

Council – 14 November 2016

Report of Councillor Jones, Portfolio holder for Clean and Green

Key Achievements

Over the last 12 months Clean and Green have

- Implemented the new Alternate Weekly waste collection service delivering budget savings of nearly £1 million, with a view to increasing the recycling rate and reducing contamination.
- Assisted Community Protection in securing a court injunction to remove unauthorised encampments more effectively. The injunction covers 12 green space sites across the borough. Additional security works are also being installed to deter future unauthorised encampments.
- Introduced a 6 month trial with a specialist company carrying out Environmental Enforcement, issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Littering and Dog Fouling offences. 12 FPN's were issued in the first few weeks up to the end of October.
- Supported colleagues in Community Protection gathering data from covert CCTV cameras and fly tipping incidents helping to secure an increased number of convictions.
- Installed a new skate park at Rushall Park with grant funding from the Highfields South Landfill Trust. A grant of £163k was provided with additional funds provided by the council from S106 funding.
- Delivered and facilitated over 175 events across green space sites including 7 local Fun Days, 49 days of Fun Fairs, 19 days of Circus's, a celebration for the Queens 90th Birthday at the Arboretum, an Environment Day, the Walsall Show, Bands on the Beacon, 4 Bonfire / Firework displays and numerous Band Stand events at Walsall Arboretum, Willenhall Memorial Park and Palfrey Park.
- Improved the car park at Walsall Arboretum where resurfacing works are progressing well and are scheduled to be completed before Christmas.
- Successfully retained Green Flag status at Palfrey Park, Willenhall Memorial Park, Merrions Wood, Rough Wood local nature reserve and Blackwood Park
- Secured 25k of funding from DCLG to provide two Pocket Parks at Chuckery and Old Hall. Local community groups assisted with site design and will carry out ongoing maintenance.
- As part of a Black Country initiative submitted an application to UNESCO for

International Geopark status for the Black Country in recognition of the cultural and geological heritage of the area. An announcement is expected in spring 2017. The geosites within Walsall are Bar Beacon and Moorcroft Wood.

- Contributed to a Black Country wide Blue Corridors project to improve nature conservation and public access across the Black Country. Walsall's contribution focuses on Reedswood Park and 86k is the Walsall component.
- Hosted the National Inland Waterway Associations Boating Festival at Nest Common, Pelsall which took place over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The event was deemed a success with over 100 boats attending.
- Worked in partnership with Public Health to improve the health and well-being of residents of Walsall via improvements with the Lifestyle Contracts. Achieving three outcomes, tackling obesity, increasing physical activity and improving mental well-being.
- Facilitated three health awareness days held at Palfrey Park, Willenhall Memorial Park and Brownhills Depot where members of the public and employees were able to receive health checks and given advice regarding healthy lifestyles and well-being.
- Introduced a new motorcycle MOT testing lane at the Brownhills depot where 9 motorcycle tests per day can be carried out generating additional income and improved customer service.

Significant Issues

There are still many issues within the service area, these include

- **Health and Safety.** Health and Safety remains vitally important and within Clean and Green the number of recorded incidents remains relatively low. 56 between November 2015 and October 2016 compared with 48 over the same period the previous year. The main category of incidents continue to be, slips trips and falls, injured whilst handling, lifting or moving a load and verbal aggressive behaviour.
- **Fly Tipping.** Fly tipping continues to increase. The number of incidents are up by around 10.5% based on a similar period last year (April to September). This compares with other Black Country authorities where increases have ranged between 14% and 22%
- **Street Cleansing.** Pressures on street cleansing activities will increase with less resource available. The service will become more reactive but we will continue to prioritise cleansing in District Centres and litter hot spots.
- **Recycling.** Recycling contamination remains an issue with current rates averaging around 11.5% an increase of approximately 1% over a similar period last year.

Major projects / proposals

- Implementation of waste collections over a longer working day, Monday to Friday. This will generate significant savings but will mean that collections times and days may change for some residents.
- The introduction of charged garden waste collection service which is currently out for public consultation. This is currently scheduled to commence April 2018.
- Tendering of a waste disposal contracts for twin stream dry recycling materials scheduled to commence in April 2018.
- Working with Public Health to review the Green Space Strategy and integrate the Play Strategy and Public Health agenda into new partnership working arrangements.
- Achieving Community Green Flag status for Caldmore Community Garden and the Pocket Parks at Chuckery and Old Hall.

Councillor Jones
Portfolio holder for Clean and Green

3 November 2016