

## LITTER CLEARANCE ALONG DUAL CARRIAGEWAY TRUNK ROADS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report quantifies the cost of clearing litter from along trunk roads and principal local roads in the New Forest and seeks additional funding as a result of newly introduced procedures for clearing litter from dual carriageways.
- 1.2 The Environmental Protection Act Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse requires the Council to clear the litter from trunk roads and principal local roads. Up until now, it has been possible to do this with a minimum of safety equipment. Litter picking staff working along dual carriageways and trunk roads were required to wear reflective clothing but otherwise very little safety equipment was needed.
- 1.3 The new changes in health and safety legislation make it much more difficult and more expensive for the Council to keep the verges and central reservations of dual carriageways free from litter.
- 1.4 It is now necessary to close off the traffic lane closest to the litter picking staff when they are working at the edge of a dual carriageway and also to provide crash protection in the form of a barrier between the litter pickers and the moving traffic. This is a legislative requirement, part of the Code of Practice on Working on High Speed Dual Carriageway and Trunk Roads. These precautions add considerably to the cost of litter picking along dual carriageways but provide a much greater degree of safety to the litter picking staff.

### 2. LITTER CLEARANCE

- 2.1 There are approximately 24 km of dual carriageway road in the New Forest District. These are:-

- A31 Ashley Heath to Cadnam 16km
- A35 Colbury to Redbridge 4km
- A326 Ower to West Totton 2km
- A326 Ashurst Bridge to Rushington 2km

Clearing litter from the M27 motorway and motorway slip roads is the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

- 2.2 To litter pick the dual carriageways in the New Forest District a traffic management contractor now needs to be employed to close off lanes, to provide the necessary crash protection and to post warning signs. There are additional restrictions on access to the A31 and A35 Totton by pass section because of heavy traffic.

- 2.3 For the A31 trunk road it is only possible to get permission from the Highways Agency to close off lanes for litter picking at night. Lane closure during the day would not be possible on the A31 road because of the traffic congestion that it would cause. The central reservation of the A31 was litter picked in January 2001 and because of the additional cost, was not litter picked again until April 2003, by which time the accumulation of litter along the central reservation was considerable. The most recent litter pick was undertaken in response to numerous complaints about the build up of litter from residents, visitors and Council Members.

### **3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Litter is bad for the environment. Litter along main trunk roads looks unsightly and creates a poor impression of the New Forest.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The current budget for keeping the dual carriageways and trunk roads within the district free from litter is £30,490. The cost of clearing the dual carriageways has to be met from this budget.
- 4.2 In the light of experiences for clearing the A31 to the new safety standard it is now estimated that additional budget provision of £27,000 is required to fulfil the Council's responsibility to keep the dual carriageways, trunk roads and principal local roads free from litter. This item can be included in the 2004/05 Expenditure Plan, but no provision has been made for these additional costs in 2003/04.

### **5. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no crime and disorder implications.

### **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 New Health and Safety legislation makes it more difficult and more expensive to clear litter from dual carriageways. Lane closures and night time working are now required so that litter picking staff can work in safety on the roadside and on the central reservation. This results in an unavoidable increase in the cost of litter picking.
- 6.2 To litter pick the dual carriageways and trunk roads in the New Forest once per year will cost an additional £27,000. This additional cost is mostly the cost of traffic management but also includes the cost of lighting and night working.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet approve additional expenditure of £27,000 in 2003/04 to clear litter from the dual carriageways and trunk roads in the New Forest.
- 7.2 It is recommended that the cost of clearing litter from dual carriageway roads in 2004/05 and subsequent years should be included in the Councils Expenditure Plan for 2004/05.

### **For further information please contact**

Roger Sired  
Services Development Manager  
Tel: (023) 8028 5948

### **Background papers**

[RY/Consult/Reports/Litter.doc](#)