

Overview and Scrutiny Board

2026

16th March

Strategic Envirocrime Update

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes, Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
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Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	n/a
Relevant Council Priority	Green, Clean and Safe
Non-Key	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to RESOLVE that the update on Environmental crime enforcement be noted.

2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In June 2024 the enforcement function for fly tipping, littering, duty of care of waste, dog fouling and untidy land (as well as Planning Enforcement) passed to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) from Environmental Services. At that time the budget was amended to allow for a resource increase from 1 to 1.5 full time equivalent (FTE) posts to cover the Redditch Borough Council area.
- 2.2 Prior to that time, enforcement focused on informal approaches to encourage compliance with environmental rules and appropriate behaviour. As the sole enforcement post within that service area, there was little support and resilience available to provide a robust enforcement framework to enable more formal enforcement action to be taken against fly tipping, littering, dog fouling or untidy land.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 Fly tipping, littering and dog fouling are blights on our communities and there is an eagerness to clear waste away quickly and efficiently. In recent years, the Environmental Services team have improved fly tip clearance times to keep community spaces clear. However, for any enforcement to take place, evidence of the perpetrator or originator needs to be collected before the waste is cleared. This has caused some delay in clearance of some fly tips.
- 3.2 The collection of evidence needs to be undertaken carefully with the integrity of the chain of evidence maintained. This requires appropriate recording and storage of any evidence (physical or digital) with statements collected from witnesses and Officers. Ultimately for any enforcement action to be possible, a file has to be prepared to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that a perpetrator committed an offence.
- 3.3 The majority of fly tipping incidents lack evidence that can lead directly to a perpetrator. However, Officers use a variety of techniques to uncover them through the assistance of staff within the WRS Intelligence Unit and deployment of cameras where practical. Reviewing camera footage is time consuming which is why this task is performed by intelligence specialists rather than Enforcement Officers. Similarly, the WRS Legal Administration assist with enforcement file preparation and processes to ensure files are suitable for consideration of potential prosecution where appropriate.
- 3.4 There are a number of offences that are considered by the Enforcement Officers which includes the act of fly tipping but also includes people not taking care of their own waste responsibly (i.e. passing it on to someone to dispose of without undertaking proper checks of that waste). Whilst cameras, officers and members of the public might have evidence of someone actually tipping waste, in the majority of cases there is evidence of the householder who having passed the waste on without proper checks being undertaken.
- 3.5 Education is an important tool in reducing waste crime. This is particularly true in Redditch, where offences are being conducted inadvertently because of a lack of knowledge and understanding that leaving waste outside of a refuse bin is an offence. In some cases, it is laziness, but others something that has 'traditionally' been done such as leaving side waste alongside their bin or in a communal area for collection because it has always been cleared from there in the past.

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- 3.6 Recognising this, a significant focus of WRS activity in Redditch has been on informal warnings to educate on appropriate behaviour. During 2025 twenty streets or local areas were targeted in this way. Fifteen were targeted between June and December 2024.
- 3.7 Covert camera deployment in urban areas for fly tipping or littering enforcement is less successful than in rural areas as the cameras tend to be more obviously positioned. However, intelligence assessments are used to identify hot spots where informal warnings and letter drops have been unsuccessful so that enforcement action can be taken. For lesser offences that would likely result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued but for other offences it may result in prosecution.
- 3.8 Enforcement action in numbers;

Action taken	2023	2024 (Jan-May)	2024 (Jun-Dec)	2025	2026 (Jan)
Number of fly tips reported	2181	1072	1330	1862	153
Number of fly tips investigated	Not recorded	Not recorded	246	287	13
Number of littering offences reported	Not recorded	Not recorded	12	15	1
Number of dog fouling offences reported for investigation	Not recorded	Not recorded	13	16	0
Number of untidy land cases reported	3	2	19	10	2
Number of letter drops	18	8	15	20	0
Number of warning letters	0	0	2	17	1
Number of Fixed Penalty Notices for Fly tipping	0	0	0	5	1
Number of Fixed Penalty Notices for Littering	0	0	0	3	0

- 3.9 The number of formal enforcement actions are increasing with a proportionate approach to envirocrime where informal action is taken initially. It takes time to construct an enforcement file, and for some of the perpetrators, Officers have identified links to multiple fly tipping incidents which makes the task more complicated as evidence is collated connecting the individuals involved to the offences. Nonetheless the enforcement actions listed above are considered successful given the resource available.

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- 3.10 Whilst no formal action has been taken with regard to untidy land to date in the Borough, Officers have investigated a number of properties for consideration under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policy Act 2014 where a Community Protection Notice may be served. To date, properties investigated have either not met the threshold required for formal action or the situation has been resolved informally. Sixteen cases remain under investigation which includes informal action in line with the Council's proportionate response and reasonable enforcement approach.
- 3.11 The level of demand is high, as shown by the first two lines of the table at 3.8. The number of fly tipping incidents alone represent an issue more severe than any other enforcement issue WRS investigate. As a result, it is imperative that a targeted approach is taken to enable the resource allocated to be effective.
- 3.12 The approach being proposed for the coming year, is as follows;
- to resolve the current active investigations (particularly around untidy land).
 - focus on particular problem areas and respond appropriately as these change which will include understanding the target audience in any targeted area so that signage and communication is effective.
 - In line with good enforcement practice, Officers will continue to engage with the community to bring about behavioural change and will continue to deliver wider public communications and messages to support that message.
 - Develop and deliver a communication campaign to include messaging of tougher enforcement action and promotion of services which would reduce fly tipping such as Bulky Waste Collection.

Current number of open cases by issue	Open cases
Fly tip investigations	28
Littering investigations	1
Dog Fouling investigations	1
Untidy Land investigations	16

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications. The report outlines the activity undertaken within the existing budget envelope. Any monies recovered from Fixed Penalty Notices is reinvested into the enforcement activity.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications. The enforcement activity undertaken is done so through appropriate delegation and authorisations. Any proposal to prosecute is a matter for the Council to consider through the legal team.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

- 6.1 There are no specific Local Government Reorganisation implications.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 The work and activity detailed in this report directly supports Redditch's Council Plan as they assist the promise of addressing litter and dog mess, the impact of fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour which are key objectives of the priority 'Green, Clean and Safe Redditch'.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific climate change implications, however raising the profile of appropriate behaviour with regard to the environment helps support our Climate Change priorities.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no specific risks arising from this report. However, action taken in respect of environmental crime helps to address risks to public health that would arise should dog faeces, litter and other environmental crime be permitted to continue with impunity.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no appendices or background papers.

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Sharon Harvey.	04.02.2026 Advised of report.
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Simon Wilkes.	13.02.2026
Financial Services	Deb Goodall.	Consulted
Legal and Democratic Services	Nicola Cummings, Principal Solicitor – Governance and Jess Bayley-Hill, Principal Democratic Services Officer	23.02.26
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	n/a.	n/a
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles.	02.03.2026.