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CABINET

Clean Streets

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr A Chadderton – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact: Helen Lockwood- Deputy Chief Executive- People & Place

Report Author: Carol Brown - Director Environmental Management

Ext. ext. 4452

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Reason for Decision

Clean streets and tackling issues of fly tipping and littering that blight our neighbourhoods remain a priority for Oldham residents and for the Council.

This report outlines a renewed approach focused on community engagement and confirms the investment and resources required in order to strengthen current street cleaning and enforcement activity.

Recommendations

1. Members are recommended to agree option 2 for the provision of the additional resource as outlined in the report

Investment in Clean Streets - Proposal

1 Background

- 1.1 Research shows that people do not always behave “rationally” in that they don’t weigh up the information about costs, benefits and penalties before deciding how to act – including when littering and fly tipping. Recent insight work shows that people’s behaviour is strongly influenced by a range of factors in their immediate environment and unconscious thought.
- 1.2 Oldham’s long-term strategy to tackle fly tipping and littering recognises these points and the approach is designed around clear messaging and informing followed by intervention and enforcement. This supports the responsible majority and provides a sound foundation for successful enforcement action against consistent perpetrators. The revised and enhanced approach for clean streets links directly to the Council’s covid recovery strategy and has been identified as a key strand for supporting Oldham moving forward.
- 1.3 The Council’s Cooperative Vision, where everyone does their bit includes a wider understanding of the local drivers behind behaviours and a series of projects have been undertaken over the last twelve months to actively engage with communities.
- 1.4 A range of interventions have been trialed in hotspot areas where litter and dumping are more prevalent. Working with communities and local leaders has provided a sound baseline to enable behavior change.
- 1.5 However, each of the hotspot areas are densely populated with a mix of social issues including a prevalence of poorly managed rental properties with transient populations leading to a lack of ownership and pride in an area. It is therefore recognised that in addition to the longer term aspiration of improving behavior there is a need to manage the cleanliness in these areas to a standard which supports and encourages behaviour in a positive way.
- 1.6 Improving the local environment to best effect is supported by a wider approach to place management practiced through programmes to improve a location. A successful approach to place based working will include a mix of private, public and/or voluntary organisations. Despite the wide variety of place management initiatives the underlying common factor is usually a desire to improve the local environment and its effectiveness for its users, whether they are residents, business owners or investors. Education to encourage wholesale change over time underpinned where necessary by enforcement which holds those parties to account where there is a complete disregard for the consequences of poor habits which lowers the potential for an area.
- 1.7 To support this approach whilst tackling known fly tipping hotspots a proposal was developed and implemented in 2018. The resource identified to deliver was as follows:
 - 1.7.1 To increase the number of Dandy Cart operators by 19 taking on the responsibility in the high-density areas and giving a high level of visibility to the local community
 - 1.7.2 The proposed dandy cart resource supported by an additional mobile team (2 FTE) to ensure that any waste collected will be removed in a timely and efficient manner. This team provides additional resource and enables dedicated teams to work to East and West Oldham.

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- 1.7.3 To reduce the duplication of visits the alignment of a mobile team with enforcement has proved very successful in reducing the time taken to clear reported general dumping. The enforcement resource was increased by 4 FTE's however, this was subsequently restructured to contribute towards the corporate savings required. The restructured service supports the strong enforcement needed to deal with industrial and trade fly tipping prosecutions.
- 1.7.4 7 day working across the teams was introduced to maximise the use of vehicles and ensure effective cleaning for the full week
- 1.7.5 2 additional street sweepers
- 1.8 Environmental Management was allocated additional funding of £600,000 (2018) to enable this approach.
- 1.9 The roles that the appointed staff undertake includes the following range of duties: -
- Emptying public litter bins.
 - Fly tipping removal.
 - Routed Street cleansing.
 - Dedicated area-based teams.
 - Alleyway clean up.
 - Enforcement clearance team.
 - 4 on 4 off working- 7 days a week.
- 1.10 The additional staff complimented the existing workforce and enabled the service to have a far more flexible and proactive approach covering 7 days of the week. This approach makes full use of the available vehicles and mechanical sweepers leading to an initial reduction in the number of complaints & a significant increase in the number of compliments.
- 1.11 The focus on Gateways and Corridors, District Centers and Oldham Town Centre still provides excellent results and the approach ensures that those living, working and visiting Oldham have the right experience.
- 1.12 There are many examples of communities engaging and supporting clean ups with support as required from the council. This approach has been extremely successful, for example in in Coldhurst and Glodwick through My Coldhurst and the Ghazali Trust respectively and this approach is to strengthen and encourage more local community engagement.
- 1.13 Following an independent audit undertaken by Tidy Britain on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Oldham was credited with a 'Passing Grade'. This result, prior to the pandemic, shows the investment made into additional street cleansing and enforcement took the Borough to a standard that is nationally recognized.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 Whilst the increased investment provided an improvement in a number of identified hotspots the picture has become increasingly complex over the last 12-16 months as the pandemic took hold and patterns of behaviour changed:
- Large numbers of people were furloughed or worked from home and therefore waste shifted from the workplace to the home environment.

- Schools and colleges were closed, and again this gave rise to an increase in the amount of waste produced in local neighbourhoods. Some areas coped well whilst in others the patterns of behaviour seen prior to the pandemic were amplified with the tonnages of waste collected and the number of service requests showing a significant increase.
- Whilst our teams have worked throughout the pandemic some of the restrictions put in place to ensure the safety of staff initially impacted on productivity (e.g. isolation of vulnerable groups of staff). However, the risk assessments are now in place for all groups and with the success of the vaccination programme productivity has returned to pre Covid levels.

2.2 To this point the joint approach of education, enforcement and cleaning has worked well and the outcome-based monitoring has shown that large parts of the borough is maintained to a good level. However, as more people have accessed the countryside and local beauty spots for exercise litter has become a more widespread problem. In addition, people not being in the workplace for a variety of reasons, has driven the potential for a general deterioration in known hotspot areas which has been noted during the pandemic.

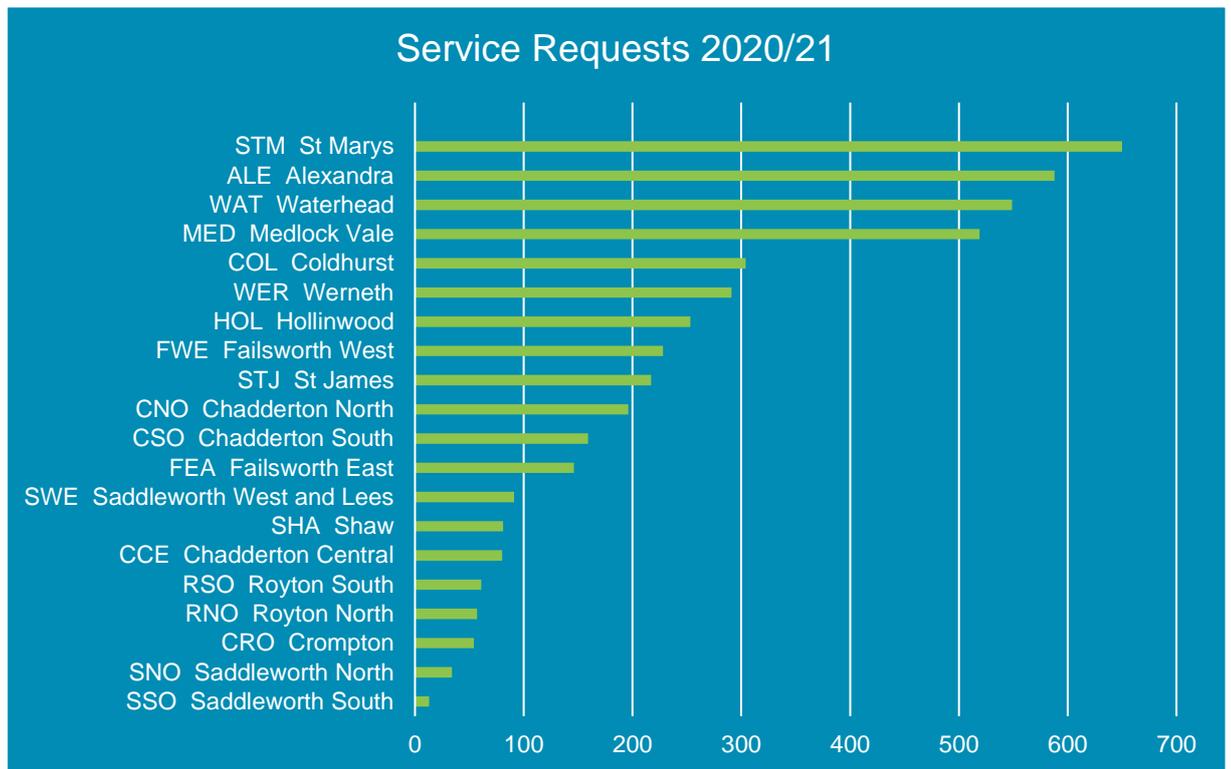
2.3 Service requests

2.3.1 The figures on service requests received support the points made above and show a reduction following the initial investment followed by an increase during the pandemic.

Year	No. of Service requests received re fly tipping/dumping
2018/19	4785
2019/20	4382
2020/21	5822

2.3.2 The numbers also show a correlation between high numbers of service requests, areas of deprivation, predominantly in our central wards, and areas with high numbers of poorly managed rental properties.

2.4 Hotspot Areas



2.5 Enforcement activity

2.5.1 Oldham has always sought to take strong action against those who litter and fly tip. Benchmarked activity clearly shows the strong position taken on enforcement when compared to other areas in Greater Manchester

	Total fly-tipping incidents				Fly-tipping fixed penalty notice actions				Fly-tipping prosecution actions			
	2018/19		2019/20		2018/19		2019/20		2018/19		2019/20	
	Raw value	Direction	Raw value	Direction	Raw value	Direction	Raw value	Direction	Raw value	Direction	Raw value	Direction
Oldham	3,042	Increasing	2,066	Decreasing	515	Increasing	496	Decreasing	32	Increasing	77	Increasing
Bolton	1,004	Decreasing	935	Decreasing	181	Decreasing	133	Decreasing	65	Increasing	46	Decreasing
Bury	2,522	Decreasing	2,677	Increasing	6	Increasing	0	Decreasing	0	Decreasing	1	Increasing
Manchester	19,056	Increasing	18,270	Decreasing	1,366	Decreasing	1,595	Increasing	220	Decreasing	308	Increasing
Rochdale	5,218	Increasing	6,111	Increasing	95	Decreasing	56	Decreasing	27	Increasing	18	Decreasing
Salford	2,759	Increasing	4,187	Increasing	1	Increasing	1	No change	10	Decreasing	4	Decreasing
Stockport	2,663	Increasing	2,511	Decreasing	3	Increasing	10	Increasing	0	No change	9	Increasing
Tameside	1,501	Decreasing	3,367	Increasing	174	Decreasing	206	Increasing	0	No change	0	No change
Trafford	2,905	Increasing	3,274	Increasing	405	Increasing	23	Decreasing	1	Increasing	1	No change
Wigan	1,696	Decreasing	887	Decreasing	310	Increasing	251	Decreasing	6	Increasing	6	No change

2.6 Work continues at key fly tipping spots to introduce physical barriers to reduce access and potential for remote dumping. The following areas will have physical measures installed to improve the position:

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- Rose Hey Lane – Failsworth East; closure notice is in progress- Barriers commissioned in readiness.
 - Propps Hall Road – Failsworth East: vacant plot to side of shops. Barrier is almost complete and joint work with First Choice Homes to allow advance works on their land is supporting this work and will provide shops with access.
 - Oldham Edge – Royton South Council site - barrier has been commissioned and will be installed as on as and Revolution radio provided with key to access.
 - St James Street – St James ward (Derker). Another prolific site for commercial fly tipping located behind St James church, the road is not used for access. Requires closure notice and barrier to be commissioned.
 - Hill Farm Close – Medlock Vale: work required across services to secure a sustainable solution as the land is identified for future housing provision.

3 Proposal to enhance operational capacity

- 3.1 It is recognised that clean streets are a priority and following the investment in 2018 a number of issues remain. The number of service requests to deal with littering, dumping (black bag waste) and fly tipping has increased over the last 16 months as people’s behaviour patterns have changed during the pandemic. It is noted that there is a generalized increase in litter for the reasons outlined above and the suggested approach supports more focused District led interventions.
- 3.2 It is therefore proposed to reinvigorate the service with additional resource as outlined below to support and extend on current activity. A key element of the work going forward will be through community focused, co-operative activity in neighbourhoods – led by local elected members. This would include monthly litter picks and this work will be supported through the establishment of the new role of Environment Marshals and Engagement Coordinators.
- 3.3 The environment marshal would concentrate on low level enforcement, provision of advice and education, signposting other issues to other services but also looking forward seeking to resolve persistent issues and locations through a placed based approach - working in partnership to understand the route causes and problem solving.
- 3.4 Working alongside would be the Engagement Coordinators. These roles will provide an active interface between communities and council services. Engagement with our communities is a crucial element of the approach to clean streets and in particular to support behaviour change, support engagement activity alongside elected members, support the develop of community involvement and support monthly litter picks. Capacity would be required to have door to door conversations, engage with our voluntary, community and faith sector and work with our newly established Community Champions network. The pandemic has shown what can be achieved working with communities and neighbourhoods to support each other and solve problems – this new approach will build on this learning. The teams would support an intelligence led approach (both data and community insight) and align its efforts to working in the place supporting the overall activity of clean streets.

3.5

Role	FTE	Cost 21/22 (£000)	Cost 22/23 (£000)
Dandy men (district alignment)	5 plus 2 grade 2 support	99	174
Environment Marshals (district alignment)	5	99	173
Engagement/Co-ordinators	3	58	102
Service Vehicles X 2		66 (capital)	
Additional Flytipping clearance team	2x teams (4 per team)	144	243
Additional Temporary Agency Flytipping Clearance team (21/22 only)	2x teams (4 per team)	102	0
Commissioning (additional resource for key campaigns eg dog fouling , comms etc)		29	50

- 3.6 Detailed financial comments are included later in the report but it is intended during 2021/22 to utilize existing resources and the future financial consequences of this approach will be included in budget setting process for 2022/23. It is unknown at this stage the impact collecting additional waste may have on the collection levy and this will be included in future cabinet financial monitoring reports.
- 3.7 The work will be underpinned by a comprehensive communications strategy and the Council is relaunching a staff volunteering programme which will allow staff volunteers to come forward and work up to 3 days per calendar year on clean up activities to complement the work outlined.
- 3.8 It is essential the activity and investment is aligned to a comprehensive place based approach and that the programme of activity is co-ordinated with elected members working at a cluster level driving and supporting the initiative.
- 3.9 It is envisaged the roll out programme will commence in **September** and will move from ward to ward. A timetable for the programme is being developed and will be co-ordinated and co-designed on a ward by ward basis with ward members leading and supporting. Importantly current street cleansing/fly tipping and enforcement activity as well as member led litter picking will continue as business as usual whilst the enhanced support is rolled out.

4.0 Options

4.1 Option 1 – not to increase capacity and work with current resources. This is not recommended for the reasons outlined in the report.

4.2 Option 2 – to proceed with the proposal as outlined in section 3.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 Consultation with the Portfolio holder has been undertaken to inform the proposal.

6.0 Financial Implications

Revenue Implications

6.1 The additional revenue costs of this initiative are detailed in the table below:

Team	2021/22 £000	2022/23 Onwards £000
Dandy men (district alignment)	99	174
Environment Marshals (district alignment)	99	173
Engagement Coordinators	58	102
Additional Flytipping clearance teams (2 permanent, 2 temporary for 21/22)	246	243

Commissioning (additional resource for key campaigns e.g. dog fouling, comms etc)	29	50
Total	531	742

- 6.2 The costs for 2021/22 are for 7 months only and assumes the scheme will commence in full on 1st September 2021. Costs for 2022/23 onwards are for a full financial year. The costs for the initiative are not included within the current budget or Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It is anticipated that the revenue costs can be met from a transfer from reserves for 2021/22, and the costs from 2022/23 onwards will need to be incorporated into the MTFS. The impact of this will be to utilise Administration Priorities Earmarked Reserves by up to £0.531m, dependent on when the posts are recruited to and the initiative becomes fully operational. With regard to the additional £0.742m cost for 2022/22, the budget estimates have been prepared to include a sum for service investment which is sufficient to support the additional cost without adding to the financial challenge.
- 6.3 Vehicle revenue costs (hire, prudential borrowing repayment and fuel) have been included within the overall costs for the relevant team.
- 6.4 The Council may become liable for additional Waste Levy charges if a significant amount of additional waste is removed. The additional charges will be £102.30 per ton of additional waste processed. The exact number of additional tons of waste cannot, currently, be accurately forecast. However, the impacts of any additional waste disposed will be included in the projections for the Waste Levy charges which will be reported in the financial monitoring reports as the year progresses. It is anticipated that this cost, if necessary, can be accommodated within the resources has available in the waste levy reserve. This in turn may have an impact on the waste levy charged for 2022/23. This will also need to be considered in the context of budget setting for 2022/23. If there are additional costs that cannot be managed within existing estimates, these will be factored into the financial planning arrangements when the position is clearer.

Capital Implications

- 6.5 In order to deliver this programme of work, it will be necessary to purchase two additional vehicles including one Crew Cab Tipper and a Compact Shovel at an estimated capital cost of £66k.
- 6.6 Cabinet approved a capital spending programme for replacing fleet vehicles totalling £5.57m on 25th February 2019. This programme encompasses a five-year period covering financial years 2019/20 to 2023/24. It is anticipated that the capital spending associated with this scheme can be financed from within this spending programme without recourse to additional funding. This programme is financed by prudential borrowing, the cost of which has been factored into the revenue budget estimates.

(Nigel Howard)

7.0 **Legal Services Comments**

7.1 Comments within the report and those from HR are noted, no further comments from Legal. Radhika Aggarwal – Principal Employment Solicitor.

8.0 **Co-operative Agenda**

9.0 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 The additional resource is to complement the existing team to upscale and roll out this work across the borough. Dandy Cart operators are already established posts within the structure so this is more of the same, the engagement/coordinator and marshal posts will be based upon roles that we have used during COVID and are likely to be Grade 3 and Grade 5 respectively. HR will work with the service in order to ensure the appropriate JD/PS and subsequent grading are progressed. The number of posts will be flexible taking into consideration the financial envelope available.

Emma Gilmartin, Strategic HR Business Partner

10 **Risk Assessments**

10.1 The report sets out the implications if the proposal is agreed so there are no specific risks to highlight in this report (Mark Stenson)

11 **IT Implications**

11.1 None

12 **Property Implications**

12.1 None

13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 There are no procurement implications in the appointment of employees. Emily Molden

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 This work is designed to support a holistic approach to improving the local environment.

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 There is clear evidence to an improved environment supporting community cohesion and we will work with partners to ensure the best results for the investment proposed.

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 N/A

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 NC-06-21