

Report to CABINET

Don't Trash Oldham Campaign: Year End Review and Next Steps

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr J Stretton – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods

Officer Contact:

Emma Barton – Executive Director of Place & Economic Growth

Report Authors:

Glenn Dale – Head of Service Environmental Services

Neil Crabtree – Head of Service Public Protection

Craig Dale – Head of Service Operational Services

Simon Shuttleworth - Service Manager, Districts

21st September 2022

Reason for Decision:

Clean streets and tackling issues of fly tipping and littering that blight our communities remain a priority for Oldham residents and for the Council. The Don't Trash Oldham (DTO) campaign commenced in September 2021, following Cabinet approval, which focused on community engagement, and confirmed the investment and resources required in order to strengthen current street cleaning and enforcement activity.

This report provides an end of year report and details the outcomes and achievements over the last twelve months; it examines the lessons learned (what has worked and what could be improved) and proposes some new measures / targeted interventions for the next twelve months, following announcements earlier this year about a further financial commitment.

Recommendations:

Cabinet members are asked to :

1. Note the achievements of the Don't Trash Oldham Campaign across the borough over the last twelve months;
2. Note proposals to roll out further activities over the next twelve months in support of the continuation of the DTO campaign, utilising funding commitments from earlier in the year; and
3. Approve option 2 as outlined in the report, for a focused and targeted delivery campaign to significantly improve the living conditions for our local communities, and to ensure a sustainable legacy is created with the available funding.

Don't Trash Oldham – Year End Review and Next Steps

1 Background

- 1.1 The 'Don't Trash Oldham' campaign commenced in September 2021, with the aim of cleaning all the alleys and road infrastructure of fly tipped/dumped waste and litter across the borough, on a ward-by-ward basis, spanning a full calendar year.
- 1.2 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. 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.
- 1.3 The picture became increasingly complex over the last 2 years 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.
- 1.4 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. 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 are maintained to a good level.
- 1.5 Some of the resources were approved to recruit a number of Environment Marshals that would complement the enforcement activity in locations, concentrating on low level enforcement, provision of advice and education, signposting other issues to other services, but also looking forward seeking to resolve persistent issues through a placed based approach - working in partnership to understand the root causes and seek to problem solve.

2 End of Year Performance Review

- 2.1 Since September 2021 the 'Don't Trash Oldham' campaign has achieved the following results across the borough: -
 - 3,496 streets cleaned;
 - 662 alleyways cleaned;
 - 284 tonnes of waste removed at a disposal cost of £84,400;
 - 381 fixed penalty notices issued, where evidence was discovered;
 - 44 individuals prosecuted at the Magistrates Courts resulting in fines and associated costs of £26,000 being awarded with a further 77 case files pending court consideration;
 - 62,000 conversations on the doorstep with residents highlighting the campaign

2.2 A more detailed breakdown of the campaign performance, outcomes and delivery on a ward by ward basis is shown in Appendix 1 and 2.

3 Lessons Learned

3.1 A number of lessons have been learned during the delivery of the campaign.

3.2 Alleyway Treatments

3.2.1 As the campaign progressed, teams came across a considerable number of alleys that were overgrown with brambles, weeds, and self-seeded trees and this required a more detailed / tailored solution rather than just the removal of any fly-tipping or litter.

3.2.2 In certain locations steps were taken to alter the perceived use of an alley with the introduction of playground markings (example below). The play markings not only provided a new facility for the children in the local area, enhancing options for play space, but also aimed to actively discourage any potential fly tipping by changing the nature of the alley space. Early indicators show this has had a positive impact, as less fly-tipping/dumping was reported in these locations on repeat / follow up visits.



3.3 Hotspot Location Analysis

3.3.1 Detailed analysis has taken place to plot the locations of all fly-tipping reports that were made, to establish any repeat trends and “hotspot locations”. These locations are focused areas / no. of streets where repeat complaints are logged and account for over 60% of all fly-tipping incidents.

3.3.2 The majority of these hotspot areas are within the central Oldham area where there is a high density of terraced property, multiple car ownership, limited green waste recycling, alongside a substantial number of privately rented accommodation. The impact of waste dumping and fly-tipping in these areas was clear to see, however there was no real ownership or responsibility being taken for the neighbourhood.

- 3.3.3 Online mapping has been developed to allow officers to overlay the fly-tipping hotspot locations with the following datasets to see if there were any other known contributory factors related to fly-tipping and illegal dumping:
- Social housing – with each provider highlighted
 - Privately Rented Housing rate
 - Terraced housing rate
 - Poverty (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)
 - Population Churn (The percentage of people moving house each year in each area)
 - Gated Alleyways in the location
 - Overcrowding in properties

3.4 Engagement Integration

3.4.1 The Engagement team have supported the Don't Trash Oldham campaign, (alongside other areas of work such as delivering Covid19 messages and face-to-face contact tracing visits as required) over the last twelve months. The 'Don't Trash Oldham' campaign funded the equivalent of three full time employees, with the engagement team bolstered through temporary Covid funding, which collectively facilitated for a much larger team for community engagement activities. The team is fixed term until end of March 2023 and have worked very closely with the District Teams, linked with community partners in the place, (for example Housing Providers, local community organisations, faith leaders, Community Champions groups, and GMP).

3.4.2 Doorstep engagement work has provided invaluable insight and intelligence, as well as the opportunity to signpost or intervene earlier by supporting residents with issues that may previously not have come to the attention of services. As the team gained skills, knowledge and confidence as the DTO programme rolled out across the borough, and there has been increasingly closer working with the district teams and with local partners in place, given the breadth of issues arising through doorstep residential engagement. The team frequently advised residents where to report issues, signposted to services, referred into services where appropriate, flagged issues, and worked closely with the district teams to enable a comprehensive response to more complex problems when they arose. The diagram below illustrates the variety of roles the doorstep engagement team took on.



3.5 Focused Waste Management Audit (in certain locations)

- 3.5.1 The waste management service (in partnership with the Engagement Team) undertook a pilot project examining the waste management provision in a specific location with a local community group.
- 3.5.2 The project involved door knocking approx. 300 properties to review waste collections and ensure residents/households had the right information (collection calendars etc.) and the right bins to participate properly/fully in the Council's rubbish and recycling collection services. The focused project was well received by residents in the neighbourhood with several positive outcomes, especially around the re-issuing of food waste recycling caddies.

3.6 Communicating / Awareness of the Don't Trash Oldham Campaign

- 3.6.1 Don't Trash Oldham has been one of the council's most successful campaigns over the last year. Residents have told the council they want to live in a cleaner and greener borough where action is taken against fly-tippers and those who dump litter and waste. Since the campaign started, the DTO messages and work has been supported by communities, stakeholders, and schools across the borough. Communications around DTO are some of the best received in terms of media coverage and social media interaction.
- 3.6.2 However, some feedback included the need for more visibility of where DTO had been within the borough, as some of the litter clearance / alley clearance / fly-tipping enforcement work went un-noticed by some residents who didn't reside or neighbour these areas.

4 Options/Alternatives for Campaign Continuation

4.1 Option 1: Continue with the current approach and extend the campaign by revisiting the areas on rotation for one month in line with Appendix 1 with enhanced visibility

- 4.1.1 Ideas and suggestions about branding / key messages have been developed, so there is a clear and visual legacy for the campaign. One suggestion is to consider the installation of signage at the location or alleyway after the clearance/ improvement work to inform residents and promote work in the area supported under the campaign. This could be in addition to keeping residents informed via direct messaging i.e. leaflets and social media.



4.1.2. This would help raise awareness of continued cleaning work, instil pride while also continuing to act against those who carry out environmental crimes will be well received across the borough and ensure that the good foundations of year 1 delivery are not lost especially in some focussed neighbourhoods.

4.1.3 After reviewing the lessons learned from the first campaign, it is felt that repeating the work of last year, even with enhanced visibility, is not enough to encourage people to do the right thing as it could simply provide another outlet for people to dispose of their waste at the known point in the year with DTO comes to the area, without addressing and tackling the fundamental issue around behaviour change to stop the litter and fly-tipping from occurring.

4.2 Option 2: Target known hotspot locations with enforcement, engagement and dedicated clean up to induce behaviour change, and introduce a boroughwide 'betterment' plan to enhance all local communities / establish a DTO legacy

4.2.1 38 hotspot locations have been identified across the borough when reviewing the work from the last twelve months, when looking at the number of service requests / reports (during the month intervention, and across the year), and when looking at the insight from the engagement feedback compared to the number of residential properties within that particular area.

4.2.2 Four of the hotspots are rural locations in nature and these could be tackled by utilising the deployable CCTV cameras recently procured. Another three hotspot locations are mainly on FCHO estates and partnership working is proposed to tackle these specific problems at these known locations. There are another two locations, where the number of reports has recently reduced by a significant amount, and recent surveys have shown that the fly-tipping issues appear to have been resolved (with no further reports).

4.2.3 This analysis has therefore enabled a focused approach to be investigated in the remaining twenty nine (29) residential hotspot areas: these areas would need continued and intensive engagement, marshal services, and targeted enforcement to embed behaviour changes and provided a sustainable resolution to help the community be cleaner, greener and safer.

4.2.4 This targeted approach would see the following interventions delivered across the 29 hotspots:

- Advance audit / survey of the neighbourhood with photographs taken of "problem" areas;

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- Engagement teams allocated to a specific zone to provide targeted awareness, education and in some areas training (with flexibility to ensure continuity of action throughout the next period);
 - Audit of bins and waste in rear yards at the properties in the area, together with an assessment of any defects that require enforcement activity such as drainage and / or pest control;
 - Refer/report any fly-tipping observed in alleyways and known areas for investigation, enforcement action and removal; and
 - Environment Marshals to serve legal notices on property owners where necessary for private yards to be cleared and defects resolved.
- 4.2.5 This intensive approach to engagement, enforcement and interventions in the hotspot locations, where over 60% of all fly tipping is reported. It is recognised that following the initial DTO works, some areas are already self-sustaining and redeployment back to these areas would not provide best use of time or value for money: however, the Environment Marshals would have continued / enhanced impact if deployed through this targeted intervention proposal.
- 4.2.6 To ensure enforcement is actioned in the rural settings, the Council has recently procured a small number of deployable CCTV units powered by battery that can be installed in specific locations where power is an issue such as at a rural location for a limited period where repeat incidents are experienced as a further deterrent. These are in addition to the units that require power from lighting columns and are therefore limited in some locations. It is proposed to utilise these at the 4 hotspot locations identified as rural in nature.
- 4.2.7 Going forward, the Engagement Team element of Don't Trash Oldham will also focus solely in the hotspot areas. The team will promote the campaign, as well as having more in depth conversations with residents to understand behaviours, and support people to ensure they are able to properly dispose of waste. The team will also continue to carry out their core wellbeing conversations – checking in on people, and helping them access support around financial issues, mental health and more, as necessary.
- 4.2.8 To compliment the intensive engagement and enforcement work focussed in the hotspot locations, it is proposed to operate a 'betterment' programme of activity, whereby communities that take an active and responsible part in ensuring their neighbourhood is managed and maintained.
- 4.2.9 These teams will sit alongside the existing environmental operatives with the aim of making an immediate impression with the same principal of previous 'Bloom' entries whereby at any given point all visible environmental issues are dealt with at the same time (as if we were about to be judged). These locations can be identified by residents or through ward councillors to ensure that where possible we can meet their aspirations and ensure an immediate impact. Alternatively, one location per ward can be identified by ward councillors to receive a more significant uplift utilising the budgets as shown in the table in section 7 below.
- 4.2.10 With the re-purposing of the staff from street cleansing to betterment, we can create these teams without the need to seek additional funding. Materials for this enhancement work can be met from the existing budgets by repurposing allocations to ensure this option is fully delivered.
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4.2.11 This betterment proposal would work by deploying two teams: one covering the North of the borough (Royton & Shaw, Saddleworth & Lees and East Oldham) and the second team covering the South of the borough (Failsworth & Hollinwood, Oldham West and Chadderton). Each team would undertake the agreed programme of work on a 4-week basis in each designated area. This betterment service complementing Don't Trash Oldham would include:

- Grass cutting, hedge trimming
- Line painting
- Sign cleaning/renewal
- Fence / railing painting
- Milestone markers repainted/cleaned
- Gully cleaning
- Other minor repairs

4.2.12 However, linked to lessons learned from the first twelve month period, consideration will be given to other requests (subject to available budget for each area) such as the following examples:

- Playground markings in alleys;
- Tree / shrub planting / wildflower meadows;
- Barrier planters; and / or
- Replacement of street furniture.

4.2.13 The rolling 4-weeks timeline for the above will need to be agreed with Members.

4.3 Option 3 - Do nothing and bring the campaign to a close with the year end report, and convert the funds to support in-year funding pressures.

4.3.1 Noted this is not likely to be supported given the political commitment to support local communities, improve living standards and enhance health and wellbeing, by tackling fly-tipping, enhancing pest control and removing opportunities for people to dump their waste.

5 Preferred Option

5.1 The preferred option is the focused intervention contained in option 2 to provide dedicated and tailored actions and interventions for local communities with the remaining funding, to ensure support for cleaner, greener, safer communities in different ways and create a legacy for his campaign to have a longer lasting impact for behaviour change.

6 Supplementary Options for further consideration

6.1 Supplementary Option 1 – Provision of food waste bags

6.1.1 To complement the work being undertaken by the proposed amendments to DTO campaign for the next twelve months, consideration has been given for how all residents can continue to support recycling and “do their bit”, as all residents would benefit from the provision (and delivery) of free food waste recycling bags. Subject to Cabinet approval, the details would be developed and reported back to the Portfolio lead for approval.

6.2 Supplementary Option 2 – Waste and recycling container project work

6.2.1 Another option being developed is the waste and recycling container project which aims to ensure that residents within the identified hot spot locations have the right number/size and combination of waste containers to participate properly in all four of the Council's domestic waste services.

6.2.2 Taking the success of the trial work undertaken by the waste management service and detailed in section 3.5, subject to cabinet approval, the service will prepare a report for Cabinet member approval to roll out this initiative focusing on the hotspot locations.

7 Consultation

7.1 Discussions have taken place with the Council Leader- Cllr Amanda Chadderton and the portfolio lead Cllr Jean Stretton in addition to extensive discussions and workshops undertaken with officers from Environmental Services, Operational Services, Environmental Health & District co-ordinators

8 Financial Implications

8.1 As part of the original Cleaner Streets Cabinet report in July 2021 a recurring budget of £742k was established covering the functions detailed below:

Team	2022/23 Onwards £000
Dandy men (district alignment)	174
Environment Marshals (district alignment)	173
Engagement Coordinators 3 FTE	102
Additional Flytipping clearance teams (2)	243
Commissioning (additional resource for key campaigns e.g. dog fouling, comms etc)	50
Total	742

8.2 This budget was subsequently increased to £1m in total via a £258k increase in the Waste Levy budget.

8.3. It should be noted that the Dandymen and Flytipping teams have never been fully recruited to and that the currently vacant posts represent an annual budget of £230k. The costs of the proposed Betterment teams, comprising 4 Grade 1 posts and 2 Grade 4 posts, has a total budget cost of £167k and can, therefore, be met from within the existing budget allocation leaving a £63k available to recruit additional Flytipping or Dandymen dependent on operational requirements.

8.4 In order to support the Betterment work it is proposed to reduce the communications budget to £20k. This would release budget of £30k for materials to support Betterment initiatives. It is anticipated that in addition to this fund the Betterment works can be funded via contributions from the LIF and ward member budgets and/or met from within the existing Environmental services budget, subject to available resources.

8.5 The proposed budget allocations are shown in the table below:-

Team	2022/23 Onwards £000
Dandymen/Flytipping/Betterment Teams	417
Betterment Team materials budget	30
Environment Marshals (district alignment)	173
Engagement Coordinators 3 FTE	102
Waste Levy	258
Commissioning (additional resource for key campaigns e.g. dog fouling, comms etc)	20
Total	1,000

8.6 The costs associated with the supplementary options to provide food waste bags and additional/larger recycling bins in hotspot areas will require further work to develop the options to a point where detailed costings can be provided. However, it is anticipated that both options would involve an increase in costs to the Council with no current existing budget provision.

(James Postle)

9 Legal Services Comments

9.1 The Council has various powers available to it to tackle waste issues, mainly in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 but also with community protection notices and public spaces protection orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The use of CCTV cameras may require authorisation under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 depending on whether they are covert cameras.

9.2 Provided the Council is satisfied that an alleyway can be considered to have highway status (but which is not maintainable at the public expense), it has the power to clean it, as the highway authority can, if it chooses to do so, undertake work on an unadopted highway. The act of cleaning the alleyway will not make it become an adopted highway so the Council will not acquire legal responsibility for continuing maintenance but there may be an expectation from local residents that

the Council should continue to keep the alleyway clear, having done so once. It would be advisable for the Council to make it clear to local residents that the Council is not accepting responsibility for future maintenance of any unadopted alleyway it cleans up and that if the residents want it kept clean they should do so themselves (although the Council has no general power to compel them to do so).

- 9.3 If the Council is not satisfied that a particular alleyway can be considered to be an unadopted highway then technically the Council is trespassing by going onto it and cleaning it up, although in most cases the local residents (who probably own the alleyway) are unlikely to object as they are getting their land cleaned up for free. It is probably appropriate not to undertake work on any alleyway the Council does not consider to be an unadopted highway, but if the decision is made that the Council does want to carry out such work, the adjoining property owners should be informed in writing in advance of the Council's intentions and asked to let the Council know if they have any objections, If objections are received they should be addressed before any works are carried out. If no objections/responses are received it is reasonable to assume that the landowners had no objection and were content for the Council to go onto the land to clean it up.

Alan Evans

10 Co-operative Agenda

- 10.1 Oldham's Don't Trash Oldham (DTO) campaign has actively engaged with residents since the campaign was launched in September 2021, working to actively understand resident needs. This engagement highlights Oldham's ambition to put resident's needs at the heart of service delivery. To date, the engagement and campaign have been positively received by residents who have been empowered to actively taken part, cleaning and taking care of their neighbourhoods.
- 10.2 Continuing the DTO campaign will ensure that residents continue to take ownership of their streets, local green spaces, and areas, meeting the Council's co-operative values, whilst enabling the DTO campaign to continue making a positive impact.

(Mahmuda Khanom – Policy Support Officer)

11 Human Resources Comments

- 11.1 The current team of Doorstep Engagers are currently on fixed term contracts until 2023 which will support the current programme of works. If engagement work is required beyond this point, then the 2.5 FTE need to be made permanent, and Council recruitment policy and procedures would need to be followed.
- 11.2 To establish the betterment teams, the service is planning to disestablish a number of vacant street cleansing roles in order to reprofile resources. Each of the 2 teams will consist of 1 x grade 3/4 and 2 x grade 1 Environmental Operative – Grounds posts. The job profiles already exist within the establishment. Engagement with the Organisational Development Team will be required in order to develop a robust learning and development offer.

(Catherine Pearson, Strategic HR Lead)

12 Risk Assessments

12.1 The council has previously accepted the risk linked into clearing unadopted highways as set out in the legal comments.

12.2 The Council has to manage this priority against the current estimated out-turn already reported to Cabinet which currently predicts an overspend if it agrees to extend the initiative.

Mark Stenson

13 IT Implications

13.1 There are no IT implications

14 Property Implications

14.1 None.

15 Procurement Implications

15.1 There are no procurement implications

16 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications

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

17 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications

17.1 This boroughwide initiative ensures that a fair and equitable approach has been adopted with the aim of improving the quality of the borough which may lead to a potential reduction in crime.

(Glenn Dale, Head of Environmental Services)

18 Equality Impact Assessment Completed?

18.1 No

19 Key Decision

19.1 Yes

20 Key Decision Reference

20.1 The report has not been included on the KDD for 28 days. A rule 13 has been requested and agreed by the Chair of Policy, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 Background Papers

21.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act:

File Ref: 06. Clean streets final.docx

Name of File: Clean Streets

Records held in Environmental Services Department, Alexandra Park, Kings Road Oldham
OL8 2BH

Officer Name: Glenn Dale

Contact No: 4065

22 Appendices

22.1 Appendix 1 - DTO Clearance breakdown – August 2022

22.2 Appendix 2 - Clean Streets dashboard – 23rd August 2022