
**REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE
13 SEPTEMBER 2022****PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT****REPORT FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****SUBJECT: LITTER STRATEGY 2022-2025****1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Council's Business Plan 2020-23 was adopted in February 2020 and outlined the Council's key priorities and objectives. A key theme is to develop a community that is a better, safer, and healthier place to live. This report sets out the Litter Strategy 2022 which will complement and help to deliver the priorities of the Business Plan.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Council's Business Plan 2020-2023 was adopted in February 2020 and defines the Council's priorities for the next three years. Critical to the delivery of this strategy is a set of supporting strategies that assist with delivery of these priorities.
- 2.2 Local Authorities have duties and responsibilities to manage municipal waste arising in their area. Municipal waste in this context is an umbrella term used to describe waste collected by, or on behalf of, Rochford District Council. This mostly comprises of waste and recycling arising from households (household waste) but also includes other waste streams such as fly-tipped waste, waste from litter and dog bins and street sweepings. The management of litter collected from the adopted highway, highstreets and the parks and open Spaces are the primary focus of the proposed Litter Strategy
- 2.3 The Council proposes to take a zero-tolerance approach to littering. Litter management within the Council is already taking place but has not previously been supported by a strategic framework. The 2022 Litter Strategy is intended to align our approach with the national picture and recent Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) guidance.
- 2.4 Dealing with litter places a significant burden on the district council, with an annual cost to the local taxpayer which would be better spent improving other local services. Living in a littered environment makes people feel less safe in their communities, and less likely to venture out, which in turn, affects mental and physical health. It is in all our interests to tackle this problem, to make littering socially unacceptable, to make it easy for people to do the right thing and remove any possible excuse for anti-social behaviour.

- 2.5 The Council is a Principal Litter Authority and has a duty to keep relevant land in the open air, to which the public have access, clear of litter and debris (as per the Environmental Protection Act 1990). Supplying Street Cleansing services through its partner Rochford Norse currently costs the authority circa £716,000 per annum. This includes the clearance of litter.
- 2.6 The clearance of litter is an avoidable cost but to reduce this requires significant cultural change alongside well designed and planned infrastructure and services to meet current and future needs. Changing culture is challenging and requires ongoing investment in education, engagement and, occasionally, enforcement.

3 LITTER STRATEGY 2022

- 3.1 The Council's draft strategy is written in accordance with the Government Litter Strategy for England, published in 2017 (HM Government Litter Strategy for England April 2017).
- 3.2 The draft litter strategy supports guidance issued by WRAP "Binrastructure – "The right bin in the right place." It is intended to apply best practice in education, enforcement, and infrastructure to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour. Good infrastructure and clear expectations, supported by proportionate enforcement, helps reinforce social pressure to do the right thing.
- 3.3 A street litter and dog bin review is currently being undertaken as part of the strategy. This review is mapping out the location, type, and collection schedules of all the street litter and dog bins across the district. From the review, the removal/replacement of existing bins will be identified and drawn up into a proposed replacement schedule that will be presented for consideration for inclusion within the capital expenditure programme.
- 3.4 The Council are exploring the option of an external litter enforcement scheme operated on behalf of the Council. This includes enforcement of littering within the District under a deed of delegation to include service of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), but may also consider recovery of charges, management of bad debtors, and management of court hearings associated with non-payment. This will be covered in a future separate report in more detail.
- 3.5 Rochford District Council would like to create a culture where it is unacceptable to drop litter. This means generating strong and lasting social reassurance against littering, making it socially unacceptable to drop litter. This requires education: from national or district-wide campaigns to constant reminders through messages and logos in all kinds of places. The messages may vary, aimed at raising public awareness or targeted at specific groups of people: children, young adults, drivers, consumers of food etc.

- 3.6 The Litter Strategy focuses on delivering three key themes that reflect those of the Governments' national litter strategy:
- 1) **Education & Awareness** - change the behaviour of people who feel it is acceptable to drop litter by sending clear messages
 - 2) **Better cleansing and litter infrastructure** – make it easy to dispose of litter, provide the appropriate facilities in the right places, and collect litter in a timely fashion
 - 3) **Improve enforcement** by exercising council powers to deal with anyone who drops litter, changing behaviour.
- 3.7 Under each theme, a set of priorities and objectives have been identified that will enable the effective delivery of the strategy. These priorities and objectives are not intended to be exhaustive but may be used to prioritise resources and approach. Objectives will be supported by a work programme that will provide more detail and establish defined targets.
- 3.8 Once adopted, the Litter Strategy will be reviewed periodically to ensure:
- It is in step with the changes to the environment which may increase levels and types of litter;
 - Changes to relevant legislation are brought into the strategy
 - Enforcement action is reviewed to assess effectiveness of implementation together with new technology and innovation

4 PRE-SCRUTINY BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 4.1 The litter strategy was pre-scrutinised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6 July 2022. At that meeting a number of questions were raised and the following points were noted:-
- Draft legislation that dog waste be collected separately from other waste had not progressed so separate contractors were not used for this.
 - Inserts for bins in respect of vermin were on order and there would be a further report on this to Members.
 - It was anticipated that aligning the litter strategy with the Waste and Resource Action Programme guidance would assist in monitoring better cleansing.
 - The scales of fines for fly tipping would be reviewed as part of an enforcement report which would be brought to Members later this year. It was also anticipated that the new waste and cleansing contract would bring improved reporting around fly tipping.

- Graffiti was more difficult to enforce but the Council was aware of hate crime graffiti and was working with the Police on this issue.
 - The use of income from fines was regulated.
 - The litter strategy report was a high-level strategy; more detail around enforcement, etc., would be forthcoming in a report at a later stage.
- 4.2 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that business sponsorship be investigated and further proposed that the Executive look in detail at the costings of implementation of the strategy.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 By approving a Litter Strategy, the Council can ensure that its available resources are used to deliver effective control over the street cleansing service, keeping land and highways clear of litter and adhere to legislative requirements.
- 5.2 Failure to adhere to the legislation regarding litter abatement will leave the Council at risk of being acting illegally if it does not evidence effective control over the street cleansing service by keeping land and highways clear of litter etc.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The adoption of the Litter Strategy will support the Council's Sustainability Strategy and environmental priorities, by encouraging the responsible disposal of litter across all areas of the district

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The new draft strategy has been drawn up within existing resources, however, the costs associated with any specific new initiatives arising from the strategy, such as the replacement of the street bin infrastructure; and the trial of any external enforcement company would be the subject of further reports for decision.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Rochford District Council is a Principal Litter Authority and has a duty to comply with its legal duties as set out in the Environmental Protection Act 1990. A Litter Strategy will assist in demonstrating that the Council is discharging the duty in an effective manner.

9 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and found there to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

10 RECOMMENDATION

10.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS TO THE EXECUTIVE**

- (1) That the draft Litter Strategy be approved as set out in the Appendix.
- (2) That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director of Place & Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment, to oversee the design & layout of the document, and make minor changes to the Litter Strategy in advance of publication.
- (3) That sponsorship from local businesses be investigated.
- (4) That detailed proposals regarding enforcement and costs of implementation be brought back to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny.



Director, Environment

Background Papers:-

None.

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DRAFT LITTER STRATEGY

FRONT COVER

Our Vision For Rochford District

Introduction

Dealing with litter places a significant burden on the District Council, with an annual cost to the local tax-payer which would be better spent improving other local services. In 2021/22 Rochford District Council collected approximately xxx tonnes of litter, at a cost of £xxx to the tax payer.

The environment in which people live has a profound impact on their quality of life. When our towns, villages and countryside are blighted by litter, our ability to enjoy our local environment is reduced and so too is our wellbeing. It is in all our interests to tackle this problem, to make littering socially unacceptable, to make it easy for people to do the right thing, and remove any possible excuse for anti-social behaviour.

An environment that looks cared for encourages a sense of civic pride and also encourages local investment.

(INSERT IMAGE)

Our Vision for Rochford District

A Tidy Rochford District: Cleaner & Greener

We want Rochford District to be a greener place to live in, with clean water and air, and beautiful countryside to enjoy with towns and villages that are prosperous, vibrant, and welcoming. We want to help people feel connected to the environment and able to take better informed decisions to protect and improve it; ensuring everyone can understand the value that it brings.

We want to create a litter conscious population who are aware of the sources, cost (environmental and financial) and impacts of litter in our District, and who take it upon themselves to routinely dispose of litter responsibly. We want to mobilise our whole community to take personal and collective action to reduce, and eliminate as far as possible, littering in our District. In addition, we want to facilitate the removal of littering promptly and use available enforcement powers where necessary.

(INSERT IMAGE)



We want to create a culture where it is totally unacceptable to drop litter. This means generating strong and lasting social pressure against littering, making it socially unacceptable to drop litter.

Our Vision for Rochford

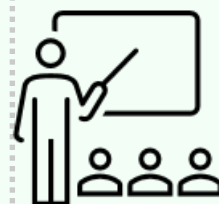
Our Strategy

Our strategy makes direct reference to the Government Litter Strategy for England, published in 2017 HM Government Litter Strategy for England April 2017. The Government have also published a 25-Year Environment Plan where their stated intention is:

"...to be the first generation to leave the natural environment of England in a better state than we found it." Our nation's future prosperity will greatly depend on how well we manage our environment.

Our strategy has also been influenced by and supports guidance issued by Waste & Resources Action Programme *"Binrastructure – The right bin in the right place"*. We intend to apply best practice in education, enforcement, and infrastructure to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour. Good infrastructure and clear expectations, supported by proportionate enforcement, helps reinforce social pressure to do the right thing. Our strategy therefore addresses cleaning as well as focusing on influencing behaviour.

3 key themes:



Education & Awareness - change the behaviour of people who feel it is acceptable to drop litter by sending clear messages



Better cleansing and litter infrastructure – make it easy to dispose of litter, provide the appropriate facilities in the right places, and collect litter in a timely fashion



Improve enforcement by exercising council powers to deal with anyone who drops litter changing behaviour

Education & Awareness



By changing the behaviours of people who feel it is acceptable to drop litter by sending clear messages we want to create a culture where it is totally unacceptable to drop litter. This means generating strong and lasting social pressure against littering, making it socially unacceptable to drop litter.

Priority 1. Clear consistent Tidy Rochford District message

To do this we need to reduce the number of people who litter consciously through education and enforcement, and to generate a social change against littering, we will:

- ♦ Spread the message that litter is harmful to people, wildlife, and the environment.
- ♦ Use recommended communication techniques from Keep Britain tidy, WRAP and RECAP.
- ♦ Promote media campaigns and other forms of communication in all kinds of places to promote the 'Right choice'.
- ♦ Promote ways of disposing different types of litter for example at recycling centres or take back to the shops.
- ♦ Promote the bulky waste service and commercial waste service and its benefits to reducing fly tipping and littering locally.
- ♦ Support groups and schools to promote anti-litter messages.



Priority 2: Tidy Rochford Culture

Show that it's socially unacceptable to drop litter, show the positive steps the community make to reduce litter, and how to dispose of litter incorrectly via different media formats.

- ♦ Promote 'Take your rubbish home' messaging
- ♦ Investigate & provide an easy system for the public to report instances of littering
- ♦ initiate targeted awareness campaigns
- ♦ include dog-fouling in our definition of litter and promote ways of dealing with it. Dog waste can be bagged and deposited in dog bins or in litter bins

Priority three: Community Involvement

To establish partnership working with organisations, communities, schools, and businesses, to extend the capacity for action to address the problems of litter.

- ♦ Formalise litter-picking volunteers and help with equipment. Initiatives include setting up community litter groups with their own twitter accounts and WhatsApp groups to keep an eye on their local patch
- ♦ Continue to provide equipment and resource to community litter picking groups, including scouts, schools and youth groups
- ♦ Support volunteers and other groups, businesses and schools with anti-litter and recycling promotional work
- ♦ recognise and reward volunteers, groups, and businesses for their contribution to tackling litter
- ♦ Investigate promoting the Green Dog Walkers scheme to increase responsible dog ownership with a view to reducing dog fouling

Better Cleansing and Litter Infrastructure



Litter and flytipping can deter visitors from spending time in an area and businesses may also be put off moving to areas affected by litter. Making easier to dispose of litter, by providing the appropriate facilities in the right places, and collect litter in a timely fashion.

Priority four: to establish a system of ongoing audit and review to ensure our provision for litter collection and containment is efficient and effective.

- ♦ Establish a digitised baseline description of our public place infrastructure & bins
- ♦ Monitor the placement effectiveness and condition of bins & develop replacement schedule for bins in a timely fashion
- ♦ Establish a system for collection crew members to log bin information into smart sheet technology, to increase intelligence around our infrastructure
- ♦ Ensure bins are only installed in areas where there is a genuine need, through surveying, and an ease of access to the bin for servicing.
- ♦ Aim to replace old open- litter bins as soon as budgets allow. These bins without lids cause wind blown litter and no longer fit for purpose.
- ♦ Move forward with dual use bins for litter and dog waste, reducing the number of bins we provide
- ♦ Continue to review the types of bins available to maximise usage including reducing smoking related litter and the potential to use bin sensors in hard to reach areas

Better Cleansing and Litter Infrastructure



Priority 5 Tackling litter issues with the right bin: make it as easy as possible for people to dispose of their rubbish properly

- Recyclable rubbish – provide recycling on the go in hotspot areas
- Dog fouling – promotion of dog waste can go in litter bins, upgrade bins as needed.
- Schools and parks litter hotspots – easy to use litter bins to encourage the 'right choice' at a young age
- Cigarette waste hotspots to have litter bins with cigarette waste extinguishing and collection incorporated.
- Litter along roads & lay-bys – continue to litter pick where safe to do so

Priority 6: Street Cleansing: create a public realm with well-maintained street furniture and bins where they are needed and easily accessible to all users

- ♦ Ensure bins are clean and easy to find and area around the bin is clean and tidy
- ♦ Review and react to changes in litter hotspots through monitoring from our cleansing/ Streetscene teams.
- ♦ Events on RDC land must have sufficient litter collections and clean ups.
- ♦ Review schedules for emptying bins and ensure means of adapting where extra or fewer collections are needed
- ♦ Continue to review route monitoring of cleansing rounds seeking staff views and using the technology available

Improve Enforcement



Enforcement will be a last resort but nevertheless it is a necessary tool, especially when trying to change the behavior patterns of habitual litterers. Education measures will help to embed a culture which views littering as an undesirable act which creates an avoidable problem. However, in order to change behaviour effectively we also need to back up this social message with appropriate and proportionate enforcement.

Priority seven: Enforcement -To actively pursue opportunities to increase the enforcement capability and the related deterrent effect.

- ♦ Take a firm enforcement approach to any detected offences of littering and dog fouling and all detected offences will be dealt with by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- ♦ Promote transparency and accurate reporting of enforcement action against littering, so that offenders know they will be punished if they are caught
- ♦ To pilot and review the viability of partnership working with external enforcement providers - to work alongside our street scene Officer.
- ♦ Focus on town centres - provide focused enforcement patrols in town centres where litter is commonly dropped.
- ♦ Implement a programme of “out of hours” working patterns to detect offences at the weekend or other times beyond ordinary working hours
- ♦ Continue to use of detection tools such as CCTV in problem areas.
- ♦ Ensure that businesses have adequate trade waste collections in place and pursue those that do not.

How we will measure our success

The following targets and performance indicators have been put in place to monitor and manage the progress to achieve the strategy objectives:

Priority	Target	Indicator
<i>Priority 1: Clear consistent Tidy Rochford District message</i>	5% incremental increase on baseline year	Uptake of Bulky collection service
	12 per year	Number of press release
	10% increase on baseline year	Number of hits/likes etc?
<i>Priority 2: Tidy Rochford Culture</i>	New Litter reporting App in place by 2023	Litter reporting App in Place
<i>Priority 3: Community Involvement</i>	10% increase in community litter picks by 2024	Number of community litter picks
<i>Priority 4: Better cleaning and litter infrastructure</i>	5% incremental increase on baseline year	Tonnage of bin waste collected
	10% of bin stock replaced/removed or installed per year	Number of Bins installed/replaced
	Bins Audit to be completed in 2022	Bin Audit Complete
<i>Priority 5: Tackling litter issues with the right bin</i>	5% incremental increase on baseline year	% of Bins waste recycled
	5% incremental increase on baseline year	Tonnage of bin waste collected
<i>Priority 6: Street Cleansing</i>	Initial Baseline to be established	Grade of Cleansing
	5% decrease year on year	Number of Fly Tips
<i>Priority 7: Enforcement</i>	50% increase FPNs by 2024	FPNs issued
	Enforcement Partnership in place by 2022	Enforcement Partnership in Place

REAR COVER