

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 15

meeting date: THURSDAY, 7 JUNE 2018
 title: REVIEW OF DOG INITIATIVES OVER THE LAST 2 YEARS
 submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT - CHIEF EXECUTIVE
 principal author: HEATHER BARTON - HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform and update Members on initiatives that have been held over the last two years.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – }
- Corporate Priorities – } To make people's lives safer and healthier.
- Other Considerations – }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Responsible dog ownership has once again been highlighted to the Council as being a problem within Ribble Valley. Dog fouling has caused concern in the borough for a number of years despite the excellent management by the dog wardens. There has been a full public health approach in all events and initiatives that have been undertaken within the borough. Unfortunately the uptake by the public and Members for a cultural and behavioural change has not been adopted with the same enthusiasm.

2.2 Dog fouling is highlighted by the local press on at least a monthly basis, yet despite high profile campaigns the problem is not be resolved.

3 ISSUES

3.1 For the Council to be able to successfully tackle dog fouling there is a requirement for buy-in at all levels.

3.2 Over the last two years there has been a heavy push to successfully reduce dog fouling in the borough.

3.3 It was brought to Health and Housing Committee in March 2015 a pet safe scheme to ensure the short term care of pets in an emergency. To the Council's knowledge this has not been adopted by many members of the public.

3.4 It was also brought to Committee on 23 March 2017 information regarding microchipping of dogs and the Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 made it a legislative requirement that every keeper of dogs must ensure that their dogs are microchipped and registered to an authorised/competent pet microchipping database such as Petlog. At this moment in time we have received 20 complaints with unchipped dogs resulting in 21 day notices being served.

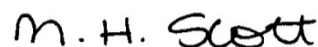
- 3.5 The dog warden policy that was adopted in January 2017 laid out main areas of concentration for the dog warden team, primarily being education, stray dogs, dog fouling and dog waste bins.
- 3.6 There has been an overhaul of the Council's website to ensure that a greater source of relevant information has been undertaken.
- 3.7 Dog fouling – it was noted that dog fouling complaints over the consultation period for the Public Space Protection Orders (Summer 2017).
- 3.8 In September 2017 it was agreed by Health and Housing Committee that an initiative for dog waste bags would be made available. The Council would issue free dog bags to Parish Councils. Whilst the initial uptake was good, this has been reoffered in spring 2018 to all Parish Council clerks with minimal uptake.
- 3.9 In September 2017 it was also brought to Committee information regarding the Council working in partnership with the Dogs Trust. After four successful campaign events in 2017 and a large amount of promotion that was undertaken in relation to the positive promotion of dog ownership. That this has once again been offered to all Parish Clerks in Spring 2018 with no uptake to date.
- 3.10 It has been arranged that the Head of Environmental Health Services will present at the next Parish Councils' Liaison Committee meeting informing them of the need for Parish Councils to take ownership in going forward in this area.
- 3.11 Whilst the uptake from Members and members of the public to initiatives seems to be lacking, Environmental Health can confirm that the number of dog fouling incidents over the last 12 months has decreased from over 200 in 2016/17; 180 in 2017/18 17 to date 2018/19. However, we believe it is the perception that dog fouling is high in Ribble Valley that is driving the main focus on this area.
- 3.12 The Local Authority has to be resilient and creative in our application to tackling dog fouling. Ribble Valley's approach is taking advantage of the eyes and ears of the local communities.
- 3.13 On 13 March 2018 a report was taken to Community Services Committee (Appendix A). At that meeting it was approved that the practice of depositing dog waste into litter bins for the entire borough and its collection by refuse vehicles. This has been promoted via the press, social media and our own website.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Acknowledge the ongoing commitment by Environmental Health to tackling dog fouling.



HEATHER BARTON
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 9

meeting date: TUESDAY, 13 MARCH 2018
title: WHALLEY DOG WASTE TRIAL
submitted by: JOHN HEAP – DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: ADRIAN HARPER – HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the success of the trial of dog waste collection from litter bins by refuse staff.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.
- Corporate Priorities – To ensure best use of council resources in the provision of parking.

2 BACKGROUND

In September 2015 a trial was initiated, at Members behest, of the public using litter bins to deposit their bagged dog waste and then be collected by the refuse department as part of their normal rounds.

This scheme is not intended to replace the existing systems that are in place for dog bins, as many of those bins are placed in areas that are inaccessible for the refuse vehicles but popular with dog walkers.

24 litter bins were used all around the Whalley area. Children play areas did not form part of the trial.

3 ISSUES

3.1 Concerns were originally expressed about the difficulties in cleaning the Refuse Collection Vehicles and the increased threat to the health and safety of the refuse loaders handling the mixed waste.

Concern was also expressed about the location of the litter bins being used for the trial. The concern was the smell from the bins and the potential proximity of the bins to food outlets, playgrounds and seating areas.

Furthermore the above would depend upon the temperatures of the summer weather and the number of times the bins were emptied.

4 Conclusion:

Due to the particularly poor summers since the trial started the trial was extended until now.

There have very few complaints from the refuse crews about collecting the mixed waste and the cleaning of the vehicles was less onerous and hazardous than was at first thought.

There were no complaints from the public about the mixed waste being in litter bins or indeed any smells emanating from them.

There is presently a push to extend the practise to the remaining parts of the borough.

Therefore a decision must be made without the benefit of a successful trial. There is no way of judging the complaints that we might receive when the weather eventually warms up. However, a number of other councils do take dog waste in their litter bins, albeit they collect it differently.

4. **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

The approval of this report may have the following implications:

Resources – None

Technical, Environmental and Legal – None

Political – None

Reputation – None as other district councils have adopted this way of working or are in the process of adopting it.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Members approve the practise of depositing dog waste into litter bins for the entire borough and its collection by refuse vehicles.

ADRIAN HARPER
HEAD OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

JOHN HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information please ask for Adrian Harper on 01200 414523.

REF: Adrian Harper Community Services 11.10.16