

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Cllr Faryad Hussain

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
DIRECTOR: Sayyed Osman**

DATE: 25 April 2013

PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE

Horsemeat - The Food Standards Agency have instructed local authorities to inspect all approved meat products producing companies in their boroughs as soon as possible. This is in response to the current findings of horsemeat contamination in meat products.

The inspections are to focus on documentary, physical and identity checks on meat authenticity, traceability, health marks and identity marks, labelling, re-wrapping and packing.

Public Protection service are currently involved in carrying out these inspections and the results will be provided to the Food Standards Agency.

Taxi unmet demand survey

A study has been commissioned to establish if there is any unmet demand for hackney carriage provision in Blackburn with Darwen. The study will mainly be carried out in April and May although members of the taxi trade have already attended a meeting to be briefed about the how the study will be undertaken.

The study will include observations at the taxi ranks in the Borough to establish waiting times for taxis. In addition, face to face interviews will be undertaken with members of the public to obtain their views on the taxis provision. Questionnaires will be sent to all the hackney trade, private hire operators and interested stakeholders which will include, transport planners and highways, Police, disability groups and some businesses. It is anticipated that the report will be complete in the early Summer.

Rubbish in yards prosecutions

Three cases about accumulations of rubbish in back yards were heard at Blackburn Magistrates' Court on 25th January 2013. The cases were proven in the defendant's absence in each case.

Fines of £400 were imposed, together with legal costs and works in default compensation amounting to £411 each for two of the defendants, and £725 for the third.

These cases related to putrescible waste left in back yards by householders on Sarah Street and Hindle St, Darwen, who ignored requests to remove it.

Abatement notices were served under S.79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and when the waste was still not removed, the council carried out 'works in default' to clear it away – payment for this work was included in the compensation costs.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Waste and Recycling Tonnages

Landfill tonnages and also recycling tonnages from the grey bin collections for January and February remain comparable with the tonnages for the same months of 2012, although green waste tonnage and recycling at the Blackburn Household Waste Recycling Centre was down.

Efforts to aid with improved recycling at the councils 2 household waste recycling centres is continuing. We are also making further improvements with resurfacing and line marking taking place.

Your Call

Despite the difficult weather conditions, during February, there have been some 5 Your Call community clean up events, that had 152 volunteers attend. The biggest event of the month took place on St James Estate, Darwen in February in partnership with the Groundwork Community Space Challenge project and TVH. Over 75 people took part and filled 2 skips with rubbish.

The Council also recognised the efforts of the Your Call volunteers at the annual Your Call Celebration event held at King Georges Hall Monday 25th March 2013.

Dog Control

During February, there was a marked increase in the number of stray dog reports, with 38 reports being received against 17 for February 2012. Of the 38 reports received, 29 were collected and taken to the kennels.

Consultation is planned this year for extending the Council's Dog Control Order to include restrictions for dogs in play areas and other such areas.

Corporation Park Conservatory

The Crown Prosecution Service has chosen to drop the case against the 3 persons arrested for the criminal damage to the conservatory windows, citing insufficient evidence to obtain a prosecution.