

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting16th April 2009

1. Title of Item/Report

Environment Select Committee - Review of Animal Welfare and Dog Fouling

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to the final report of the Environment Select Committee detailing its findings arising from its review of Dog Fouling and Animal Welfare issues.

The purpose of the review was two fold. Firstly the Committee investigated the trend of dog fouling complaints over the last ten years and the effect the Council's policy has had on this, in particular, education and enforcement issues. In addition it considered further control dog fouling in certain designated areas and how these orders would be enforced, and flexibility regarding the level of any fines imposed.

Secondly, the Committee reviewed resource issues arising from the first six months of implementation of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 from April 2008 which placed sole responsibility on the Council for dealing with stray dogs.

The Council's Environmental Health Service currently received approximately 2,000 animal welfare requests each year regarding dogs. The service also received about 350 complaints a year about dogs fouling in public places. Currently there were 200 dedicated dog bins located in popular dog walking areas which were provided to reduce the amount of dog waste left on public footpaths and play areas.

The review highlighted many areas of good practice that was already being carried out. The Committee commended the work of officers dealing with dog fouling and animal welfare issues. The sharp increase in work caused by changes in legislation placed an incredible pressure on the finite resources available to deal with the concerns of the public. The recommendations proposed sought to strengthen the areas of positive working arrangements and go some way to provide opportunities for further improvement. It was suggested that the conclusions/findings of the review would be of interest to any Parish/Town Council in the

Borough similarly faced with tackling such issues; and should therefore be shared with these authorities.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the following recommendations proposed by the review; and a summary of the conclusions/findings be shared with each of the Parish/Town Councils in the Borough:-

R1 Dog waste bins are GIS located and that this information is available on the SBC web site.

R2 To improve the reduction of dog fouling in the borough such incidents should be GIS recorded and that this information be available through the FLARE system.

R3 The call centre to include asking for the nearest lamp post number to assist locating dog fouling on the GIS system if an identifiable address can not be provided.

R4 To explore the possibility of Dog Control Orders, as per the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, for specified areas including enclosed children's play areas and associated public seating areas.

R5 The Council introduce a pilot scheme of biodegradable pavement painted stencils in known areas of dog fouling to act as an additional reminder to dog owners to act responsibly.

R6 The Council turn it's attention to dog fouling problems on and around school grounds and on footpaths that are used to access school grounds and Safe Routes to School to try and minimise the incidence of children being exposed to a potential health and safety hazard.

R7 The Council continue to use responsible dog ownership education packages in schools and explore the expansion of its delivery when budgetary pressures allow.

R8 The Council proactively lobby local MPs to campaign for the introduction of compulsory dog registration and micro-chipping of dogs.

3. Reasons for the Decision

In order to further assist the Animal Welfare and Enforcement services deal with incidences of poor dog ownership issues.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected
None
5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest
None
6. Details of any Dispensations
Not applicable
7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed
By midnight on Friday, 24th April 2009

Proper Officer
20 April 2009