Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet Date: 14 December 2010

Subject: Environment Portfolio Item: 7(c)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mary Sartin

Recommending: That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted

Fixed Penalty Notices

As of 29 November 2010 accredited officers have been able to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for a range of environmental offences. These provide an alternative to prosecution in the courts for offences such as littering, graffiti and fly-posting, excessive noise, inadequate waste transfer documentation, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling. Fixed penalties range from £50 to £300, a full list being available on the Council's website. Officers issuing the notices do not themselves collect the fines but for some offences these will be reduced by 50% if paid within 10 days of issue. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid we will pursue the matter through the courts to obtain a conviction.

A campaign to raise awareness prior to the introduction of this new tool in the Council's fight against those who commit these offences has been underway over the last three months. There are a minority of residents and visitors to the district who choose not to respect the local environment but they cost local council tax payers many thousands of pounds in clean-up costs.

The initial period when FPNs can be issued will be more about education but I will update members on numbers of notices issued at the Council meeting.

Waste Management

With the Christmas and New Year period fast approaching I would like to take this opportunity to remind members and residents of the importance of looking at collection calendars or checking the Council's website for changes to collection days during this period. It is as important as ever that we maintain our recycling figures over this time and I would ask everyone to continue the good work which they have being doing over past months. As in previous years we will be collecting real Christmas trees in the weeks after the festivities, details again being given on the Council's website and also in the latest edition of the Forester.

With the recent wintry weather around the country in mind and conscious of the difficulties encountered during the severe weather last winter, contingency

arrangements are being put in place to provide telephone services during the Christmas and New Year shut down period should this be necessary. Details will be made available once finalised.

Bobbingworth

I would just like to update members on the setting up of a local liaison committee to have an oversight on the way forward for this site. The first meeting will take place on 16 December with myself, as the Portfolio Holder, in the chair and local representatives from Bobbingworth and Ongar as well EFDC officers.