

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN  
DATE: 22 JULY 2021**

### **WASTE AND RECYCLING**

The Council will be delivering its next round of annual calendars to all households in the borough towards the end of July, with dates for the collection of waste and recycling bins. The calendars will also provide details of what can and cannot go in which bin. At the same time as delivering the calendar, the Council has been working with the Keep Britain Tidy Group and will deliver a leaflet detailing their efforts to reduce plastic pollution getting into rivers and our seas.

We are also working on developing a recycling partnership with Terracycle, who have a reception facility at the Suez depot in Darwen, to accept and recycle plastic film at our Household Waste Recycling Centres. At present, we are unable to recycle it within the borough, but should soon have an outlet available for residents.

The garden/brown bin subscription scheme is going from strength to strength, the total number of subscriptions by the end of May 2020 was 13,834, and the total number of subscriptions by the end of May 2021 is 14,542.

The Council's Envirocrime enforcement team, along with its Legal Services team, successfully prosecuted 16 residents for various waste offences in May this year, as part of our efforts to tackle those who blight our communities, due to their poor waste management. In addition to this, the Council has also recruited an additional enforcement officer to respond to the challenges in the areas of the most prolific poor waste management, caused by owners, tenants and also landlords. The officer is already dealing with a number of cases that may ultimately end up in court, if the residents and any respective landlords do not take heed of the advice being provided.

Additional signage is also being placed around the ponds and lakes at Corporation Park to deter residents from leaving food for the wildlife in the area, as it causing continual problems with rodents eating the food left by residents with the best of intentions. The Council continually has to bait the locations to control the rodent population, but is fighting a constant battle due to the amount of food being left for birds and other wildlife.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

The Environment team are developing a range of educational resources, not just aimed at households, but more specifically, for schools and community groups to use to educate young people, to encourage good habits of not dropping litter and also correctly recycling – this is also a good way of introducing these messages to their families as well.

A new web site has been created to host these materials [www.recyclebwd.org](http://www.recyclebwd.org) Resources are being added to all the time, and also include some cartoon characters to help engage young people, which are outlined below:-

### **Captain Muck and Captain Litter Campaign**

As part of our mission to reduce littering across Blackburn with Darwen, we are working with local schools and teachers to educate young people on the negative impacts of dropping litter. We have developed 'litter heroes' – Captain Muck & Captain Litter – who help us with this mission.

Organising a litter patrol is a great way for the school to show their pupils that they want to look after their local environment and how important it is, whilst actively encouraging people not to drop litter and take pride in where they live.

Blackburn with Darwen Council, alongside Captain Muck and Captain Litter, can help schools with their litter patrol by lending them the necessary litter picking equipment. This includes litter pickers, bags, gloves, stickers and certificates. We also have a resource booklet with links to the curriculum, how to organise a litter pick and how to evaluate the results afterwards.

So far since launching in May 2021, our litter heroes' equipment has been lent out to 5 schools. Schools can find out more and register their interest here: [Litter Patrol – BwD Recycle \(recyclebwd.org\)](http://www.recyclebwd.org)

### **Recycling superheroes**

We have also created an educational website aimed at primary school children that covers all aspects of waste, with a local focus.

Each recycling superhero is linked with one of our four bins – general waste, recycling, paper and cardboard and garden waste. As well as useful videos, we have an online colouring page, quiz, and an interactive word search. Meet the heroes here: <https://recyclebwd.org/meet-the-heroes/>

## **PARKING SERVICES**

### **Benefits of Parking Enforcement during the lockdown**

Parking management is an important public service, which provides benefits to motorists and the wider community. Those benefits include maintaining road safety and ensuring access to goods and services. This is extremely important, particularly for certain key workers, as local authorities aim to keep providing essential services at this challenging time.

### **New undercroft car park and Feilden Street car park upgrades**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 the new undercroft car park opened below the cinema, this is a free car park for users of the new Reel cinema but also doubles up as a Pay and Display car park for other users of the Town Centre.

The car park has an Automatic Number Plate system (ANPR) which has also been installed in Feilden St MSCP. These car parks operating hours have been increased and now open until midnight 7 days a week.

### **New enforcement powers**

From December 2021 the powers to enforce moving traffic offences is being extended to local authorities. Moving traffic offences such as banned turns, stopping in boxed junctions and driving in formal cycle lanes will all be the Council's responsibility to enforce. It is expected that these powers will allow improved connectivity, boost active travel and increase air quality by reducing congestion.

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

The Service has continued to focus heavily on Covid-secure enforcement, working to prepare businesses for the easing of restrictions on 12<sup>th</sup> April and 17<sup>th</sup> May and checking that they continue to operate safely.

Prior to each key date, officers engaged with key businesses to ensure that they understood their responsibilities and that their covid-19 risk assessments were realistic and comprehensive. Following each easing, officers have carried out numerous visits to confirm compliance, provide advice and, where absolutely necessary, take enforcement action.

With the identification of the Delta variant, officers supported enhanced test and trace work with more in depth doorstep visits with people who had tested positive to try to identify the extent of community transmission. As the Delta variant took hold, work intensified to ensure that businesses in the Borough remained as safe as they could be.

Covid Marshals have continued to patrol streets and shopping centres to promote mask wearing among the public where appropriate.

In the period April – June 21, the Service:

- Carried out 1889 compliance visits
- Dealt with 104 complaints
- Handled 14 requests for advice
- Carried out 504 doorstep visits to support test and trace
- Advised 37 businesses following outbreaks
- Issued 5 FPN's and 22 warning notices