

Report Title	ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT
Meeting	EXECUTIVE
Meeting Date	24th September 2026
Report Author	David Walker
Directorate	Place
Lead Executive Member(s)	Councillor Zafar Ali
Wards Affected	All
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	Public
Appendices (if any)	

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Executive Members with information on enforcement activities in response to environmental crimes such as littering, failure to clear dog fouling and breaches of Public Space Protection Orders prior to and following withdrawal of proactive education and enforcement patrols in 2023.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, the Executive is recommended to:

3. Provide Colne Area Committee with the financial implications as set out within this report allowing the Committee to consider the financial viability of reintroducing proactive education and enforcement patrols within the Colne town centre, carparks and public retail areas
4. Consider ringfencing income generated from Fixed Penalty Notices issued for littering and dog fouling offences by funded officers within the Committee's area to the Area Committee enabling the Committee with support of Operational Services to deploy additional frontline resources into areas of need and deliver ongoing communication campaigns which encourage responsible disposal of waste items.

5. Information: the Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendations

- 5.1 At the Executives meeting in June 2026 Members were asked to consider an item referred from Colne Committee
- 5.2 Colne Committee noted that there had been zero Fixed Penalty Notices issued in Quarter 4 and felt this was unacceptable, particularly in view of the continuing problem with littering and dog fouling.
- 5.3 Colne Committee felt that a dedicated team of people was needed to address the problem.
- 5.4 Councillors highlighted concerns about litter and dog fouling, expressed a welcome for the employment of an environmental warden and enquired on what education was being undertaken in schools.
- 5.5 The Executive was asked consider the views of the Colne Committee and take appropriate action
- 5.6 The Executive asked for a report to be submitted to the August meeting of the committee.
- 5.7 The Executive is advised that from 2019 through to March 2023 the Council made use of a third party provider to educate and enforce against lower levels of environmental crime such as littering, failure to clear fouling and breaches of Public Space Protection Orders in parks and cemetery spaces.
- 5.8 The average number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued across the borough per annum during this period for littering was 2083.
- 5.9 The average number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued per annum across the borough for failure to clear dog fouling over the same period was 32. Failure to clear fouling offences are lower as the offence is harder to witness and the presence of uniformed officers promotes positive behaviours.
- 5.10 Of the Fixed Penalty Notices 1345 were linked to patrols within Colne and surrounding areas.
- 5.11 In March 2023 the Council reported a forecasted income for the financial year 2022/23 within the region of £62,000 would be received from the third-party provider. The income was provided to the Council by the service provider after all operational costs were covered. Using the same principle of payment Colne would achieve an annual income of £19,556 based on the 2023 report
- 5.12 Following the withdrawal of the third party provider the enforcement of littering, dog fouling and breaches of PSPO'S has been delivered by Operational Services.

- 5.13 The Service Area employs 6 officers within an enforcement and education role with 3 officers dedicated to the enforcement of flytipping, duty of care, littering, dog fouling and breaches of PSPO'S. Officers additionally act as the Council's dog wardens and actively participate in multi-agency projects such as Clear Hold Build.
- 5.14 Due to limited resources being available and those resources being used to support various enforcement and educational activities from 1st April 2025 through to 31st March 2026 we report that 37 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for littering and dog fouling offences across the borough.
- 5.15 With support from Nelson Town Council the service has recruited an Environmental Warden to deliver education and behaviour change activities solely within the Nelson Area. So far the officer has interacted with business and volunteer groups to provide information on responsible waste and material disposal. The Officer will support enforcement should proactive interventions be unsuccessful.
- 5.16 The Executive May wish to consider the benefit of re-establishing an agreement with a third party provider or providing internal resources that creates a physical presence within our town centres, reduces littering, promotes positive behaviours and supports the enhancement projects that have been delivered and are being delivered to improve the town centre's across the Borough against the Council's revenue budget level.
- 5.17 During the lifetime of the past agreement with a third party provider the Council received several complaints against its enforcement officers. Investigation often led to the complaint not being upheld. The highest level of complaints came from the West Craven area and linked to the enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders, namely dogs off lead and dogs in areas not designated for their exercising.
- 5.18 Complaints created a negative impression of the work completed by the enforcement provider and should the Executive consider there is a need to pursue re-introducing proactive education and enforcement patrols we recommend that activities are concentrated on town centres, car parks, retail and commercial areas of the Borough.
- 5.19 Should the Executive be mindful to support the introduction of a presence within Colne for educational and potential enforcement purposes we recommend the Nelson Town Council model is put forward to Colne Area Committee Members for consideration.

- 5.20 The model being the employment of an additional officer resource within Operational Services. The resource being entirely funded by Colne Area Committee. Income ringfenced back to the Committee as set out in paragraph 5.11 of this report. The resource being dedicated to activities within the Colne Area Committee area. Estimated cost of one officer would be in the region of £34,335.00 per annum.
- 5.21 The benefit of the above model is that the service is reactive to the Committee's priorities and can be quickly re-assigned to address the changing priorities of the Committee or in order to reduce any negativity enforcement activities would bring over periods such as the Rhythm and Blues festival.

6. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (Providing High Quality Services and Facilities, Proud and Connected Communities and Places)

- 6.1 If accepted the proactive patrols would support the improvements made to the town centres, retail and commercial areas of Colne and surrounding villages.
7. If accepted additional income would support further education and deployment of frontline resources in areas of greater need

8. Implications

8.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implication raised on the Borough Council directly from this report.

The Nelson Town Council model would cost Colne Committee £34,335.00 per annum.

The report sets out the forecasted income from Fixed Penalty Notices the Colne Committee could receive based on 2023 levels of activity.

8.2 Legal and Governance Implications

There are no legal or governance implications directly created by this report

8.3 Climate and Biodiversity Implications

Reducing littering and fouling would have a positive impact on climate and bio diversity.

8.4 Human Resources Implications

There are no Human Resource Implications raised from this report.

8.5 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no Equality or Diversity implications raised by this report

8.6. Consultation

8.7 Pride in Place impact fund survey included high street and town centre revitalisation.

8.8 Alternative Options Considered

Providing an internal resource to deliver a borough wide service would need to be managed centrally, the cost of such a model is not affordable for the Borough Council. Individual Town Council's / Area Committee's could replicate the Nelson Town Council's environmental warden model aligning the officers' priorities to each Committee's own.

8.9 Statutory Officer Sign off (please put an x in the relevant box below)

Section 151 Officer	x
Monitoring Officer	x

9. Background Documents

Colne and District Area Committee meeting minutes 14th May 2026

Executive minutes 25th June 2026

Contact Officers

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