



**Prosperous Communities  
Committee**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**Subject: Approach to Environmental Crime**

Report by:	Director of Change Management, ICT & Regulatory Services
Contact Officer:	Andy Gray Housing and Enforcement Manager  andy.gray@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To seek approval for the new Environmental Crime Policy and the Environmental Crime Commitment.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Committee are asked to:

- a) Approve the Environmental Crime Policy as shown in appendix 1.
- b) Approve the Environmental Crime Commitment as shown in appendix 2.
- c) Approve that minor amendments to the policy can be made in line with the scheme of delegation by the Director – ICT, Change Management and Regulatory Services with the agreement of the Chair of the Committee.

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

The Council has a variety of statutory powers in relation to environmental crime for the matters covered within this policy.

The policy sets out the Council's position on these matters and sits underneath the Council's broader Corporate Enforcement Policy for these specific work areas.

### **Financial : FIN/152/23/SSC**

There are no financial implications within this report. The Environmental Crime Commitment sets out projects that will be explored in the future and these may have financial implications that will be set out and considered accordingly when those projects are developed and approval is sought for them.

There may be financial implications contained within elements of future work within the Environmental Crime Commitment, however the majority of the work is operational and can be financed from within the existing revenue budgets.

### **Staffing :**

The additional initiatives shown within the Environmental Crime Commitment can be resourced via the existing establishment.

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

The Council's approach to enforcement is set out within its Corporate Enforcement Policy. This policy and commitment seek to ensure that the Council's position on these matters is clear and documented. There is not believed to be any adverse impact in relation to equality and diversity.

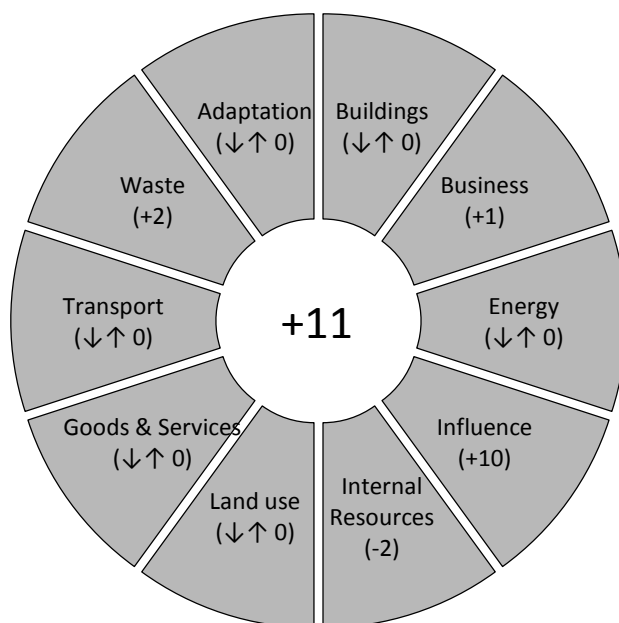
### **Data Protection Implications:**

None noted

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### Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

A CESIA has been completed for this policy and is shown below:



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West Lindsey District Council will be net zero by 2050 (26 years and 11 months away).

The policy and commitment will contribute to the Council's net zero carbon initiative mainly through the influence it will have. The raising of awareness on specific initiatives and successful enforcement work will help to spread the right message for the commitment that the Council has for dealing with these issues and in turn, help to actively reduce these.

### Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

The Council has regulatory powers across the majority of the work areas and legislation covered within this policy. It will seek to use these in line with the Corporate Enforcement Policy and apply these as required and appropriate.

Where there is broader criminal activity associated with environmental crime the Council will liaise with the relevant partners to ensure that a joined-up approach is taken to tackle the issue.

**Health Implications:**

Tackling environmental crime can have a positive impact on health and wellbeing for the district's residents and businesses. Ensuring that the district is clean and that waste is disposed of appropriately are key objectives for the Council.

Seeking to raise awareness in regards to the impact of environmental crime is aimed at reducing the instances in which it occurs and in turn improving the look and feel of the district, particularly in some of its more deprived areas.

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:****Risk Assessment:****Call in and Urgency:****Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

**Yes**☐**No**☐**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

**Yes**☐**No**☐

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This report aims to seek approval for the Environmental Crime Policy (Appendix 1) and the accompanying Environmental Crime Commitment (Appendix 2).
- 1.2. The Council has not previously had a formal policy relating to its environmental crime work and this will sit alongside other service-based policies and be informed by the broader Corporate Enforcement Policy.

## **2. Context**

- 2.1. Environmental crime continues to be a high-profile area of work for the Council. This has been identified by residents and Councillors in various forums over the previous 12 to 18 months. The Council's approach to environmental crime is seen as a key issue and was also specifically identified within the Corporate Enforcement Policy workshops for Councillors that were held in August 2022.
- 2.2. The proposed policy aligns with the overall strategic aim within the Corporate Plan which is to "Create a safer, cleaner and greener district in which to live, work and socialise". It also seeks to outline the key work areas that the Council is responsible for and to compliment and work alongside the objectives of the Lincolnshire Environmental Crime Partnership.
- 2.3. The Environmental Crime Commitment seeks to outline the work that the Council are doing currently to tackle this issue and at the same time set out what it wishes to achieve in the coming 18 to 24 months. This document is proposed to be the public facing element of the policy that can be used to raised awareness of environmental crime and its impacts.

## **3. Approach to Environmental Crime**

- 3.1. The Council puts a significant amount of resource into dealing with environmental crime and this resource is spread across a number of work areas on a daily basis. On this basis, it is essential that the Council uses its resources effectively and seeks to limit the impact that this issue has on these.
- 3.2. The proposed Environmental Crime Policy sets out the Council's position across the following work areas:
  - Abandoned vehicle removal
  - Abandoned shopping trolleys
  - Dog fouling and Littering
  - Early presentation of waste and commercial waste
  - Fly-tipping
  - Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)

- 3.3. The Council also works collaboratively with partners such as the Police and the Environment Agency to deal with cross cutting issues and ensure that the full range of legislative powers can be utilised to deal with any specific challenges.
- 3.4. The approach proposed within the policy takes into consideration the work that has been undertaken by the Council as part of its T24 review service and incorporates the use of improved technology as appropriate.

#### **4. Environmental Crime Commitment**

- 4.1. This document will act as the front facing aspects of the Council's Environmental Crime work and seeks to set out what the Council is doing to tackle the issue, alongside what it is committed to do moving forward.
- 4.2. The future actions have been informed by work that has been undertaken over the past 12 to 18 months and informed by feedback from Councillors in a variety of forums and any post pandemic impacts. The annual budget consultation also identified elements of enforcement that could be considered in the future, therefore these have been addressed also.
- 4.3. It is intended to keep this document live during the period of its operation and to bring back a review of the Council's progress and a revised commitment towards the end of 2024.

#### **5. Examples**

- 5.1. The links below show some of the proactive communications work that has occurred in the last 12 months in relation to fly-tipping and environmental crime.
- <https://thelincolnite.co.uk/2022/08/west-lindsey-district-council-use-stickers-in-proactive-approach-to-fly-tipping/>
  - <https://www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk/news/local-news/novel-approach-tackling-fly-tipping-7460274>
  - <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/council-news/2022/11/stark-warning-residents-illegal-fly-tipper-served-ps400-fixed-penalty-notice>

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