

Council - 14th July 2022

Notice of Motion

Create a Public Facing 'Wall of Shame' in order to Tackle Fly-Tipping and Environmental Crime

Southend-on-Sea City Council notes that:

Residents are frustrated and feel passionately that the fly-tipping problem in Southend-on-Sea has become unacceptable. Fly-tipping ruins our street scene and poses a genuine threat to our environment.

Clearing up incidents of fly-tipping comes at a significant financial cost the Council, which currently has to be built into the cost of our waste collection contract. If we were able to demonstrate a decrease in fly-tipping we would be in a strong position to negotiate a waste contract which provides better value for money for our local taxpayers. Saving money where we can is particularly important in the wake of the year-on-year cuts to Local Authority funding coming from central Government.

Our city needs an innovative solution to our perpetual fly-tipping problem.

Creating a 'wall of shame' to expose those who are caught in the act of dumping rubbish would be a cost-effective tool and would almost certainly see a sharp drop in offences shortly after launch. Our newfound City-status offers us a unique opportunity to rebrand and rebuild our website, into which we can create the exhibition interface for such a scheme.

Traditional enforcement methods can prove costly to the Council in legal fees. Additionally, fines are frequently ineffective deterrents as a fine disproportionately punishes those who cannot afford to pay it, whereas businesses or wealthier individuals may see a penalty fine as 'worth the risk'. Public exposure on the other hand, is not the kind of press that any person or business wants.

When considering a scheme such as this, serious attention should be given to the fact that a share of the blame for these crimes is owed to landlords who fail to provide their tenants with adequate waste storage space.

On the issue of fly-tipping, Councillors and our residents are in strong agreement - fly-tipping is totally unacceptable and we are not willing to simply put up with it.

Southend-on-Sea City Council therefore resolves:

To create a public facing "Wall of Shame" on Southend-on-Sea City Council's website. This page will be populated by a web-series of videos, showcasing incidents of fly-tipping caught on camera.

The video clips will be compiled into short 'episodes' and narrated over in order to make them both informative and entertaining. In a similar fashion to popular long running crime watch shows, our web series will allow viewers to write or call in and help to identify unknown individuals responsible - further supporting traditional enforcement.

The Council will continue to extend our City's CCTV network and, in addition to the current areas of interest, this should prioritise coverage of Southend's major fly-tipping hotspots. A 'Wall of Shame' scheme will improve the Council's ability to enforce against environmental crimes and discourage people from offending.

For transparency, this new section of the Council's website should include a display which tracks statistics including: the number of fly-tipping fines handed out by the Council, the tonnage of fly-tipping collected, and the number of landlords prosecuted.

This Council resolves to reinstate the sense of pride in our streets that residents long to return to.

Proposer

Cllr Aston Line

Seconded

Cllr Maxine Sadza