

SUBJECT:	UPDATED ANIMAL POLICY (INCLUDING WELFARE STATEMENT)
DIRECTORATE:	COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	FRANCESCA BELL – PPASB & LICENSING SERVICE MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To brief Executive members on the revised Animal Policy.
- 1.2 To seek approval of Executive for the policy to be implemented.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council has many and varied roles and functions that relate either directly or indirectly to animals.
- 2.2 This policy had a major review in 2017 which brought together a number of our functions into one collective policy. The policy in 2017 was drafted by experts, consulted on with specialists, third sector and industry bodies.
- 2.3 The policy has received a refresh as it has now been in place for over 4 years. There have not been and significant changes with the exception of a change to the licensing of activities involving animals which affects Pet shops, Dog and Cat Boarding, Home boarding of Dogs and Dog Day Care, horse riding establishments and performing animals.
- 2.4 The Animals Policy is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.5 Policy Scrutiny Committee have offered comments on the policy and their comments and recommendations implemented.

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2017 the Council overhauled its animal policy and created a robust single policy that also encompassed our previous animal welfare charter.
- 3.2 The policy focuses on upholding the welfare of animals and ensuring that the high standards the Council has a long-held tradition of upholding in relation to the welfare of animals in its local area, both through our service delivery and our policy position.
- 3.3 The purpose of this is to embed the relevance of the welfare statement, provide consistency across our services and present a cohesive position externally.

4. The Revised Animal Policy

- 4.1 The revised policy can be found attached as appendix A. There have been some minor adjustments made to the policy.
- 4.2 The policy has been updated to reflect changes in the Council's strategic priorities.
- 4.3 Section 12 which details the licensing regime for animal activities has been updated to reflect the change in legislation which occurred in October 2018. The policy previously referred only to pet shops.
- 4.4 Finally, it includes minimal amendments in relation to changes in Data Protection legislation.

5. Policy Areas

- 5.1 The policy also deals with several individual areas where we have direct responsibilities, which includes;
 - Dogs
 - Animal Nuisance
 - Horses
 - Dangerous Wild Animals, Breeding and Boarding Establishments
 - Licensing of Activities involving Animals

6. Policy Scrutiny Committee Comments

- 6.1 4.1 of the policy: Agreed that the word "unnecessary" be removed and the policy would read "Reduce suffering to animals"
- 6.2 7.4.1 of the Policy: Asked if the full title of the legislation should be included rather than "Lucy's Law" Agreed that a hyper-link could be included in the Policy for the website which would link to the legislation.
- 6.3 7.8.1 and 7.8.3 of the policy: Made reference to contacting the Council and asked if the contact details could be included in the Policy. Contact details have been added.
- 6.4 7.8.7 of the policy: In relation to snares and traps and asked for clarification on what were considered pests, this has been clarified in the policy.
- 6.5 Policy Scrutiny Committee asked if trophy hunting could be included in the Policy. A position statement about the Council being opposed to trophy hunting has been included in the policy.
- 6.6 The amended Animal Policy has been circulated to members of the Policy Scrutiny Committee prior to referral to Executive.

7. Strategic Priorities

7.1 Let's drive inclusive economic growth

Part of our functions in relation to Animals involves regulation of industry. It is critical that the way we deliver regulation leaves space for business to grow and innovate whilst ensuring high welfare standards are maintained.

7.2 Let's reduce all kinds of inequality

Animal nuisance, stray or dangerous dogs can often have an impact in some of the most deprived areas of our City. Welfare can be linked to inequality and financial difficulties which can in turn lead to the maltreatment, trade or abandonment of dogs or other animals. This policy ensures the best possible response to tackle these issues.

7.3 Let's deliver quality housing

This policy relates to all tenures of property including our own council stock and so ensuring that the housing we provide is safe and offers a good quality of life free from animal nuisance.

7.4 Let's enhance our remarkable place

By ensuring that high standards of animal welfare are embedded across our work both in residential and commercial settings will help to enhance our remarkable place.

8. Organisational Impacts

8.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

There are no significant financial impacts associated with this policy. However legal challenge may result in legal expenses.

8.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

The legal implications of this policy are ensuring that the Council fulfils its statutory obligations in taking reasonably practicable steps to investigate complaints of nuisance within its boundary. This may result in cases being progressed to court, this has an impact on both the PPASB and legal teams' resources.

8.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination

- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

This policy seeks to ensure that both equality and diversity are considered at the point of a service request being made and throughout the enforcement process. The policy serves to ensure that no-one is unfairly impacted and that the service can be accessed by all.

8.4 Human Resources

There are no HR implications of this policy.

8.5 Land, Property and Accommodation⁷

There are no land, property or accommodation implications.

8.6 Significant Community Impact &/or Environmental Impact

There are no significant community or environmental implications.

8.7 Corporate Health and Safety Implications

Employees investigating animal nuisance or welfare standards may be lone workers and may face confrontational situations. These risks are identified and managed via both written and dynamic risk assessments. Training, elimination and reduction of risk and PPE are all provided to manage the risks posed.

9. Risk Implications

9.1 (i) Options Explored

No further options explored.

9.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach

This policy seeks to reduce risks associated with noise nuisance.

10. Recommendation

10.1 That Executive consider the policy and agree to implement.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? Two

List of Background Papers: None

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