

CHILTERN, WYCOMBE & SOUTH BUCKS JOINT WASTE COLLECTION COMMITTEE (JWCC)

15th August 2017

Briefing note - Litter Strategy for England, 2017

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RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the Strategy be noted and that the proposals in the consultation document be broadly welcomed

2) And that a further detailed report on options for implementing some of the recommendations within this strategy is brought to a future JWCC meeting.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

(1) Implementation of the Strategy will assist the Councils to meet their strategic objective of working with and empowering our partners and local people to provide clean, healthy, safe and cohesive communities.

(2) The Strategy will assist the Council in maintaining the quality of our environment through effective and efficient service

1. Summary

In April 2017, the Government released the Litter Strategy for England. The strategy sets out how the government plans to work with groups and businesses to reduce litter. The detail of the summary (as it appears in the document) is set out as Appendix 1. The strategy sets out the following ambitions:

- We want our whole country to be a great place to live in, with clean water and air; beautiful countryside to enjoy and urban areas that are prosperous, vibrant and welcoming. A littered environment is bad for our wellbeing, and bad for the economy
- Our ambition is to be the first generation to leave the natural environment of England in a better state than it found it. We are clear that we must act now to clean up the country and change our culture so that it is no longer acceptable to drop litter. The changes in how local government is funded also make it vital for local authorities to attract business and housing growth. Keeping streets cleaner and litter-free will be of the utmost importance in their efforts to do this.
- Our strategy is to apply best practice in education, enforcement and infrastructure to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour, so that in the coming years we see demonstrable improvements

2. Proposed approach

The Litter Strategy sets out the proposed approach:

Send a clear and consistent anti-litter message, by:

- Developing, seeking funding for, and delivering a world class national anti-littering campaign
- Developing an anti-littering culture which aims to educate young people not to litter

- Inspiring and engaging local communities, and empowering them to take action, including introducing a new 'litter innovation fund' to pilot, implement and evaluate small scale local research projects that could be replicated more widely
- Making a compelling business case for businesses of all kinds to invest in anti-litter activity
- Exploring voluntary and regulatory measures that aim to increase recycling and reduce litter
- Working with stakeholders to look at innovative 'nudge' techniques' to tackle littering behaviour

Improve enforcement against offenders, including:

- Delivering on our Manifesto commitment to review the case for increasing fixed penalties for littering and related offences
- Introducing new regulations to help councils tackle littering from vehicles
- Providing improved guidance for councils on how to use their enforcement powers proportionately and appropriately, and
- Raising councils' and magistrates' awareness of the range of sanctions available to tackle littering and fly-tipping.

Clean up the country, including: Supporting national clean-up days :

- Working with Highways England to put in place measures to deliver a lasting improvement in cleanliness at 25 priority litter hotspots on the Strategic Road Network, including updating the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse to clarify the expected standards of cleanliness on the Network
- Producing new guidance on "binrastructure" (the design, number and location of public litter bins and other items of street furniture) for local areas to help them reduce levels of litter
- Working with the relevant industries to tackle certain types of particularly problematic litter, including fast-food packaging, smoking-related litter and chewing gum
- Exploring the ways in which packaging and packaging design can contribute to reducing litter.

3. Implementing this approach

We understand that the Government will continue to work hard to implement this new strategic approach and will report to Parliament on progress.

The strategy document sets out a detailed programme of intended activity to deliver improvements in the following key areas (detailed in Appendix 2):

- Measuring Litter - Development of improved methodology for assessing and monitoring extent of litter in England
- Education and Awareness – Delivery of world class national anti-littering campaign and continued support for national clean up days.
- Engage local communities – Driving increased involvement of citizens and business in tackling litter, supporting and encouraging councils and other land managers to achieve the highest standards of local environmental quality.
- Making a compelling business case - Exploring voluntary and /or regulatory options for improving recycling and re-use of packaging.. Creating a new expert group to look at further ways of cutting the worst kinds of litter, including plastic bottles and drinks containers, cigarette ends and fast food packaging.
- Improving enforcement – Reviewing the case for increasing fixed penalties for littering, introduce new powers for tackling litter thrown from vehicles, improve enforcement tools

for dealing with fly-tipping and promote more effective and transparent use of enforcement powers.

- Better Cleaning and Litter Infrastructure -

4. Review of Fixed Penalty Notices

Defra are considering options for increasing fixed penalty notices for littering, graffiti, fly-posting and introducing new FPNS for throwing litter from vehicles.

This has included:

- ☐ options for increasing maximum littering fixed penalties from £80 to either £100 or £150
- ☐ clarification that councils will be able to spend fixed penalty income on any of their functions
- ☐ proposed amendment to the Local Government Transparency Code to make it clear that data on enforcement activities against littering and other environmental offences should be published
- ☐ proposals to extend the power to impose fixed penalty charges for littering from a vehicle to all councils

Guidance will then be issued to councils to accompany any new enforcement powers, to make sure they are targeted at cutting litter, while preventing over-zealous enforcement or fines being used to raise revenue.

5. Next Steps

We will watch for Government's plans to implement this strategy and for confirmation on changes to the fixed penalty notice system. Once this clarity has been provided, we will set out our own options for local implementation with the associated costs and benefits and will bring this back to JWCC for consideration. This may include:

- Reviewing the opportunities and resource implications for the use of enforcement powers for tackling litter, fly-tipping and other envirocrime across Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Council areas.
- Exploration of opportunities for wider community engagement
- Detail on opportunities for improved communication and education to help achieve the highest standards of local environmental quality