

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 12 December 2017
Report Subject	Overview of Flintshire County Council's Pest Control Service
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection
Report Author	Chief Officer (Planning and Environment)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the work undertaken by Flintshire County Council's Pest Control Service.

Although it is a non-statutory service it fulfils an important role in supporting the public health agenda. In particular, rats and mice transmit a number of serious diseases. If they gain access to properties they can spread disease, cause damage and contaminate food. Since April 2015 all aspects of the service offered by Flintshire County Council are chargeable, which is consistent with the position adopted by other local authorities in the region.

In Flintshire the team of three officers also undertake dog warden duties, which is a statutory service the authority must offer in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members to note the contents of the report, and promote the Pest Control Service within their local communities, where possible.
---	--

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	OVERVIEW OF FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PEST CONTROL SERVICE
1.01	<p>As part of the Planning and Environment's business planning process the Pest Control Service was identified as a service that should, eventually, become self-financing. Ambitious, incremental, income targets were set for the service over a four year period.</p>
1.02	<p>The team offers a professional and comprehensive service, treating the following types of pests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Rats▪ Mice▪ Fleas▪ Wasps▪ Crawling ants <p>Services range from basic advice on pest prevention to the direct control of pests. The rates offered are competitive and include follow-up visits, with concessions available (at present) on the full rate if the service user is in receipt of certain benefits. All pest control officers are fully trained and qualified to industry standards.</p> <p>Maintenance contracts are also available with an annual fixed price. These contracts are tailored to the client's needs and include regular scheduled inspections, pest monitors and an information binder.</p>
1.03	<p>Since January 2016 there has been a concerted effort to try and improve the uptake of the service through promotion.</p> <p>Some of the positive developments to support and promote the service are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Appointment of a corporately funded Flintshire Trainee in September 2016.▪ Design and distribution of new leaflets. Leaflet drops have been made, targeting, in particular, newer housing estates who may not have been included in the mass mail out which was done in early 2016.▪ Articles promoting the service have been distributed via the press and social media.▪ Letters have been sent to businesses in the area and subsequent phone calls made to discuss pest control contracts.▪ Work has also been undertaken to assist the Environmental Control Team where there have been complaints of filthy and verminous

	properties.
1.04	The progress of the service is monitored at the Planning and Environment Programme Board.

2.00	FINANCE AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
-------------	--

2.01	<p>At present there is an in-year risk of not achieving the Pest Control fee income target for 2017/18, with a shortfall of approximately £0.043m projected.</p> <p>Prior to financial year 2015/16, Pest Control income targets were set at approximately £30,000 annually with fee income consistently falling short annually on average of 50%. The income target was raised in 2015/16 as part of the 3 year Business Planning efficiencies at a rate of 79% from £31,919 to £57,229.</p>
2.02	<p>Pest Control fees are reviewed annually and increased in line with inflation. In 2015/16 the fees were reviewed and restructured in line with commercial organisations to demonstrate a competent and competitive service. A widespread increased marketing exercise and publicity promotion to introduce the service to both domestic and commercial areas and widen the customer base within Flintshire was undertaken. The fee shortfall in-year was an improvement on previous years at 39%. The 2nd and 3rd year of the Business Planning efficiencies have seen the income target further increased to its current level of £100,229. In-year monitoring has shown that the income target is not being achieved.</p>
2.03	<p>The number of Pest Control calls also increased in 2016/17 following the publicity from the previous year. This, however has now reduced in the first half of 2017/18.</p>
2.04	<p>The largest number of pest control fees received are in the £20 - £60 range.</p>

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
-------------	---

3.01	None required as a result of this report.
------	---

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
-------------	------------------------

4.01	The progress of the service is monitored through the Planning and Environment Programme Board.
------	--

5.00	APPENDICES
-------------	-------------------

5.01	Appendix A – Schedule of Charges Appendix B – Publicity Leaflet
------	--

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
-------------	--

6.01	Contact Officer: Sian Jones, Community and Business Protection Manager Telephone: 01352 702132 E-mail: sian-jones@flintshire.gov.uk
------	--

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
-------------	--------------------------

7.01	None
------	-------------