

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 11th December 2008

Subject: Our Response to Fast Food Litter and Associated Problems

Report of: Executive Director – Environmental Services

Contact officer: Sally Wolstencroft Ext 5102

Purpose / summary: This report responds to a recent Council motion referred to Cabinet on 13th November 2008, about the negative effects of fast food litter. Its purpose is to inform Cabinet about actions being taken to tackle fast food litter, and the positive impact they are having on local environmental quality across the borough.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: N/A

Recommendation / decision: That Cabinet note the report and acknowledge the positive steps being taken to tackle the problem

The decision will be made as a result of this report and will be published within 48 hours

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	None
Staffing:	None
Policy:	None
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report
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? **No ***

Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **No ***

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
		11 th December 2008	

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

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 26th November 2008

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 A motion referred from Council to Cabinet on 13th November 2008 expressed concern about litter that originates from fast-food takeaway outlets, and the adverse impact it has on residents and borough image, and its associated risk to public health through the spread of vermin. The motion made a number of suggestions, that: -
- A new initiative is needed to tackle the problem
 - Steps should be taken to reduce the amounts of generated waste, including packaging, and to promote/install on-site recycling facilities
 - A programme of street-based action and visits to fast food outlets was required to promote responsible waste management and 'green' practices
 - A robust, focused education and enforcement programme is needed
- 1.2 This report is to inform Cabinet of the positive, collaborative steps that are already in place to address these issues and to deliver on our Local Area Agreement priority to improve the cleanliness and greenness of the borough and create a stronger, more resilient community.

2. Background:

- 2.1 Cabinet will be aware that as part of my Neighbourhood structure, which promotes a locality based approach to services, I have moved away from a perpetual and unsustainable cycle that focused on litter removal and reactive 'fire-fighting'. I have significantly restructured core 'street-scene' and community engagement functions.
- 2.2 Cleansing, anti-social behaviour, environmental awareness and enforcement and Township/community engagement resources have been reshaped into five responsive area-based teams based within the Neighbourhood Services division. The primary purpose of Neighbourhood Services is to deliver against NI 195 street cleanliness targets aligned to the relevant LAA priority.
- 2.3 We are doing this by working with communities, Members and partners to identify the most important issues that need attention, deciding on the best course of action, agreeing who should lead and who else needs to provide support, and then targeting resources where they are needed.
- 2.4 The subject of this report – tackling fast food litter - highlights two elements that are central to effecting positive change; the PACT community engagement process, and the role of Neighbourhood Services as a key deliverer and commissioner of 'street-scene' services. It also demonstrates how teams are engaging and working with other partners to deliver efficiencies and improvements.

3. Identifying Priorities:

- 3.1 The department has adopted the ENCAMS cleanliness performance management framework, which is used to inform the Local Environmental Quality Survey of England. Neighbourhood Officers undertake detailed

cleanliness surveys across the borough identifying problems such as litter, dog fouling, graffiti etc.

- 3.2 This methodology also provides additional detailed management information, such as prevalence, types and likely sources/causes of litter to inform borough-wide and neighbourhood service delivery.
- 3.3 It reveals that the areas affected most by fast food litter are the town centres, secondary retail areas and other highways, such as estate cut-throughs and ginnels. The information also enables us to drill down and identify detail about the type and likely origin of fast food.

4 Cleansing Strategies

- 4.1 The cleansing element of Neighbourhood Teams uses ENCAMS methodology to put resources where they are needed. Each of the five Neighbourhood Teams has some similar and shared priorities, like fast food litter, and others that are specific to their ward or twin-township area
- 4.2 The move towards area-based cleansing has enabled the service to stretch existing resources to remove fast-food litter from unadopted land and streets. Information about persistent problems is being fed into our prevention, campaigning and enforcement resources to tackle the causes and sources of the litter to reduce and eliminate the problem.

5 Prevention Strategies

- 5.1 **Keep Britain Tidy Business Awards –Encouraging Compliance** I am promoting the ENCAMS programme that publicly recognises good waste management practice and community spirit. It is open to all businesses but specifically helps fast-food outlets achieve standards set out in Defra's 'Food on the Go' Voluntary Code of Practice.
- 5.2 Participating businesses agree to comply with the legal duty of care around waste management as a basic standard, and to keep shop frontages clean. They are also assessed on voluntary elements such as how well they minimise, reduce, re-use and recycle their waste - including packaging. Depending on performance, they can receive Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards.
- 5.3 **EcoSchools:** My Environmental Education team engage with children and young people through the EcoSchools programme to encourage responsible disposal of litter.
- 5.4 **Campaigning:** Environmental Services is delivering a borough-wide fast food campaign geared at the early teens and 18 – 24yrs age groups, which local and national data identify as most likely to deposit fast-food litter.
- 5.5 It will coincide with ENCAMS national fast food campaign in January 2009, and benefit from greater publicity and a reduction in advertising costs. The campaign will also target town centre and secondary retail area businesses that sell or serve food and promote the Voluntary Code for Food on the Go through the Keep Britain Tidy Business Awards.
- 5.6 **Visits and Formal Advice:** Fast food outlets are visited by a range of officers including, Pest Control, environmental health, Business Compliance and Public Health teams, who offer advice on aspects of responsible waste

management, promote Keep Britain Tidy Business Awards and Healthy Business Awards

6. Enforcement Strategies

- 6.1 An enforcement policy has been drafted and is currently in the final stages of consultation. It will ensure a consistent, appropriate and robust approach to address irresponsible behaviour.
- 6.2 To date, 100 operatives and officers from Environmental Services, Wigan and Leigh Housing and Wigan Leisure Culture Trust have undertaken a partnership enforcement training programme. This is almost complete and provides a competent evidence gathering and enforcement resource that can be deployed according to need.
- 6.3 Action that is taken in respect of someone dropping fast food litter ranges from informal advice to a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

7. Conclusions:

- 7.1 The above actions are aimed at improving levels of cleanliness across the board.
- 7.2 Initial performance figures show an improving trend in the level of cleanliness that is better than the target set for Wigan by Government North West.
- 7.3 Positive steps have been taken to tackle all litter, including fast-food litter