

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

**COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN  
DATE: 7 OCTOBER 2021**

### **WASTE AND RECYCLING**

The refuse service collected 14,440 tonnes of residual waste tonnage collected from households from April 2021 to the beginning of September 2021, which is a reduction of 279 tonnes, when compared with the same period last year (14,719 tonnes).

The residual waste from the household waste recycling centres from April this year, has increased by 862 tonnes on the same period for the previous year. It should be noted that the centres were closed between April and mid-May 2020, due to the pandemic and a booking system was in operation until the end of March 2021.

The combined recycling tonnage for the blue bin and the grey bin from April 2021 to the beginning of September 2021 has reduced by 935 tonnes compared for the same period in 2020. However, the contamination rate has dropped significantly, this year contamination levels have ranged from between 12% and 16.5% each month since April, which is much lower than contamination rates in the same period last year, when ranged from 18% to 21%. As a result of the better quality of material being recycled and also the variation in commodity prices in the recycling material markets, we have seen the monthly fee for processing the recycling reduce from £23,000 per month to an average of £7,000 per month.

### **WASTE EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT**

The Council has had over 50 successful prosecutions through the courts for waste offences since April 2021. Some prosecutions included video or photographic evidence which has been submitted to the Council by residents from their own CCTV. Having recognised the benefits of the availability of CCTV footage from residents, the Environment team are working with colleagues in IT and Communications and Engagement on developing the Wall of Shame.

The Wall of Shame will be used to identify and locate those who blight our borough with waste and littering offences. We will make available an on line form to enable residents to provide us with CCTV footage or photographs of waste and littering offences. We will make any suitable footage publically available on line via the Wall of Shame, as well as any footage from the CCTV cameras which are managed by Environment.

Members of the public will be able to look at the footage on line and inform us if they recognise who the culprits are so our enforcement team can track down the perpetrators of the waste and littering crimes. The Wall of Shame is due to be made publically available in October 2021.

The Environment team have also been assisting local residents, across the borough, tackle back streets that need a little love and attention. A number of residents have taken to tackling the unloved back streets, cleaning them up, speaking to neighbours about keeping the back streets clean and tidy, painting the back street walls, making planters and benches etc., to use the back street as a focal point for the community to use in a positive way, in order for children to play safely and communities to meet and socialise. Some terrific examples of what is possible has been shared on social media sites by the community and we are working on developing the idea of loving back streets further, with the soon to be available information booklet to help communities with ideas take their ideas and make them become a reality.

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

### **Covid Secure Enforcement**

Although most covid-19 legislation has now been repealed, covid security at businesses is now covered by general health and safety legislation.

Therefore, officers from Public Protection continue to undertake proactive checks to ensure that businesses have done the necessary covid risk assessment which must consider, as a minimum, ventilation, cleansing routines and hand sanitisation. Initial visits are supportive and advisory, but businesses of concern will receive a formal health and safety inspection.

In the meantime officers also continue to undertake Test and Trace home visits where telephone contact tracers have been unable to make contact.

### **Illicit Tobacco Seizure**

Trading Standards Officers are back on the streets searching for shops selling illicit tobacco. With the help of a tobacco search dog provided by Trading Standards North West, officers discovered a cache of illicit tobacco hidden in a secret compartment at a shop in Blackburn. 6000 illegal cigarettes and 100g illicit hand rolling tobacco were seized and enquiries are continuing.

## **PARKING SERVICES**

### **Parking Services Income**

The ability for Parking Services to generate income in 2021/22 has been severely hampered due to the series of lockdown measures due to the Covid pandemic. Parking income has starting to increase since we moved to step 4 of the roadmap, but income is currently 23% lower than before the pandemic. The encouraging news is that the two largest income streams which are Pay and Display and enforcement are getting closer to the income levels we achieve prior to the pandemic.

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

The Auto Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) has now been installed and is working on the two car parks at Feilden Street and the Undercroft, in addition to this the operating hours of both sites have been extended until midnight Monday to Saturday and until 11.00pm on Sundays.

These extended hours are being covered by a security company who not only monitor the car parks but also deal with any anti-social behaviour on these sites.

New CCTV has been installed on both sites which provide 100% coverage of the car parks, these cameras feed into both Feilden Street and the CCTV room based in King George's Hall.

**New enforcement powers**

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