate of £10 per month for a period of 18 months. She was also ordered (with her consent) to take part in the Bridge Project for a period of 23 days (an intensive community programme designed and developed in Essex).

Four Environment and Neighbourhoods officers gave evidence as to what they had heard on six occasions and the effect they had witnessed on the neighbour who experienced the noise nuisance. The neighbour also gave evidence regarding the impact the noise had had on her and her family. Ms Holyoak has subsequently lost possession of her property and is due to be evicted.