

EXECUTIVE REPORT**FULL 12.04.05****IMPROVING AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT SERVICE PORTFOLIO****COUNCILLOR ALLAN HOLIDAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****KEITH PARKER - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****1.1 CLEAN AND GREEN TEAM**

The Clean and Green Team started with the Council on Monday the 21st of March, having gained the funding for the team we felt it was important to get a head start and employed the two new operatives ahead of the 'gum busting machine'. In their early weeks they have done some great work tidying up litter in the Borough and were able to recover a handbag, stolen 15 months ago and still containing personal effects which the owner was delighted to have returned. At the same time Waste Management Department arranged for King Street, Whitehaven, to be cleared of chewing gum, as a one off. The team's own machinery has now arrived and will be utilized across the borough in the coming months. We are keen to encourage community groups to work with us in tidying the Borough and I would ask colleagues to let me know if there are groups they think we should be working with.

1.2 ENFORCEMENT**Businesses Waste Disposal**

In March a partnership investigation involving the Environment Agency and Copeland's Enforcement Unit commenced to address concerns brought to our attention by Councillor McPhillips. This was in connection with businesses potentially failing to dispose of their waste in accordance with legislative and environmental requirements.

The aim of the initiative is to ensure that businesses are contributing towards environmental issues in the same way as householders of the borough and that their waste is being handled properly.

At the time of writing two random visits to inspect business in Millom have taken place. It is intended to roll out further inspections of businesses across other towns and villages across the Borough together with Environment Agency colleagues.

Litter

Members will be aware that the Council has received some poor public satisfaction responses including those for litter cleanliness. Officers have undertaken additional research to try and understand why this should be. It now appears one of the

reasons seems to be public perception of litter on private land. Although our waste management and enforcement teams respond quickly to reports of fly tipping and do prosecute in cases when evidence presents itself it appears litter on 'private' land remains a problem with which the Council is 'blamed'. To combat this perception a new approach is being taken to ensure that private landowners take their litter control responsibilities more seriously. Our enforcement and legal staff are now addressing the problem through "Litter Abatement Notices" against land owners in a number of areas where there are specific litter issues. These notices ensure that the landowner clears litter and to keep clean the land in their ownership, but have not been greatly used by the Council in the past.

1.3 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Huntsman/Rhodia (Environmental) Local Liaison Committee

There was a meeting of the committee on 22 March 2005.

Certain members of the committee, particularly my fellow member Cllr Peter Tyson, expressed dissatisfaction at the fact that the announcement by Huntsman in September about the forthcoming major reduction in workforce at the Whitehaven plant. Particularly because it followed just a day or so after the meeting of the liaison committee held on 16 September when there had been no mention of the companies intention.

Because of the recent and forthcoming drastic reduction in activities at the site by both companies the future of the committee was considered. Although the majority present were in favour of the abolition of the committee it was decided that at least one further meeting of it would be held but on a date yet to be decided and which would be influenced by circumstances pertaining to the site. It was recognised that there are other avenues by which information can be easily and effectively disseminated to the public and elected members, which includes scrutiny via our Overview and Scrutiny process.

The minutes are available from the council's Environmental Health Manager (Vic Emmerson) and a report will be submitted to the council's OSC – Environmental Well Being shortly.

Whitehaven Harbour

For a few months now officers from the Environmental Health Section have been working jointly with the Environment Agency to tackle problems of pollution in Whitehaven Harbour. Such work has involved visits to all food catering establishments in the town centre to check on methods of the disposal of grease and other substances. The joint working is likely to continue for a while yet.

Air Pollution Control

Under the Pollution Prevention and Control regime of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the council has regulatory responsibility for 21 industrial processes, mainly in respect of emissions to air. Such processes include the quarries at Millom and

Eskett, the crematorium at Distington and several processes at Sellafield. The processes have to be inspected at least once a year and the permit has to be reviewed annually, all of which is very time consuming. I am pleased to be able to report, that for the first time for several years that the Council team have met the target as regards the inspections, etc.

A survey was carried out recently to find out if there were any unauthorised waste oil burners being used in the borough. The survey found 8 waste oil burners in use in motor vehicle workshops which had not been permitted by the council under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. All of the users concerned are co-operating with the council so prosecution proceedings will not, it is hoped, be taken.

3 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

4 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Car Parking – Seascale and St Bees Station

Date of Decision: 22 February 2005 **Decision Reference:** EXE/04/0171

Context: This report presents the outcome of negotiations with representatives of Seascale and St Bees Parish Councils in relation to the car parks at Seascale foreshore and St Bees Station

Decision

That:

- a) **St Bees offer of £2,000 for a twelve month period be accepted and the St Bees Station car park charges be removed for the same period, and**
- b) **that Seascale offer be refused and charges be retained.**

Subject: Gypsies And Travellers

Date of Decision: 10 March 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/04/0182

Context: A Joint Protocol has been written up together with the County Council, the six county Borough Councils, Cumbria Police, and other partners agencies as a working practice document to ensure a balanced and consistent approach when dealing with Gypsies and Travellers.

Decision

That the Executive endorse the Joint Protocol and the Chief Executive be authorised to sign it on behalf of the Council at the earliest opportunity