Member Briefing for new environmental enforcement services

From 17th October 2016 a new environmental enforcement service designed to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for littering, spitting, street urination and dog fouling will begin. This service will work alongside the existing Community Safety service and help to provide additional enforcement activity to tackle offending behaviour which has an impact on environmental quality in the borough.

Who is delivering the service?

Following a competitive tender process the service is being delivered by NSL. NSL have over 15 years’ experience of providing enforcement services and will have delegated authority to represent the Council and issue FPNs to anyone aged 18 years or older who has littered, spat, urinated or not disposed of dog waste responsibly through delegation of our powers under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005.

How will the service work?

The contract starts on 17th October and the first few weeks will involve training and induction to ensure that the new enforcement officers are ready to patrol the borough. When at full capacity there will be one Team Leader and six Enforcement Officers. Three Enforcement Officers and a Team Leader have already been recruited and recruitment for the remaining officers will be completed shortly.

The new team will be based in International House alongside the in-house Community Safety service. When at full capacity four environmental enforcement officers will be deployed at various locations across the borough, 7 days a week, with patrols varied between 7am and 9pm, issuing FPNs to anyone over 18 who commits an offence. Oversight of the new teams will be taken by the Community Safety service.

The patrols will be intelligence led with data from a number of services/sources used to ensure that the service is able to identify issues and respond to concerns raised by Members, council staff and residents. Initially the teams will focus on areas of high littering activity such as Brixton, Clapham and Vauxhall stations.

How much does the service cost?

This is a cost-neutral service for Lambeth. Once NSL have recovered their core costs a percentage of any income generated will be returned to Lambeth to be used to fund further enforcement. No targets have or will be set for the number of tickets issued.

The service will run for a year, with an option to extend for a further two years if it is considered successful.

As this is the first time we have piloted this model of enforcement we will continue to review this and reassess the effectiveness of the service throughout the year.

What are the fines?

Fine limits are set by the government

Littering and spitting is a fine of £80 payable within 14 days or £50 if paid with 10 days

Dog Fouling is a fine of £50 payable within 14 days.
The government is currently consulting on increasing these fines, and if that change occurs the fines will be adjusted appropriately.

**How can payment can be made?**

Online: Website: www.lambeth.gov.uk/payments. Quoting the fixed penalty notice reference number.

By Phone: Using a Credit or Debit card calling our payment hotline on 020 7926 6108, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

*Callers will be asked the following information:*
- Who Issued the notice (Officer’s name).
- Fixed Penalty Notice number
- Date of issue
- Offence code

By Post - Cheques & Postal Orders should be sent to, The London Borough of Lambeth, Community Safety, 6th Floor International

**How are fines issued?**

A key requirement of NSL enforcement staff is that they issue FPNs in a fair, safe and reasonable way. This is has been reinforced through their training and will continue to be monitored.

A diagram of the FPN process is shown below.

**Process**

1. Enforcement Officer identifies offence/gathers evidence
2. Enforcement Officer issues FPN
3. FPN paid | FPN not paid
4. Reminder letter sent
5. FPN paid | FPN not paid
6. If appropriate case referred to court
7. Magistrates Decision

**How will complaints and members enquiries work?**

Complaints and members enquiries will happen in the normal way that they do now, and members enquiries should be logged in the same way.

First stage complaints and enquiries will be handled by the NSL Team leader.
If Councillors have any more general questions about the service they can contact David McCollum on 027 926 7004 or dmccollum1@lambeth.gov.uk

How can I report littering hotspots or concerns?

Please continue to report hotspots in the same way that you do now. All intelligence and evidence will be considered by the in house community safety team and shared with NSL


What outcomes will the new service achieve?

- Demonstrate that there will be a zero-tolerance approach to littering, spitting, street urination and dog fouling in Lambeth
- Encourage residents to think about their behaviour and act responsibly, setting examples to others
- Show residents that the council is acting to improve the environmental quality in the borough
- Build community relationships with ward councillors, street champions, residents groups, police and businesses.
- Act as an extra ‘eyes and ears’ presence on the streets
- Help to implement an educational and community campaign across the borough supporting our goal of behaviour change; for example visiting schools to talk to children about the impacts of littering and developing key partnerships.

What is the comms strategy?

A soft launch started for a week from 3rd to 7th October. No enforcement action took place in this week, but the new officers were walking the borough and advising residents that once the service starts fines will be issued for offences.

Towards the end of October the successful ‘not on our streets’ campaign will be relaunched alongside press releases. Ongoing communications will be carried out throughout the year.