

M16 Project - Outline proposals to improve environmental awareness and promote cleaner streets in the Old Trafford (M16) area.

Introduction

For many years the back alleyways of the Old Trafford area have been problematic in as much as there has been regular, high volume fly-tipping of domestic waste and bulky items that is both detrimental to the area and costly for the Council to deal with. The aim of this proposal is to put in place a long term, sustainable change in the behaviour of local residents and businesses who currently do not dispose of their waste correctly. The aim is to break the cycle of fly-tipping and clean ups that have become the norm in the area. It is proposed that this project will be led and managed by the Environmental Improvement Team with support from other Council services and local partners. Progress will be monitored at the monthly meetings of the Environment Working Group chaired by the Head of Regulatory Services.

Background

Old Trafford is an area of high density terraced housing built in the 19th and 20th century. There are many back alleys behind these houses that have become the area where wheeled bins are stored but it is also the area where some households and businesses dump waste on a regular basis. There are a number of reasons why this behaviour may be taking place including:

- Transient population in rented properties,
- Language barriers leading to misunderstanding of what the local waste disposal standards are, particularly recycling requirements
- Permanent fly-tipping blighted areas where residents will add to existing rubbish piles
- Residents have a lack of understanding around waste disposal
- Theft of and damage to wheeled bins
- Charges for the removal of bulky items or lack of understanding of the process.

Any plan to improve on the current situation needs to take all these factors into account and will require a broad approach involving a range of Council services, partner organisations, community groups, businesses and the public if the objectives are to be met. Legal action will be taken against individuals or businesses that do not respond to the 'Be Responsible message' and continue to harm the environment.

The Council currently deploy a range of services within the M16 area to tackle the problems of litter, fly-tipping and waste, including:

- Scarab Sweeper (medium size mechanical street sweeper) which has removed over 45 tonnes of detritus (litter at the side of the road) from the Old Trafford area since April 2014,
- One 7 ton vehicle and two operatives have removed over 34 tonnes of bulky waste items (fly tipping) between January and August 2014.
- Currently the Council maintain over 30 litter bins in the area working with our mobile caged vehicle to remove 30 tonnes of litter between January and August 2014.

These quantities are typical of the amounts of waste removed over the last 3-4 years.

Proposals

The following initial list of proposals from the Regulatory Services Team will be the subject of consultation with colleagues, elected members and partners and are likely to be expanded to include other initiatives over time. They are intended to be adopted as a package for maximum effectiveness.

Proposal	Details	Costs
Wider partner engagement	Engaging partners and residents will be the key to the success of the M16 Project. Officers will work with Elected Members, partner agencies, businesses and the public to deliver a joined up campaign to promote good practice and challenge irresponsible behaviour. This approach will build on the success of the “Be responsible” campaign, which has already led to a reduction in dog fouling complaints of 20%.	May need potential additional materials to provide additional focus on the “Be Responsible” message in the M16 area. This can be managed within the £10k identified within the Environment and Operations Progress Update Report to support phase 2 of the Be Responsible campaign.
RSLs and letting agents	We will work with these organisations to promote better waste disposal as part of tenancy agreements and conditions.	May need to carry out a re print of the waste calendar for the M16 area to allow RSLs to send out to new tenants. This can be managed within the £10k identified within the Environment and Operations

		Progress Update Report (as above).
Better communication	Communication will take into account the diversity of the local population. The Council's Communications team will assist to ensure an effective multi-media campaign is delivered, including newsletters, press releases and social media. Local faith groups will also be engaged to help.	If it is decided to produce a local newsletter we would seek to fund this through external sponsorship. Alternatively we could also investigate the use of the Old Trafford News or RSL newsletters as a means of getting the message out. We may also need some funding to employ interpreters; we would also seek to fund this through external funding.
Funding and Sponsorship	Working with the Economic Development team we will pursue sponsorship and funding to help deliver the new initiatives.	No costs
Involving local residents	Some of the environmental problems in Old Trafford are created by a minority of the residents. The Council wants to work with local residents to encourage them to spot and challenge (or report) fly-tipping and the Council will support and encourage this behaviour. We will seek to recruit more "Street Champions" as there is evidence this can work well. We will encourage and support the Old Trafford Environment Partnership to establish itself..	We may need a reprint of the Street Champion welcome packs. We will seek to deliver this through external funding.
Bigger Better Bins	We will trial large capacity, shared, Euro-bins in a limited number of locations. We will also seek to improve usage of recycling bins however it may be necessary to take a more flexible and pragmatic approach to local problems where cost benefits can be linked to the provision of replacement bins.	£5k - £10k (Revenue) Costs are still being established for this initiative and will depend on the number of houses chosen to participate in the trial. Up to £10k can be funded from within exiting revenue budgets
Education Officer	The proposed new temporary post will assist with the M16 Project particularly on a one to one basis with householders and businesses that are struggling to meet required standards.	This can be managed within the £15k identified within the Environment and Operations Progress Update Report.
Enforcement	This is an important aspect of the project however the main campaign message will continue to be positive, i.e. "Be Responsible". The	No cost.

	enforcement will be focused on serious or intransigent offenders and will seek to prosecute, rather than issue FPN's, in order to publicise enforcement action.	
Improve usage of alleyways	By improving the facilities in gated alleyways some Councils have improved appearance and ownership of the areas. This has been done by the introduction of planters and benches for the use of residents to promote social interaction and shared responsibility.	These schemes should be funded via external funding streams.
Should these initiatives not bring about the desired changes in behaviour they may need to be supported by increased enforcement activity the cost of which has not yet been established.		
Surveillance	The Council could operate mobile camera units to record irresponsible behaviour in problem areas.	
Increased enforcement and investigation by officers	Increased enforcement activity would impact on the on-going Trafford Be Responsible campaign across the borough and may need fixed term additional staff resources.	

Engagement with Local Councillors

An initial meeting was held with Regulatory Services and local ward members on 24th September to discuss residents' issues and consider any other initiatives Members feel would help to improve the local environment. The project proposal was well received.

Conclusion

The M16 Project will run for a period of 12 months from the launch date and will be reviewed at 6 months to ensure that it is delivering in all areas. The Environment Working Group will review progress at their regular monthly meetings. It is hoped that this broad partnership based approach will bring about a lasting change in behaviour that will improve the local community and remove the need for costly clean ups and interventions to deal with fly-tipping.

Where possible we will develop local performance indicators to assist us to monitor and evaluate the above proposals. Initial measures of success may result in:

- Residents being more willing to engage with the Council and being proactive in reporting anti-social behaviour including fly-tipping.
- A reduction in the amount of fly-tipped materials in rear passageways,
- A reduction in the amount of litter on the streets of Old Trafford,
- A reduction in the amount of contaminated wheeled bins in the area,

- An increase in community awareness of waste disposal/recycling standards, and
- An increase in the number of Street Champions in the M16 area.