

Environment & Neighbourhoods – Health & Environmental Action Service
Response to the Statement from the Scrutiny Board (Environment & Neighbourhoods) : Dog Fouling – 13th July 2009

Recommendation	Response
<p>1. That the Council works in close partnership with local parish and town councils to ensure the effective use of Dog Control Orders across the city and maximise available enforcement resources.</p>	<p>All Parish and Town Council's (Secondary Authorities) to be contacted to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify dog related issued within their area; • Ascertain which DCO's (if any) would be appropriate for their area • Discuss support and assistance for enforcement and educative campaigns, including erecting any signage
<p>2. That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods determines a suitable figure for Leeds that will be enforced in relation to the maximum number of dogs that any one person can walk at any one time.</p>	<p>Inaugural enquiries made with the National Association of Pet Sitters, who recommended no more than four dogs.</p> <p>The DEFRA Dog Control Order Guidance recommends a number of six dogs.</p> <p>Appropriate figure to be determined through the consultation process if this Dog Control Order is recommended.</p>
<p>3. That the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods carries out a review within the next 4 months of the options available to the Council to extend Dog Control Orders in Leeds.</p>	<p>See attached report entitled Dog Control Orders dated 13th July 2009.</p>

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<p>4. That an action plan is drawn up on how the Dog Control Orders agreed upon following the review can be progressed. This action plan will be brought back to the Scrutiny Board for consideration by June/July 2009.</p>	<p>The action plan will be determined through the dog control strategy, therefore the timescale has been amended as per the Director's response.</p>
<p>5. That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods will roll out the training programme for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for litter and dog fouling over the next 12 months to all Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Ranger staff and recommend that this involves any other enforcement staff who may be able to carry out such works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Environmental Action staff now trained and authorised to issue Fixed Penalties for litter and dog fouling. • Training complete for Park Rangers and Neighbourhood Wardens in North West area. Discussion taking place with relevant department as to how staff can implement this. • Neighbourhood Warden role currently under review. • Training Session to take place 25th June 2009 for Travellers Services Team and Otley Chevin Estate Officer.

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<p>6. That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a review of existing staffing resources within the Dog Warden Team to determine whether it is adequate enough to meet current service demands.</p>	<p>Review Conducted. 25% increase in stray dogs handled since Transfer of Responsibility from West Yorkshire Police, equivalent to one FTE dog warden post (at a cost of £22,631 p.a., plus on costs including vehicle hire and PPE). Budget review will need to be assessed to see whether these funds are available. In addition, competing priorities dictate that any absences will not be covered including current maternity leave.</p> <p>Meeting taken place with West Yorkshire Police HQ to improve partnership working and ensure efficiency in dealing with dangerous dog issues.</p>
<p>7. That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods ensures that the full budget provision for the Dog Warden Service each year, which includes the additional funding from West Yorkshire Police, is spent on improving that service.</p>	<p>It was not felt appropriate to be prescriptive on how budgets are spent as this can detract from the flexibility needed to deliver a range of services according to varying demands. The Directorate is committed to tackling both the problems with stray dogs and also dog fouling; and therefore Recommendation 6 reports on scale of resources available.</p>

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<p>8. That the contract specification for the provision of stray dog kennels is reviewed prior to its renewal and that further opportunities are explored to help generate greater interest from local suppliers.</p>	<p>Kennelling of stray dog contract currently undergoing the procurement process. Market Interest Day for potential suppliers to be held 30th July 2009 to generate interest in the contract, in particular with local suppliers and support any applicant queries over the procurement and tender process.</p> <p>New kennelling contract is proposed to be a geographical framework, to reduce officer travelling time to kennels.</p> <p>New contract will be a collaboration between Leeds, Kirklees and Wakefield Councils. Interest also received from Barnsley Council and West Yorkshire Police.</p>
<p>9. That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods reviews an out of hours flexible working scheme for the Dog Warden Service and explores opportunities to utilise other relevant enforcement staff working out of hours to assist with the enforcement of dog fouling.</p>	<p>Current contractual arrangements with dog warden staff specify normal office hours but officers do operate a flexible working system and work evenings/weekends, depending on operational and community needs. A move towards extending contracted hours or introducing shift patterns would have a significant financial impact.</p> <p>A bid has been submitted to Outer North East area committee well being fund for structured early morning, evening and weekend dog fouling patrols. Outer South since submitted an interest and further bid currently being prepared.</p> <p>Options to be explored further as part of the Dog Control Strategy.</p>

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10. That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces a Dog Control Strategy for Leeds by September 2009 setting out the duties of the Dog Warden Service; the current and potential role of other officers in enforcing Dog Control Orders; strategies for future education campaigns; and the implications of having additional Dog Control Orders for Leeds.	Outline Strategy pertaining to the Dog Warden Service only (but identifying partners) will be drafted for the September 2009 deadline. A Strategy including the agreement of partners will take longer.