

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 13

meeting date: THURSDAY, 23 MARCH 2017
title: PET SAFE SCHEME
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: HEATHER COAR – HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Members of an initiative that the Dog Wardens are undertaking to ensure short-term care of pets in an emergency.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – None.
- Community Objectives – To promote and support health, environmental, economic and social wellbeing of people who live, work and visit Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To provide quality services efficiently and effectively.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 There are a number of vulnerable people within the Ribble Valley ie living alone or with no family nearby. The authority is aware that a lot of these people own pets for companionship.

2.2 The scheme has been an initiative driven by Pendle Borough Council along with Lancashire Constabulary. It was set up after problems arose with people who lived alone being rushed into hospital leaving no-one to care for their animals. Being rushed into hospital is distressing enough without the added worry of who will look after your animals when you are not at home.

2.3 The Pet Safe scheme was developed as a way of making sure people's pets were cared for in case of an emergency. Without such a system in process and if there is no family, it should fall to social care under the Social Care Act 2014 to look after pets. However, this is not easy to sort out in an emergency. The scheme is a way of facilitating an immediate response in the case of emergencies. This allows front line staff of emergency services to contact an emergency pet carer should the need arise, thus alleviating the stress for owners as well as promoting animal welfare.

2.4 The ideas is simple, the form is available to be given out to vulnerable people ie elderly, people living on their own or with no family nearby. They fill in a form with their details, the animals details and the emergency pet carer's details; this bit is key as it ensures that the person who will be contacted is aware that they will be contacted if the owner has to be rushed off to hospital.

2.5 The temporary carer will then ensure the short-term care of the animal until a more permanent provider can be found if the need arises. The forms are to be displayed in the person's property in a prominent place ie fridge door or on a calendar. This way the emergency services going in will know to look for the form if pets are in the property.

- 2.6 Pendle Borough Council has taken the service to another level and created credit card style cards that can be printed off so people can carry them round in their wallet in case something happens to them while they are out.
- 2.7 The Council is also led to believe that in Pendle some pet tags have been made up with the Pet Safe logo on them for easy identification of animals in the scheme and it also allows the emergency services to check if there is a Pet Safe form in the property.
- 2.8 The suggestion was made by Lancashire Constabulary following the multi-agency working with Pendle Borough Council to which they have been entered into an award with the RSPCA due to the recognition that it has gained. The scheme has been well received within Pendle, however it is still in its infancy.
- 2.9 At this moment in time we are looking to adopt the scheme rather than undertake it in conjunction with Pendle.
- 2.10 The scheme costs very little in time or money to do; it is essentially a piece of paper with relevant information displayed on it in the person's property. The Dog Wardens are undertaking a large amount of education within the borough and will be giving out the details of the forms whilst undertaking the presentation.
- 2.11 It is also hoped that we can link up with the NHS in the future, however at the moment the role is primarily with Lancashire Constabulary.
- 2.12 The Dog Wardens will be increasing partnership working with the departments in the Council and outside agencies.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

For further information please ask for Heather Coar, extension 4466.

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