

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 16th April 2009

Subject: Tidy Business Awards

Report of: Executive Director of Environmental Services

Contact officer: Neil Fearnley ext. 2084

Purpose / summary: To inform Members of action being taken through the 'Tidy Business Awards' to reduce unnecessary and wasteful packaging in response to a Council motion.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: The Tidy Business Awards Programme is a nationally accredited scheme run by ENCAMS.

Recommendation / decision: To note the positive action being taken to support local businesses and retailers in minimising waste and reducing the availability of free disposable plastic bags as part of a package of environmental improvements.

Key Decision: This report does not involve a key decision.

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	Within existing budget
Staffing:	Within existing resources
Policy:	n/a
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	None required
Wards affected:	All

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **N/A**

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **N/A**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No**

* delete which applicable

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x		
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	x

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
		16.4.09	

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer M. Kimber

Date 8.4.09

1. Background:

1.1 The following motion was referred from Council for Cabinet to consider:-

“This Council seeks to further support and encourage retailers, businesses and commercial manufacturers to reduce unnecessary and wasteful packaging, in particular the widespread use of plastic bags.

This Council resolves to take the lead in reducing free plastic bag provision by launching a borough wide campaign to gain voluntary agreement between the Council, business, and other interested parties to end the practice of providing free plastic bags within Wigan Borough” (submitted by Councillor R. M. Bleakley).

1.2 This report sets out the work that has been ongoing since August 2008 in conjunction with ENCAMS and local businesses, that both supports and develops the proposal contained in the above motion. This has been delivered through the Tidy Business Awards Programme.

2. What is the Tidy Business Awards Programme?

2.1 The Tidy Business Awards (TBA) Programme is a nationally accredited scheme run by ENCAMS, a charity group that runs the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign, who are based in Wigan. The programme assesses businesses against a range of environmental criteria. The assessments are graded at Bronze, Silver and Gold award. It is an ideal mechanism to improve Wigan Council’s relationship with our business community by incentivising good environmental practice. It can also be seen as the counter measure to enforcement work that sometimes needs to be carried out with our businesses that often creates a negative relationship.

3. What is the aim of the TBA Programme?

3.1 The main aims of the programme are:-

- To build links with the business sector and encourage them to ensure that they are not contributing to wider cleanliness issues through either their products or their waste.
- To reduce, re-use and recycle business waste wherever possible.
- To give something back to the community in which they are based, for example, take part in litter picks, sponsor Wigan Borough In Bloom activities, donate trees.

3.2 Strategically, the intention is to raise awareness of environmental issues and to bring about cleaner, greener town centres which people will want to revisit so there is an economic as well as an environmental aim behind the programme.

4. What are the benefits to the TBA Programme?

4.1 These include:-

- Enhanced relationship between Wigan Council and the business community
- Support businesses to minimise waste to help the environment and save money on waste disposal costs.
- Cleaner, greener shopping areas.
- Greater potential for shoppers to return.
- Positive publicity for both the business and the Council.
- Helping businesses to avoid financial penalties for non compliance.
- Greater staff morale by taking part in improving the local environment.
- Contribute to improved standards of trade waste management across the UK.

5. Current Situation

5.1 The Tidy Business Award was piloted in Jaxons Court and Hallgate, Wigan town centre in August / September 2008 where 16 businesses were assessed. Of these, 6 achieved Bronze level, 5 are at Silver level and 5 are at Gold level.

5.2 During February and March 2009, further assessments have taken place in four additional town centres. 10 businesses in Tyldesley (2 Bronze, 3 Silver, 5 Gold); 9 businesses in Ashton (1 Bronze, 5 Silver, 3 Gold); 3 businesses in Atherton (1 Bronze, 1 Silver, 1 Gold); and 2 businesses in Leigh (2 Silver).

5.3 As part of the initial pilot scheme in Wigan 1,000 Bags for Life were distributed to encourage businesses to take part and demonstrate how wasteful disposable plastic bags can be replaced by more sustainable carriers. Following the initial provision of free bags, businesses are encouraged to continue offering their own Bags for Life to customers. This helps them maintain their Tidy Business Award and develops the move towards a 'plastic bag free' Wigan borough.

6. Key Roles - Environmental Education Team & Town Centre Management

6.1 The Environmental Education Team and Town Centre Management teams in the Environmental Services Department are trained as assessors for TBA and it is their joint role to identify businesses to target in respective town centres. Businesses are targeted in terms of type, such as fast food establishments, or in locations where street cleanliness is a concern.

6.2 The Environmental Education Team is the lead body which retains all information regarding the TBAs at a central point. The team is also responsible for training 40 officers from Neighbourhoods Division so that the TBA programme can then be rolled out at a neighbourhood level, for example to parades of shops or precincts. Following the training sessions,

Neighbourhood officers will be responsible for carrying out TBA assessments in their neighbourhoods and reporting these to the Environmental Education Team in order to maintain a strategic overview as the programme develops.

7. Future Programme

- 7.1 Over the next six months it is intended to complete the first 'wave' of Tidy Business Awards in 7 of our key town centres. In Wigan, Tyldesley and Ashton this has already been achieved. During April / May press releases will be issued and other publicity opportunities sought for both Tyldesley and Ashton.
- 7.2 Further work will take place in Atherton and Leigh with the aim to have a minimum of 10 businesses in each town centre signed up to the programme. Following this, the programme will be rolled out into Hindley town centre and one other town centre. The remaining town centre will be chosen based on the results of recent environmental monitoring surveys.
- 7.3 It is also intended to expand the number of businesses in Wigan during May 2009 in order to keep the programme evolving. In addition, all businesses signed up to the TBA will be invited to participate in the 'Big Tidy Up' campaign during May 2009. The 'Big Tidy Up' is a national initiative being run by ENCAMS asking for as many partners as possible to carry out a litter pick. Wigan TBAs supported this last year.

8. Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option

- 8.1 The nationally accredited scheme run by ENCAMS was assessed as being most suitable for raising awareness of environmental good practice within the local business community. It also compliments other national initiatives introduced by major retailers to reduce levels of food packaging and use of disposable plastic bags.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The Tidy Business Award Programme has been successful in encouraging local businesses to take ownership of a range of environmental issues. These have included the need to minimise the amount of waste produced and to move towards more sustainable ways of managing their waste. Replacing the use of disposable plastic bags has been one example of this that has been supported by local businesses and achieved through the use of incentives and positive publicity.
- 9.2 Members are asked to note this report and be satisfied that the proposal contained in the motion raised at Council is being pursued in a positive manner.

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section:

Policy/Service Area:

Person Completing Form:	Date:

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race			Disability		
Ethnicity			Gender		
Age			Religion		
Class			Sexual Orientation		

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

Action Plan – <i>What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?</i>

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

Timescale	
Responsibility	
Comments	

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	
Section/Team Plan	
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review

