

Committee	Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date	13 January, 2022
Title	Street Cleansing
Cabinet Member	Councillor Catrin Wager
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Purpose	Ensuring Clean and Tidy Communities

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Poor local environmental quality has far-reaching and negative effects. It affects well-being, discourages access to green spaces and is even linked to higher rates of crime and anti-social behaviour, while also affecting tourism and the local economy.
- 1.2 The effects of the recent pandemic have impacted and changed our work with increasing pressure on our resources during periods of recent years.
- 1.3 Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the public highways are free of litter. We provide a full range of services that help to keep our streets and public open spaces clean.
- 1.4 Street cleansing is something that happens throughout the year and activities include:
- clearing litter
 - disposal of dead animals
 - clean up dog faeces
 - removing anything that is fly-tipped
 - emptying litter and dog waste bins
 - clear anything else that has been deposited
 - cleaning public open spaces
 - sweeping roads and pavements.
- 1.5 The service covers all of our public sites and adopted roads managed by the Council and areas are divided into zones according to their use. High intensity of use zones are mainly town centres, Medium intensity of use zones include most residential areas, whilst Low intensity of use zones are less densely populated areas and include rural County roads.

- 1.6 Litter accumulates in the different zones over various time periods. The cleanliness of an area is assessed by comparison with standard. The standards are:
- Grade A - no litter or refuse
 - Grade B - predominately free of litter and refuse apart from some small items
 - Grade B+ - no more than three small items of litter
 - Grade C - widespread distribution of litter and/or refuse with minor accumulations
 - Grade D - heavily affected by litter and/or refuse with significant accumulations.
- 1.7 Alternative response times are allowed to clean the areas and return them to the appropriate standard. The principle of the Code is how clean an area is and not how often it is cleaned.
- 1.8 The standards of cleanliness are regularly monitored by random sampling of streets throughout the County.
- 1.9 An independent audit of cleanliness standards is carried out by Keep Wales Tidy and currently takes place annually. This is done using a methodology (LEAMS).
- 1.10 Where possible, the main roads are mechanically swept regularly. Areas of high amenity, such as the town centres and local shopping centres, are cleansed daily. Other areas of land are monitored and cleansed to meet the standards set out in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Code of Practice for litter and refuse.

2. Background and Current Situation

- 2.1 Our cyclic cleansing routes need updating to meet the additional pressures of increased tourism but also different waste collection arrangements.
- 2.2 We also want to ensure that suitable bins are located throughout the County to promote recycling of litter and provide appropriate opportunities for residents and visitors to get involved - everyone has a responsibility to dispose of their litter responsibly.
- 2.3 Our priority as a Department is to ensure Clean and Tidy Communities and introduce dedicated teams to tackle problems that contribute to improving the appearance of our streets and local environment - the work of these teams will need to be closely aligned with that of the cyclical cleansing team.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Nobody likes to see litter on the streets, but regrettably, some people are still harming our environment by not disposing of their waste responsibly.
- 3.2 By reminding people of the best option, and making that option as easy as possible, we can change behavior to achieve long-term environmental benefits.
- 3.3 Educating our children is vital as is raising awareness of the effects of litter.
- 3.4 Volunteers are vitally important and we are already seeing countywide litter picking campaigns and the organisation of events to clear illegally disposed items.

3.5 The Welsh Government is also about to release a Litter and Fly-tipping Scheme and is working on introducing a new Code of Practice that is very likely to place much more emphasis on standards of cleanliness.

3.6 Our vision therefore is to bring this together by:

- Reviewing our cyclical cleaning arrangements by ensuring that they respond to demand, by revisiting the available resources necessary to carry out this work
- Co-ordinate volunteer litter picking activity
- Cross-sector working to deliver campaigns
- Tackle roadside litter
- Introduce on-street recycling bins to maximize recycling
- Benefiting from information technology advances, e.g. smart bins
- Adapt as and when the new code of practice is introduced.