

COMMITTEE:	CABINET	
DATE:	1 August 2002	
SUBJECT:	Abandoned Vehicles	
REPORT OF:	Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities	
Ward(s):	All	
Purpose:	To consider action to be taken concerning an ever increasing number of reported abandoned vehicles within the Borough.	
Contact:	Mark Probyn, Head of Amenities, Telephone 01323 415240 or internally on extension 5240.	
Recommendations:	That the Cabinet instructs the Head of Amenities to further the initiative described in this report for responding positively towards the removal of abandoned vehicles and that the Lead Cabinet Member for Environment is informed on a regular basis of progress in this regard.	
1.0	<u>Background</u>	
1.1	At its meeting on the 5 June 2002 Cabinet received a report of the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities on this Council's current response to abandoned vehicles and the potential effects of a recent change in legislation.	
1.2	Further to this, Cabinet resolved that the report be noted and that the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities submit a report to a future meeting of the Cabinet on the implications for the Council in providing a facility that would enable all abandoned vehicles to be removed off the highway at the earliest opportunity prior to disposal or being claimed by an owner.	

1.3	This report responds to meet Cabinet's recommendation in 1.2 above and considers other ways by which an improved performance may be achieved.	
2.0	<u>Revised procedures including a storage facility for abandoned vehicles</u>	
2.1	The Cabinet requires a level of service that ensures the prompt identification, confirmation and removal of abandoned and potentially abandoned vehicles off street and from other places with the minimum of delay.	
2.2	Ideally this could be achieved by the Council wholly taking responsibility for the removal of all such vehicles to a secure storage compound, regardless of ownership or registered keeper, provided that the Council has reason to believe that the vehicle is abandoned and then seeking to recover costs.	
2.3	The Head of Amenities is mindful however of the significant costs to provide such a service. Therefore, in this financial year, he would propose as an alternative, initiatives to complement existing arrangements, which in this year will respond to over 2000 abandoned vehicle reports, resulting in over 500 vehicles being removed from the streets of Eastbourne.	
3.0	<u>The Initiative</u>	
3.1	In addition to the current response to abandoned vehicle reports it is proposed to undertake a number of short term initiatives during which reported vehicles will be removed off street with the minimum of delay.	
3.2	It is intended that these initiatives will take place through joint agency working with the Police, DVLA, East Sussex County Council and others resulting in a far greater number of vehicles being removed off street during short term 'hit' operations.	
3.3	It is anticipated that once reported abandoned, vehicles will be removed and either disposed of with the minimum level of checking, or as may be appropriate, held for collection by an Owner and only released on payment of a fee.	

3.4	Further to undertaking the first initiative, officers will review the success of this with the other agencies and advise the Lead Cabinet Member on the merits of undertaking similar operations in the future.	
3.5	It is anticipated that by taking such action this will send out a strong message to those who are responsible for placing abandoned vehicles on our streets and other places, particularly unscrupulous traders, that Eastbourne is not prepared to tolerate such practice and will through joint agency working endeavour to deter the unlawful practice of abandoning vehicles both on and off street.	
4.0	<u>The implications</u>	
4.1	There will be financial implications to enable such an initiative to take place. It is anticipated that the Abandoned Vehicle Officer will work additional hours and additional administrative support will be required for the Cleansing Office to support the initiative.	
4.2	Additionally there is a resource required to remove, and as may be appropriate, store vehicles prior to their disposal for collection. These costs are referred to below in 7.1.	
5.0	<u>Consultation</u>	
5.1	Officers of the County Council have been consulted on this report and have no substantive comments to make. Further consultation will take place with the other Agencies referred to above, prior to implementation of the initiative.	
5.2	The Director of Finance and Corporate Services has been consulted on this report and has no adverse comment to make.	
6.0	<u>Human Resource</u>	
6.1	There are Human Resource implications arising from this report which are described in the body of the report and in the Financial Implications that follow.	
7.0	<u>Financial Implications</u>	

7.1	Financial implications arising from this report are, initially:	
	Additional staffing resource:	£1,700
	An estimate of the total additional funding to support removal and disposal of vehicles, and as appropriate, storage of vehicles. To which a contribution will be received from the County Council in terms of meeting jointly, removal and disposal costs and any monies arising from the collection of vehicles impounded:	£7,800
	Total:	£9,500
	This sum is to be found from within existing revenue budgets held by the Amenities Group.	
8.0	<u>Environmental, Youth and Anti-Poverty Implications</u>	
8.1	There are no immediate environmental, youth and anti-poverty implications arising from this report.	
9.0	<u>Summary</u>	
9.1	In response to responding to an ever increasing number of abandoned vehicles within the Borough it is proposed to undertake a joint Agency initiative to remove a significant number of reported abandoned vehicles off street within a short period of time.	
Mark Probyn		
Head of Amenities		

Background Papers:

The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

Addendum to Report

Best Value Review of Cleansing Services (Addendum to Report) -

Scrutiny Committee, 12 December 2001

Abandoned Vehicles

Eastbourne Area Committee, 21 March 2001

Minutes - Eastbourne Area Committee 17 January 2001

Eastbourne Borough Council - Members News Item - February 2001

Report to Cabinet, 5 June 2002, Abandoned Vehicles

(document reference) Reports/1 July 2002 Cabinet Report_Abandoned Vehicles
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