

Agenda Item 4

Strategic Leadership Team Lead Officer	Jack Straw
Author	Jack Straw
Telephone	01306 879246
Email	jack.straw@molevalley.gov.uk
Date	10 th September 2019
Ward (s) affected	All
Key Decision	Yes

Subject	Council Motion – Don't be a tosser campaign.
----------------	--

Recommendations

- (i) Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider if the Keep Britain Tidy campaign to discourage littering from vehicles should be supported and publicised at an estimated cost of up to £14,000. This work to include purchasing the standard package of publicity materials
- (ii) Cabinet and Council be advised accordingly
- (iii) In the event that Scrutiny Committee wishes to support the campaign, Cabinet be asked to recommend to Council that £14,000 be allocated from the General Fund reserve to this project.

Executive Summary

A motion was submitted to Council on 9th July 2019 asking it to join the Keep Britain Tidy "Don't be a tosser" campaign. This seeks to raise awareness of the penalties for discarding litter from vehicles. The motion was referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration. This report explains the background to the Keep Britain Tidy campaign and the estimated costs to the Council of supporting it.

Corporate Priority

The Keep Britain Tidy "Don't be a tosser" campaign to discourage littering from vehicles reflects MVDC's community wellbeing priority to tackle environmental and community anti-social behavior by working with partners to deliver education and effective enforcement.

The Council has the authority to determine the Recommendations

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of Council on 9th July, a motion asking MVDC to campaign for all road users to take their rubbish home was referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- 1.2 Details of the motion are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

The Keep Britain Tidy "Don't be a tosser campaign".

- 1.3 In April 2018 the Littering from Vehicles outside London (Keepers: Civil Penalties) Regulations 2018 came into force. They enable District Councils to issue a civil penalty notice to the keeper of a vehicle from which litter is thrown. To issue a civil penalty notice for littering from a vehicle, enforcement officers have to be satisfied that on the balance of probabilities, litter was thrown from that vehicle. The penalty is

£100 or £65 if the penalty is paid early.

- 1.4 The Joint Enforcement Team and Civil Enforcement Officers can use the Littering from Vehicles outside London Regulations if littering from vehicles is observed. Third party witnesses can also submit reports of littering from vehicles which are processed by the Fraud and Investigation Team.
- 1.5 On the back of these Regulations, the Keep Britain Tidy “Don’t be a tosser” campaign was launched in October 2018. It was designed to help local authorities tackle the issue of vehicle related litter and to bring to the attention of drivers and passengers that they could face fines if rubbish is seen being thrown out of a car window. It is a campaign aimed at preventing anti-social behavior and reducing the amount of litter on roads and verges.
- 1.6 There are two campaign packages that can be purchased from Keep Britain Tidy. Details of the materials provided with each package is set out in Appendix 2. Package one costs £1,200 and provides digital and hard copy material to run the campaign. For example posters showing discarded fast food packaging and drinks cans. Package two costs £2,445. While Package two provides a range of materials to use at events and roadshows the numbers provided are small. In light of this, should Scrutiny Committee be minded to support the proposals, it is recommended that the standard package (Package 1) be purchased.
- 1.7 The majority of the material provided is in a digital format so running the campaign will require further costs to cover printing artwork for buses, bus shelters and billboards.

Bus shelters

- 1.8 The motion proposed that MVDC should be encouraged to place “Don’t be a tosser” posters on bus shelters. The cost of this is likely to be in the order of £6,000. This would allow for the display of a poster for 2 weeks on 10 sites and a further two week display of the poster on ten other sites for two weeks. There are nearly thirty bus shelter sites where the poster could be displayed. Availability of space on bus shelters has not been checked at this stage.

Bus Backs

- 1.9 There are several bus operators providing services across Mole Valley. Operators do not always keep a bus on the same route each day so there is no guarantee that a bus with a Mole Valley “Don’t be a tosser” campaign poster would be operating in Mole Valley every day. It may be possible that an operator would agree to place a poster on buses operating on a specific route, for example the 465 from Kingston to Dorking via Leatherhead. It is understood that the cost would be in the region of £4,150 for three months.

Working with Partners

- 1.10 The Mole Valley Borough Commander has indicated the Police would support the campaign by sharing social media communications; briefing the Neighbourhood Teams and highlighting enforcement on social media. Surrey County Council, Surrey Heartlands ICS, Parish Councils and Residents Associations have been approached to find out their appetite for working with MVDC on promoting the campaign. Their views are awaited.
- 1.11 There are limited staff resources to run and promote the Keep Britain Campaign in Mole Valley. If it is decided to implement the recommendations it would be useful to explore whether or not any other Surrey authorities would like to join us in implementing this campaign.

Dot Matrix signs

1.12 The Surrey County Council has been asked if it is possible to use the Dot Matrix signs, for example those on the A24, to display the “Don’t be a tosser” strap line. It would need some additional text encouraging drivers and their passengers to take their litter home or risk a fine.

1.13 Next Steps

The decision regarding whether or not to implement such a campaign is an Executive function and lies with the Cabinet. However, given that there is no funding available to support such a project, Council would have to release the necessary funding. As such, should Scrutiny Committee want to support the proposals outlined in the Motion it will need to recommend this to Cabinet who, in turn, would need to support the proposals and recommend to Council that the necessary funding be released from general fund reserves.

Financial Implications

The cost of using the Keep Britain Tidy’s “Don’t be a tosser” campaign material is either £1,200 or £2,445 depending on which package is chosen. A bus poster campaign is estimated to cost in the order of £6,000 and a bus back poster campaign a further £4,150. There are also likely to be printing costs which at this stage cannot be estimated. The total cost of running a campaign using Keep Britain Tidy material is estimated to be in the region of £11,350 to £12,595, plus printing costs, say £14,000 in total. There is no specific budget provision for running the campaign and, as such, Council would be required to allocate funding from General Fund reserves. Serving civil penalty notices for littering from vehicles would result in some income but it is difficult to estimate what the level would be.

Legal Implications

None as a direct result of this report.

2.0 Corporate Implications

Monitoring Officer commentary

The Monitoring Officer confirms that all relevant legal implications have been taken into account

S151 Officer commentary

The S151 Officer confirms that all relevant financial risks and implications have been taken into account, and that the level of the General Fund reserve is sufficient to enable the funding of this scheme.

Risk Implications

There is a risk that the campaign does not register with vehicle drivers and does not result in a change of habits by those who are disposed to littering from vehicles.

It will also be difficult to measure whether the campaign is a success. This could be done by measuring litter levels before and after the campaign but the street cleaning contract requires Amey to keep litter levels down so it is likely to be difficult to get an accurate fix on measuring litter levels. Measuring the number of fixed penalty notices resulting from littering from vehicles, or by an evaluation of the communications campaign might also be possible.

If the campaign gives rise to an increase in reports of littering from vehicles, the work load of the Fraud and Investigations Team will be increased. A decision would need to be made as to whether this work should be given the priority over other calls on the Team’s resources.

A report of an incident would not necessarily result in the implementation of a Civil Penalty Notice (CPN), as the incident usually require corroborating evidence in the

form of other witnesses, photographs, video, etc, or witnessed by an Enforcement Officer. The ratio of successful CPN's to incidents is relatively low.

Equalities Implications

None directly as a result of this report.

Employment Issues

The Joint Enforcement Team and Civil Enforcement Officers are empowered to take action under the provisions of the Littering from Vehicles Regulations. The Fraud and Investigation Team review reports of littering from vehicles which are submitted by third parties. If the campaign is successful there should be reduction in the level of littering from vehicles and less need for intervention and prosecutions. However, in the short term, there could be an increase in workload as a result of increased awareness and reporting by third parties. There will also be a need for staff resource to publicise the campaign and arrange the bus shelter/bus displays. This would impact on the communications team and the work of the waste management co-ordinator.

Sustainability Issues

Discarded litter on roadside verges and ditches is not only unsightly but can have adverse environmental consequences, including for wildlife. The removal of litter from verges (but not ditches) is included in the street cleaning contract. In addition local volunteer groups carry out litter picking and are supported through the provision of equipment and payment of £1 for every bag of litter that is collected. Despite the work of the street cleaning contractors and the endeavours of volunteers litter will continue to tarnish the appearance of the District unless those who are predisposed to discard litter from vehicles can be encouraged to stop this anti-social behaviour. A campaign to highlight the possibility of a fine for littering from vehicles could help in reducing this anti-social behaviour

Consultation

The views of Surrey County Council, Surrey Police, Surrey Heartlands ICS and Parish Councils and Residents Associations have been sought.

Communications

None

Background Papers

None.