

## **Place Select Committee**

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday 13th July 2026.

**Present:** Cllr Jim Beall (Chair), Cllr Steve Nelson (Vice Chair), Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Ted Strike, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

**Officers:** PC Chris Lambert (Cleveland Police), Marc Stephenson, Stephen Donaghy (Adult, Health and Wellbeing), Dale Rowbotham, Abigail Kiddell (Community Services, Environment and Culture), and Michelle Gunn (Corporate Services).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Norma Stephenson

**Apologies:**

### **PLA/20/26 Livestreaming**

The Committee noted the meeting was being livestreamed.

### **PLA/21/26 Evacuation Procedure**

The Committee noted the evacuation and housekeeping procedures.

### **PLA/22/26 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **PLA/23/26 Minutes**

AGREED the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **PLA/24/26 Scrutiny Review of Animal Welfare, Kennelling, and Protection of Pets**

The Committee received a presentation from Cleveland Police regarding their roles and responsibilities for dangerous dogs, animals of suspects arrested, and how they worked with the Council. Key information included:

- The two main piece of legislation that the Police were responsible for investigating were Section 1 and Section 3 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.
  - Section 1 regarded prohibited types of dogs (banned breeds) which were XL Bullies, Pitbull Terriers, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, and Brazilian Mastiff.
  - Section 3 regarded dangerously out of control dogs, which could be any type of powerful dog that could or had caused injuries e.g. German Shepherd or Rottweilers.
- A person would be committing two offences if they owned a prohibited dog, without an exemption, which then attacked another person.

- The Police would only investigate an Animal Welfare offence under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 if there was an immediate risk, criminality or safeguarding issue.
- Cleveland Police were increasingly using the civil powers given under the Dogs Act 1871, which included control orders to be put in place, such as the dog must be on a lead and muzzled and be kept secure gardens. It also gave the power to request destruction from the court and to apply for disqualification of dog ownership. Under the legislation, evidence for cases where the victim withdraws consent or support for prosecution could still be presented to the civil court to attempt to get an outcome that protected the public.
- The data required to be recorded by the Home Office only included Aggravated Section 3 offences, which were offences where injuries had occurred. There had been a significant increase in 2025/26 of these cases in Cleveland Police area, and these were due to both an improvement to internal recording procedures and a year-on-year increase in the dog population.
- Due to the number of kennels available, the Police could not seize every dog involved in an offence and therefore used a triage tool to assess the risk and make a decision on whether it needed to be seized. This included factors such as the level of injury caused, whether it was a repeat offence, if children lived at the address with the suspect dog, and whether there were other vulnerabilities. Public Safety was the main consideration as well as consideration of the dog's welfare and the costs involved.
- The Police also investigated cases and reports of dogs out of control which did not result in injury, dealing with reports of Section 1 prohibited types which included taking responsibility from local authorities for handed in or stray prohibited dogs that needed to be processed through the court, and low-level complaints. There was cross over between Police and local authorities' responsibilities regarding dog-on-dog, neighbourhood disputes and anti-social behaviour and they would work together to make decisions on which organisation would lead on the case or whether it would be a jointly led.
- Out of court resolutions for dog offences were used alongside court or civil outcomes.
- Disqualification orders were being sought where necessary and used to prevent dogs going back to the owners and being reported again for similar offences. However, these could only be obtained following a destruction order.
- The number of days a dog was held in kennels had reduced from an average of 200 days three years ago to an average of 44 days, and the reduction had benefits for both the welfare of the dogs as well as costs. The main reason for a dog being in the kennel for longer was taking the case through the criminal justice court system where it may go to trial. The defence could request assessment of the dog's temperament or of the type of breed the dog was which needed to be built into and prolong the timeframe of the case.
- Partnership working and sharing of data was important. Local authorities and Police may be receiving complaints about the same animal and sharing information helped to build cases and to intervene at earlier stages by the organisation leading on the case, which could prevent a serious injury occurring. The Police would sometimes go with the Animal Welfare Team to present official documentation and warning notices, which also helped to prevent the issue escalating. Cleveland Police also linked with Children and Adult Services to understand the wider issues and situation with a particular dog that had been reported.

- Ensuring there was a clear pathway for that those working within Cleveland Police, local authorities and other partner organisation, along with clear reporting routes for the public, was important.

The Committee discussed prohibited types of dogs. It was noted that exemption certificates could be applied for via the courts who considered whether the dog posed a danger to public safety by applying a three-fold test: the dogs' temperament, whether the owner was a fit and proper person, and any other relevant circumstances. The court would give conditions the owner must follow with the exemption. DEFRA managed the database of exempt dogs and notified the police if that exemption was breached. The majority of cases regarding prohibited dogs would be taken through the civil court due to the shorter timeframe taken to process the case, however there would be no sentencing options for the owner via this route. The only cases dealt with through the criminal court would be if the dog had been involved in an incident where injury or fear of injury had been caused.

The relationship between Cleveland Police and the Council's Animal Welfare Team was raised, and it was noted that there was good professional relationship, with information sharing and collaborative working taking place. However, there was a challenge with communication to ensure that the correct procedure was followed when a person with a dog is remanded or in custody for a prolonged period, and police officers did not admit dogs to Animal Welfare in error.

It was questioned what happened to the dogs of prisoners who were sentenced. The Committee were informed that the Police would seek consent from the owner for the dog to be cared for by a family member or friend. If the person did not cooperate or did not have someone to nominate, and they may be with the police for a prolonged period, a legal notice would be served which would give them 14 days to nominate someone to take care of the dog. If they did not nominate anyone the Chief Constable relinquished their obligation to care for the dog and it would be assessed for re-homing, if it was not a prohibited breed.

It was noted that kennelling costs were sought by Cleveland Police from owners. In civic court cases, the court's decision may include that the owner reimbursed Cleveland Police for their court costs, which would then be sought. For criminal court cases the costs would be reclaimed through the criminal justice routes.

The Committee requested the following further information:

- A breakdown of aggravated Section 3 offences by Local Authority area
- A breakdown of the number of prosecutions for Section 3 offences
- The types of dogs being seized for Section 1, Section 3, and combined offences

The Committee thanked the Police Officer for the information.

AGREED that the information be noted.

## **PLA/25/26 Progress Update - Domestic Waste Collections Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste**

Consideration was given to assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Committee's previously completed review of Domestic Waste Collection, Kerbside Recycling, and Green Waste. This was the fourth update, and two recommendations were assessed as fully achieved while one, regarding the

communications and community engagement plan, remained on track due to engagement continuing until October 2026.

The Committee received a presentation as part of the update which outlined the following information:

- In the first month of the change to collections, April 2026, there was a reduction of approximately 1,800 tonnes (35%) of general waste collected from the kerbside, an increase from approximately 700 tonnes to over 1,000 tonnes of dry recycling collected, and 500 tonnes of food waste collected (55% increase of overall recycling tonnage).
- The amount collected exceeded the expected level of participation in recycling and food waste collection, which was 45-50% participation. Rounds were modelled on 65% participation level however the first few weeks saw 80% participation therefore there were some challenges and additional vehicles were needed.
- There had been issues with residents leaving out large amounts of bulky cardboard which could not be collected at the kerbside, and there was a need to highlight to residents that these should be either flattened and placed in the white sacks if they could be or taken to the recycling centre. The crews would collect multiple white bags of cardboard from the kerbside.
- The in-cab system tracked where vehicles were in real time, which helped to manage rounds and send crews to rounds which needed additional support. It also gave live information on participation levels and if there had been contamination issues.
- There had been an extensive communications and engagement plan using a range of channels, and engagement would continue until October 2026. The team had found that when speaking to residents who were nervous about the change, once they started to recycle they realised the system was ok.
- Green Waste subscriptions had also exceeded expectation, with 25% of households signed up and regular requests for new bins.

It was questioned whether green waste would be collected if it was put out in bags and officers informed that due to the new vehicles collecting the green waste having bin lifts, the crew were unable to collect green waste bags. The Committee requested further information regarding the projected number for year 2 green waste bins.

The bags for food waste were raised, with members commenting that they easily split, and officers informed that these had been bought in bulk, however would review the type of bags when purchasing again.

The Committee discussed the perception on social media of increased rats associated with the food waste collection and increased fires due to moving to fortnightly general waste collection. It was noted that there had been no increase in the reports of either to the Waste team, Environmental Health or Cleveland Fire Brigade since the change in collections. The Committee also discussed complaints regarding bins not being collected due to recycling and general waste being collected at different times of the day, and it was suggested that communications could reinforce this message.

Members questioned whether all the new vehicles ordered had been delivered and it was confirmed that they had, however not all had been rolled out as they needed time to be bed in. Due to the increase in recycling being higher than expected, extra vehicles were needed, including spare vehicles to make sure that if one goes down there is another that can cover. The cost of the extra vehicles would be covered by funding from

government and savings made through increased recycling. Where old vehicles were still being used there was a perception that the recycling was being mixed in the vehicles due to it being difficult to see the back, however there was some separation taking place.

The eligibility for larger bins was discussed, which included that the household must recycle, there was a medical reason why the household was generating more general waste, and the number of people living at the property.

The change to rounds was discussed, with these being refined to reflect the frequency changes in recycling and general waste collections, along with the higher concentration of garden waste collections in particular areas. The days of the collections had not changed to make it easier for residents.

Engagement and education regarding recycling was discussed and officers noted that the engagement team had visited over 30 schools. There would be further engagement with schools from September 2026.

The Committee commended the officers for the implementation of the major changes to waste collections. The Committee also commended residents for the uptake in recycling.

The Committee requested that the next progress report be presented in December 2026, following the end of the engagement plan.

AGREED that the progress update be noted and a further update be presented in December 2026.

#### **PLA/26/26 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme**

Consideration was given to the work programme.

Two dates had been identified for the site visits to two kennels as part of the Scrutiny Review of Animal Welfare, Kennelling, and Protection of Pets. The Committee agreed on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2026.

AGREED that site visits would be arranged and the work programme be noted.

Chair: .....