



ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 5th April 2012

Title: Dog Fouling

Report of: Angela Culleton - Director of Local Environment

Report reference: LE09/12

Summary:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a report be brought on dog fouling. This report advises on the concerns and significance of dog fouling in the Carlisle City Council area and outlines an Action Plan for 2012/13 to reduce the level of dog fouling.

Questions for / input required from Scrutiny: That the Committee consider the contents of the report.

Recommendations: To consider the report and support the development of an Action Plan for 2012/13 to address dog fouling.

Contact Officer: Scott Burns

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Health Risks. As well as being unpleasant in both looks and odour dog fouling can also pass on a number of diseases. Unwashed vegetables or other foods which have been contaminated with dog faeces can cause gastrointestinal diseases like salmonella and Ecoli along with the disease Toxocariasis from the round worm Toxocara Canis. Toxocariasis is of particular concern as a puppy infected with the worm can pass on as many as 15,000 eggs per gram of faeces. These eggs can survive for up to 3 years in the soil exposing young children in particular to the greatest risk of infection from ingestion. When hatched the human body treats the larvae of Toxocara Canis as a foreign material and in attempting to destroy the larvae causes tissue damage, the liver and the eyes being particularly at risk. In severe cases Toxocariasis can cause blindness.

As well as causing diseases to humans there is growing evidence of the links between two specific diseases in livestock and the presence of dog fouling on grazing land. Neosporosis, a parasitic infection can cause abortions in cattle and Sarcocytosis, another parasitic infection, causes neurological disease and death in sheep.

All responsible dog owners should therefore have their dogs regularly checked and wormed and pick up after their dogs have fouled.

1.2 Dog Fouling in Carlisle. In 2007 Carlisle City Council issued three Dog Control Orders under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The Fouling of Land by Dogs (Carlisle District) Order 2006 makes it an offence by the person with a dog to fail to clean up after it has fouled on land which the public are entitled or permitted to have access. The Council can serve fixed penalty tickets of up to £80 for this offence and/or progress the offence to the Magistrates Court where a maximum fine of £1,000 can be issued. The other two Dog Control Orders deal with dogs being kept on leads; all the Orders can be viewed on the Council website:

http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/environment_and_waste/animal_welfare/dog_control_orders.aspx

Table .1. below lists the number of complaints about dog fouling logged by the Environmental Health Service and the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued.

Number of Dog Fouling Complaints and Fixed Penalty Tickets

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Number of Complaints	666	617	467	(15 th March) 562
Number of Fixed Penalty Tickets	26	92	45	11

The Environmental Health Service also deals with the collection of stray dogs. Stray dogs can be the cause of dog fouling. Table 2 details the number of stray dogs collected:-

Number of Stray Dogs Collected

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Number of Stray Dogs Collected	346	408	422 (15 th March)

1.3 Dog Fouling Action Plan 2012/13. It is considered that there are three approaches to address in combating dog fouling:

- Street Cleaning;
- Education, and
- Enforcement.

A Dog Fouling Action Plan for 2012/13 is under development which will use all three approaches to address the problem of dog fouling. Additional funding for the next two years has been allocated by the Council. New street cleaning equipment and methods of cleaning are being investigated. A new Education and Enforcement Team will deal with dog fouling in the District through education and enforcement activities. A dog fouling educational campaign will be run early in the new financial year to support this. The new action plan will build upon the work carried out in

2011/12 which saw an increase in the number of Council Officers able to issue fixed penalty tickets and the targeting of eight areas in the District considered to suffer most from dog fouling. 24 staff were trained in March on how to issue fixed penalty notices. The targeted enforcement in the eight areas included high profile signage, door knocking and leaflet dropping educational work.

2.0 Conclusion. The local Authority will take what action it can to ensure the streets and public places are free for dog fouling; it is however dog owners who are responsible for cleaning up after their dogs. In view of the diseases dog fouling can cause picking up after a dog should be a moral duty, however, the City Council will not hesitate to serve fixed penalty tickets or prosecute offenders.

Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	no	
Disability	no	
Race	no	
Gender/ Transgender	no	
Sexual Orientation	no	
Religion or belief	no	
Human Rights	no	
Health inequalities	no	
Rurality	no	

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

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If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.