

Health and Environmental Action Service - Briefing Note on Dog Fouling – 28th October 2008

Following the Scrutiny Board meeting on Monday 13th October 2008, a number of issues were raised with regards to the dog warden service and requests for further information. Responses to these issues are as follows:-

1. Clarification as to why fixed penalty notices in relation to dog fouling had reduced over the last three years

There may be a number of reasons as to why this has occurred, the main reason being that the numbers of offences have reduced. The staff are “high profile” and drive around in vehicles which are sign written with a campaign highlighting dog fouling and environmental crime. Prosecutions are publicised through the website and the media. Anti-fouling signage is erected city wide. Consequently, more members of the public are aware of the offence.

2. The need for dog fouling enforcement to become a standing item on the Board's agenda until further notice

Reports can be provided on a monthly basis which will detail the number of dog fouling fixed penalty notices issued, prosecutions (for dog related offences), the numbers of stray dogs impounded and the numbers of general requests for service. These can be submitted on a ward basis at the end of each calendar month. The data for September 2008 is attached.

3. The need for more staff to be employed within the Dog Warden Service

The service is short staffed at present due to maternity leave, with the post holder not due to return until 2009. In terms of dog issues, priority is given to stray dogs, as the authority has statutory duty under Environmental Protection Act 1990 to collect.

East Leeds Area Management did temporary fund an officer to work two days per week in their super output areas only. This project has now come to an end.

To support the officers in dealing with dog fouling issues, we also have other officers trained to issue dog fouling FPN's including staff in the Environmental Action Teams. In addition, in November we are undertaking a pilot to train some neighbourhood wardens and park rangers to issue litter and dog fouling FPN's. This will then be rolled out city wide.

4. Clarification of the hours worked by Dog Wardens

The dog wardens work Monday – Friday, excluding bank holidays. The hours the service is covered is from 8am until 5pm. We have a contracted kennel facility available out of hours where members of the public can take strays they have found.

Neighbourhood wardens work Monday to Friday in shifts on either 7am until 3pm or 8am until 4pm.

Parkswatch staff work on a shift basis - 4 days on/ 4 days off on an 8 day cycle. 6 officers work every day and the service is covered 7 days from 10am until 10pm.

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