



Role Profile

Role Title: Environmental Crime Officer

Service Area: Housing and Wellbeing

Band: 6

Reporting to: Environmental Health Manager

Responsible for: N/A

Purpose

Working with communities to achieve clean and safe streets and premises by effectively responding to problems such as fly tips, domestic and commercial duty of care issues, commercial burning, abandoned vehicles, daytime stray dogs provision, along with reporting anti-social behaviour and licensing offences and other issues noted whilst carrying out patrols. Utilising powers under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Protection Act along with any other relevant enforcement legislation.

Carry out investigations, intervention & enforcement activities delivered to a professional standard in compliance with guidance on evidence gathering for prosecutions, drafting prosecution files in conjunction with Senior Environmental Health Officer's and the Environmental Health Manager – Environment, and appearing as a witness when necessary.

Provide an in hours stray dogs service including the collection and return of dogs, the identification of owners, along with issuing relevant fines and costs.

Key Responsibilities

- Ability to plan own busy workload over a short term, balancing a reactive caseload with ongoing project work and other scheduled proactive work, having regard to the service plan and the Council's priorities. As an Authorised Officer of the Council sound use of judgement will be expected to make unsupervised enforcement decisions.
- Excellent organisational skills in order to meet a number of conflicting deadlines, such as: response times for dealing with complaints, completing projects on time, planning and completing proactive and educative work and meeting statutory deadlines.
- Ability to manage own busy caseload with enquiries and changing priorities
- Undertake follow up work to assess progress on compliance with legal requirements and to instigate further action where contraventions remain.
- Flexible to provide an immediate response to environmental crime emergencies, such as a large potentially hazardous fly tip, along with responding to stray dogs requests
- Undertake frequent site visits and patrols focusing mainly around the Town Centre, but also supporting the delivery across the borough. Ensuring businesses have suitable waste management systems, searching through fly tips and accumulations, taking and securing evidence and removing bags of waste as appropriate for safety and evidence purposes.

- The role will also involve regular walking patrols around the Borough and enforcement work and issuing on the spot fixed penalty notices for the offence of littering, fly tipping and duty of care offences
- Ability to meet targets for fixed penalty notices issued and ensuring that Watford remains amongst the top performing authorities in Hertfordshire,
- Investigate enviro-crime complaints and take recommend appropriate action in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policies.
- Preparation and service of statutory notices including fixed penalty notices under relevant legislation under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act. Along with warnings and action under the Anti – Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- Lead on gathering evidence in appropriate cases, draft prosecution files in conjunction with SEHO/EHO, attend and give evidence in court.
- Keep detailed logs and maintain up to date files, with detailed records of all cases and inspections undertaken in Uniform, and ensure the transfer to computer based systems to aid statistical returns.
- Liaise and establish good working relationships and partnerships with officers within this service, across the Council, customers and other outside organisations (such as Police, Environment Agency and other relevant statutory agencies).
- Attendance at meetings and working parties, including the police to identify and report antisocial behaviour issues.
- Responsible stray dogs and ensure that all stray dogs received are collected, and where possible ownership identified, Statutory fees collected, and dogs returned. Where this is not possible the postholder will be responsible for liaising with rehoming centres.
- Undertake proactive work to promote awareness and educate customers and stakeholders in relation to enviro-crimes. This will include:
 - keep abreast of changes in legislation, policy, practices and techniques across the range of environ-crimes.
 - Attend internal and external meetings.
 - Demonstrate an understanding and commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policies in employment and service delivery.
 - maintain confidentiality of all computer and filing systems.
 - consult and inform the Environmental Health Manager of any casework which is controversial, political or otherwise of a sensitive nature.
 - Participate in the corporate work of the Council and service as appropriate.
- Contribute and assist in the development and production of policy / practice / procedures related to the services delivered. Making suggestions and contributing towards service improvement.
- The role requires occasional working in the early morning, late at night and weekends.
- Support the Councils commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
- Assist when required the duties on behalf of the Electoral Registration Officer and/or the Returning Officer relating to the registration of electors and the organisation of elections i.e., processing postal votes, canvassing properties during office hours, election hall set up etc are undertaken.
- Undertake duties to help to deliver Council Services during times of local or national emergencies. This may include duties outside your usual role and/or at a different location.

Specific Knowledge, Skills and Expertise

- A full (current) driving licence is essential.

- Detailed knowledge of enviro-crime and environmental protection legislation and regulations
- Ability to work on own initiative under own motivation to resolve problems / issues.
- Experience of working with external and internal customers, understanding their needs and providing a high standard of customer care
- Ability to apply legislative and policy requirements in order to achieve practical and legal compliance. In occasional cases there will be no clear policy or legal solution.
- Ability to problem solve using knowledge of existing resources and new resources to make and recommend informed decisions and solutions, this will occasionally require innovative solutions.
- To plan work effectively to meet short and long term targets and deadlines.
- To communicate effectively, verbally and in writing with a wide range of people (such as customers, elected members, colleagues, contractors, outside agencies etc) from varied professional, technical and cultural backgrounds in order to deliver positive outcomes.
- To communicate complicated, sensitive and complex information in an appropriate format for the receiver, for example compliance with legislative requirements.
- Confidence to diffuse situations that may arise from dissatisfied and anxious service users, dealing with contentious issues in a considerate and appropriate manner
- To advise, negotiate and influence individuals and businesses to adopt/desist a particular course of action.
- To work with officers within and outside of the Service and external organisations to publicise and resolve Environmental Crime issues.
- To work effectively and develop as part of a team.
- To undertake training to keep up to date with new developments in Environmental Crime, as well as to learn from others and share own learning
- An understanding of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and a commitment to implementation in the post holder's job.
- Ability to maintain detailed notes and records on cases and investigations undertaken, in accordance with Service procedures. This will include proficiency in updating and maintaining electronic databases.
- The post holder will regularly encounter difficult situations with a risk of aggression being encountered. In some situations the post holder may be on occasions required to wear body armour / stab vests
- Difficult physical environments are not uncommon on site visits, for example searching waste accumulations for evidence.
- Experience of implementation of enforcement procedures, gathering and preparing evidence in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act and giving evidence in court
- Experience of working in a multi agency environment
- Experience of organising own flexible working hours to meet the demands of the service

Key Relationships

- WBC Council Employees
- External Partner organisations such as the Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Environment Agency
- Residents and stakeholders
- Local businesses, service providers and organisations
- Elected Mayor, Portfolio Holder and Councillors