

## Residents Services Business Case for Future Provision of Environmental Enforcement

<b>Business Case Title</b>	<b>Environmental Enforcement Future Provision</b>		
<b>Revision No:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016</b>
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### Summary

The Environmental Enforcement Function was previously dealt with by a Community Protection Team at Thurrock. In 2013/14 this team consisted of 10 officers and dealt with 2016 service requests for environmental enforcement. As a result of successive departmental restructures and staff changes over the intervening period this team now consists of two officers. These officers have an interim manager from Environmental Health who currently undertakes this work in addition to his substantive duties.

The number of service requests received between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2016 for potential environmental enforcement is 3699. The types of work included under the heading of environmental enforcement are fly-tipping, littering, abandoned vehicles, waste carrier offences, fly-posting, dog fouling, littering from vehicles, graffiti. Officers undertaking environmental enforcement would also be responsible for dealing with Freedom of Information requests associated with these activities.

In light of the reduced resources and increased workload the Environmental Enforcement officers are falling behind in addressing incoming work to the point where numerous incoming service requests are not being addressed quickly enough.

In addition to the previous staff changes and consequent reduction in resources devoted to combatting environmental crime the intervening period has seen the enactment of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This widens the scope for councils to pursue environmental crime by the use of community protection notices. It also raises public expectation and provides a means for Councils to be held accountable for their actions on these issues by way of the introduction of community triggers, a mechanism for residents to call for action to address shortcomings on the part of authorities.

## Proposal

Reform a dedicated team recruiting or redeploying suitable officers and a team leader to undertake environmental enforcement work.

A small team of one supervisor and five environmental enforcement officers would restore some capacity for the Council to address environmental crime in Thurrock. If the supervisor and officers all undertook case work this would give a caseload of 600-650 requests per officer per year.

Engage a private contractor on a cost neutral basis to undertake littering and dog fouling enforcement. This will further enhance the capacity of in house officers to address fly tipping enforcement.

## Strategic rationale

Environmental enforcement work helps to reduce the degradation of the street scene and quality of the environment in Thurrock by acting as a deterrent to those who would commit environmental crime such as fly tipping, abandoning vehicles, spraying graffiti, littering and other related offences

## Approximate Cost

300k

## Timescales

Activity	Timescale
Agree funding and devise a team structure	Determined by HR schedules and the availability of suitable staff
Plan and execute a recruitment campaign.	

## Risks /Consequences

Failure to have a team working on environmental crime will adversely impact the area as there will be no deterrent to those committing environmental crime and spoiling our environment. Reduced capacity to clean up streets and public spaces due to changes at the Environment department exacerbate this situation.

## Finance costs

### Financial summary

#### General Fund budget 2014-15

	Staff £000s	Premises / Transport £000s	Supplies/ Services £000s	Direct Payments £000s	Third Party Payments £000s	Total Expenditure Gross	Income £000s	Net Expenditure £000s

# Appendix 1

						£000s		
2016/17	250	10	30		10			300

## Staff Related costs

Current number of posts (FTE and headcount)	1
Number of posts to be created/deleted (FTE and headcount)	5
Amount of salary cost/saving (inc on-costs)	250

## Non- Staff Related costs

Premises and buildings (inc utilities)	
Transport	10
Supplies and services	30
Other (please specify)	10 Legal Costs

## Benefits – non financial

Improvement in the quality of the public realm
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## Costs & Resources Required

Direct costs	250
Redundancy costs	
Accommodation costs	
Procurement and/or Legal costs	10
Other HR costs	
Other (please specify)	30 Equipment and Supplies 10 Transport

## Impact/Consequences of proposal – not covered in financial section

### Impact on Corporate Priorities/objectives/ performance targets/standards

Priority 1. Create a great place for learning and opportunity	
Priority 2. Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity	
Priority 3. Build pride, responsibility and respect	
Priority 4. Improve health and well-being	

# Appendix 1

**Priority 5. Promote and protect our clean and green environment**

Whilst contributing to a number of Council priorities the provision of an Environmental Enforcement team will act primarily to address priority 5.

## Impacts on partners

Improvements in the state of the public realm benefit all partners both directly and indirectly.

## Impacts on customers / community and equality/diversity implications

Better environment will improve the perception of both residents and visitors to Thurrock and assist in attracting investment and skilled persons to contribute to Thurrock's community.

## Other impacts/implications

Detailed above

## Assumptions, Dependencies & Exclusions

<b>Timeframes Assumptions/ Dependencies/Exclusions</b>	The feasibility of delivering the benefits associated with this proposal are dependent on securing sufficient funding and being able to attract and recruit suitable staff.
<b>Benefits Assumptions/ Dependencies/Exclusions</b>	
<b>Costs Assumptions/ Dependencies/Exclusions</b>	
<b>Other/ General Assumptions/ Dependencies/Exclusions</b>	

## Any other comments to support proposals

# Appendix 1

The issues that could be dealt with by a moderately resourced environmental enforcement team would positively impact on the borough as a whole and improve the quality of the public realm. The ongoing risk of reputational damage to the Council would be reduced by the adoption of this proposal.

The staff resource currently devoted to this area of work at Thurrock does not compare well with similar authorities in Essex.

Figures have been provided in the spreadsheet attached to this business case to illustrate the demand for work in this area compared with the staff resource allocated to it for these authorities and Thurrock.