

**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 2 SEPTEMBER 2014  
title: PETITION FOR DOG EXERCISE AREA IN EDISFORD  
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: MARK BEVERIDGE, HEAD OF CULTURAL AND LEISURE SERVICES

**1 PURPOSE**

1.1 To present to members a petition submitted to the Council on behalf of dog owners in the Edisford area of Clitheroe, asking for a space to exercise their dogs on the green space the Council owns around the sports pitches at Edisford or Roefield. Members are asked to consider the petitioners' request, and the information supplied by officers.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives - }
- Corporate Priorities - } to make people's lives safer and healthier, and to protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of the area.
- Other Considerations - }

**2 BACKGROUND**

A detailed report was considered by this Committee on 27 May 2014, following which members approved the implementation of five Dog Control Orders, including The Dog Exclusion (Ribble Valley) Order 2014, (the **Exclusion Order**), which excludes dogs from, amongst other areas, sports pitches. The petition, which has been submitted, is in response to the implementation of that order.

**3 ISSUES**

3.1 The principle behind the Exclusion Order is to keep dogs off the sports pitches and play areas the Council operates, because, although many owners pick up after their dogs, some owners are not so responsible and do not. Where owners pick up their own dog's mess, it is not practical to remove all vestiges of the mess from the ground, and a residual amount remains. This then poses potential health concerns for the children and adults who use the pitches, including our own work force. Where owners do not pick up, this makes the issue even worse for pitch users.

3.2 The petitioners are seeking an area to one or both sides of Edisford Road, where dogs may be let to run without a lead. Currently, this would not be possible under the Exclusion Order.

3.3 If an area were created, it would need to be fenced in order that it is clearly separated from the sports pitches. Also, the requirement to pick up (the Fouling of Land by Dog (Ribble Valley Order) 2014), would still apply. However, it would give owners the opportunity to exercise their dogs without impacting on the sports pitches.

3.4 It is worth noting that, although a petition has not been received, a similar arrangement for Mardale playing pitches has been requested. Although a small dog

walking area exists alongside the playing pitches, and has done so for many years, the area available is not big enough for some – mainly bigger dogs to exercise vigorously.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – The cost of putting suitable fencing up to create dog exercise areas would need to be determined once an area(s) were identified. There is currently no budget provision for dog exercise areas
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The Exclusion Order is in place for both Edisford and Mardale, this proposal would amend those areas by creating a defined fenced area, indicating the extent of the sports pitches. Outside of an exercise area, the Exclusion Order would still apply.
- Political – The existing provision was agreed by the Committee, after the required consultations. However, many dog owners have told us they were unaware of the Orders. Receipt of the petition has given some of those owners the chance to make their views known.
- Reputation – The Exclusion Order was introduced in response to concerns from sports pitch and play area users.
- Equality & Diversity – The legislation makes provision for guide dogs, assistance dogs, and hearing dogs for the deaf, and these are reflected in the Exclusion Order

#### 5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

Considers the report and determines if they wish officers to report back to a future Committee, on the suitability and associated implications of dog exercise areas at Roefield and/or Mardale.

MARK BEVERIDGE  
HEAD OF CULTURAL AND LEISURE SERVICES

JOHN HEAP  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

Dog Control Order Reports: 27/05/14, 14/01/2014, 21/05/13

For further information please ask for Mark Beveridge 01200 414479.

REF:MB/02.09.14/Community Services/IW