

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & OPERATIONS

COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING
CHIEF OFFICERS: Strategic Director
of Environment & Operations
Thursday, 20 July 2023

Build happier, healthier and safer communities

Waste and Recycling

Waste Education and Enforcement

Working within communities, the 2 Environmental Education Officers have been out and about delivering education sessions in schools and community venues across the Borough. Since April, 6 schools have been visited and have undertaken our recycling heroes' session and 4 schools have borrowed our litter picking equipment to go litter picking in their local area - [Hero News – BwD Recycle \(recyclebwd.org\)](https://www.recyclebwd.org).

Since April, a further 47 Keep It Tidy Volunteers were recruited and were encouraged to contact their respective Keep Blackburn or Keep Darwen Tidy group too. Since April, we have also had 9 community clean up's arranged by residents wanting to clean their local area.

There was a beatsweep arranged in the Galligreaves area by Community Safety team in June. This was a multi-agency approach whereby the Police, Fire Service, Red Rose Recovery, Environmental Education and Enforcement and Together Housing came together to try and overcome issues in the area. Together Housing organised skips for the residents to use, a survey was filled out by residents regarding bins and rubbish disposal and a litter pick was undertaken. St Luke and St Johns Primary School also came to help with the litter pick.

Our most recent bin calendar and guide has been sent to print with a look to be posted to every resident in the Borough in the last two weeks in July. The focus is on the right recyclables in the right bins, food waste survey 2022 – what you told us and batteries/vapes.

A blue bin video has also been created showing the journey of our paper and cardboard which should be released in the next few days - [Blue Bin video \(vimeo.com\)](https://www.vimeo.com)

Our Environmental Crime Team joined forces with the Environment Agency & Lancashire Police to carry out inspections at waste sites across the Borough. These are sites that have the necessary permits to accept waste, however there are strict rules with regard to what type of waste, the amount of waste and how/where it is stored. Twenty sites were visited in which the following problems were found:

- Five suspected breaches of licence on two of the licenced sites
- Two sites did not have licences but were trading
- One stolen vehicle found
- One fly tipping hotspot located

Public Protection and Environmental Health

Proceeds of Crime Case conclusion

A Proceeds of Crime application made by the Public Protection Service has finally reached a conclusion, with the defendant being ordered to pay £50,000 in Proceeds of Crime, and £35,000 in costs at Preston Crown Court.

In February '22 the defendant, Alan Ahmad, owner of Smak Polski on Bank Top, pleaded guilty to business fraud offences relating to a tobacco raid carried out by Trading Standards in 2018. He was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment on each of 7 counts, to run concurrently, and 4 months imprisonment for two other related offences, again to run concurrently. The custodial sentence was suspended for a period of 18 months, with a requirement to perform 150 hours Unpaid Work and Rehabilitation Activity.

Under POCA rules the Council will get 37.5% of this POCA payment (£18,750), giving the Council a total of £53,750.

Illicit tobacco worth £81,000 and alcohol seized during the original raid in 2018 were also surrendered to the Council for destruction.

Parking Services

Parking Services Income

The ability for Parking Services to generate income over the last two financial year has been severely hampered due to the series of lockdown measures placed on society due to the Covid pandemic, however as these are no longer in place we are for the first time seeing usage and income levels return to pre-covid levels.

Over the first 3 months of this financial year we have seen income from Pay and Display be around 98% of what it was pre-covid, with the number of vehicle movements being around 96% of pre-covid levels.

Blakewater Car Park

Construction of a new car park on the old Blakewater Lodge site just off Swallow Drive will commence on the 27th July 2023. The new car park will provide 54 parking spaces plus 5 disabled parking bays. The new car park will provide much needed additional parking facilities for those visiting the businesses in the area.