

Private eyes may be hired to track fly-tipper

Eoghan Dalton Reports

Private investigators may soon be taking to the city's streets to snoop out litter louts.

The local authority has said it would be open to hiring PIs to help deal with fly-tippers dumping rubbish around the city. Cllr Eamon Quinlan (FF) called for the tactic last week, noting that other State bodies such as the Department of Social Protection also make use of private investigators. "We have essentially dumping going on in regular areas by a small number of people," he said. "I'm wondering if we could look at bringing in outside help such as private investigators to view these areas so that we could identify the perpetrators and instigate prosecutions," he said.



Illegal Dumping is becoming out of hand . Photo from thejournal.ie

Waterford City and County Council's environment official, Raymond Moloney confirmed that it is an option for dealing with persistent dumpers and can be looked at.

Cllr Quinlan said there has been regular dumping around the city centre and noted that drones have been used to combat the problem in the city centre.

However drones were ruled out by Mr Moloney who said the Council "certainly wouldn't" be using the flying machines for the city centre.

He said CCTV remains the main option for urban locations and added: "The use of private investigators is always an option that we can use and certainly we can look at [that]."

It would not be the first time private investigators have been put to use in Waterford.

In 1997 the former Waterford County Council received praise from a District Court Judge for its use of private investigators in chasing fly-tippers, according to the Irish Times.

More recently it was revealed by the Sunday Independent that local authorities had spent in the region of €350,000 on detectives for a range of matters including for probing personal injury claims and for tracking down absent employees.

Investigators are just one tool in a local authority's arsenal when dealing with litter louts.

While drones can be used for the county, door-to-door inquiries can also be deployed similar to television license inspections. South Kilkenny's monthly meeting of the Piltown District heard earlier this month that residents of Kilkenny city will be subject to random check-ups to see whether they hold a bin license. If the knocks are successful they will be expanded into South Kilkenny.