

# Minutes of Dog Fouling Working Group

Meeting Date: Friday, 16 April 2021, starting at Time Not Specified  
Present: Councillor J.Alcock (Chair)

Councillors:

T Austin

R Newmark

D Birtwhistle

M Robinson

In attendance: Director of Community Services, Acting Head of Environmental Health and Chief Executive

## 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

## 2 CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

The Chair, Cllr. Jan Alcock reminded members that the working group had been constituted by the Health and Housing Committee at its meeting on 18 March 2021.

## 3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference were approved as follows:

- The Working Group has been constituted by the Health and Housing Committee at its' meeting held on the 18 March 2021 (Draft Minute 1064 refers).
- The purpose of the group is to review the Council's current arrangements, specifically as they relate to the provision of dog bins and the frequency they are emptied.
- Nominated Members of the group are:  
Councillors Alcock (chair), T Austin, D Birtwhistle, R Newmark and M Robinson.
- The group will meet as necessary.
- Three nominated Councillors of the working group need to be present to be quorate.
- The working group does not have any delegated decision-making powers.
- The working group will consult with the relevant Chairs of other service committees as appropriate.
- The group will identify issues and explore realistic options regarding the Council's current arrangements, taking account the principles of best value for the Council, the needs of the local community, local residents and Council staff.
- The working group will take the form of a Task and Finish group with the aim of completing its considerations by **dd month year** to enable reporting to the **month** Health and Housing Committee.

### Note:

The task completion date and the date a report will be submitted to the Health and Housing Committee, will be agreed at the Working Group's meeting on 4 June 2021.

## CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

John Heap and Matt Riding updated members on the Council's current provision and ongoing activities.

John stated that the bin location mapping exercise is going well and that currently there are 551 bin locations and that most bins at these locations were being emptied once per week.

Other statistics presented by officers showed that 42 bins are currently being emptied by dog wardens and that park staff are responsible for emptying bins in parks.

Members were also reminded of the role undertaken by Lengthsmen in emptying parish dog bins, particularly in locations that are relatively remote.

In addition, members were informed that 34 twin bins (ordinary waste and recyclable waste) were located across the Borough and that these bins suffered from high levels of contamination (rubbish being mixed).

John went on to say that from his calculations, no savings would accrue to the Council if the task of emptying dog bins was taken away from the refuse collection teams.

In response to a question, John stated that there was no formulae for how many bins are required in a specific area and noted that if one additional (two man) team were introduced, the cost to the Council would be in the region of £60,000 - £70,000 per year. This figure takes into consideration travel time and assumes it takes a team approximately 10 minutes to empty one bin. John felt that three teams would be needed to maintain the current service levels.

Officers pointed out that as the Council had allowed dog waste to be deposited in ordinary waste bins, this is contributing to the problem of bins over-flowing. It was noted that this a particular problem where bins are situated near fast food outlets.

Matt informed members that 8 applicants for the role of Dog Warden had been shortlisted and an offer would be made shortly.

## ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The Chair stated that she had submitted a draft litter prevention notice for review by John Heap. The intention would be to display such a notice at known litter sites.

Issues discussed included the:

- Health issues associated with dog faeces, especially for young children.
- Role of the dog wardens and where the emphasis should be placed, enforcement, educational or bin emptying.
- Use of body cams by dog wardens.
- Role education can play in preventing people littering.
- Need to increase the number of bins currently in situ in the Borough. It was noted that if more bins were provided, it may require the Council to increase expenditure in this service area.
- Need to increase fines for dog fouling and litter dropping
- Use of a private company for enforcing litter offences, either as a 'one off blitz' or on a regular basis.
- Role and strength of the street cleaning teams.
- Council's ability to 'name and shame' litter offenders.
- Phasing out of dedicated dog waste bins.

John Heap noted that if serious consideration is being given for the Council to spend substantial sums of money on providing a solution to the current issues, it may be prudent to look at all cost effective options and not just fixes/tweaks to the current arrangements.

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#### NEXT STEPS AND ACTIONS

1. John Heap to review the notices submitted by Cllr Alcock.
2. Heather Barton (on her return to work) to be asked to implement the wearing of body cams by Dog Wardens.
3. Parish Councils to be consulted on the number of bins they require..
4. A review to be undertaken on the role and strength of the current street cleaning teams.
5. Consideration be given for the use of a private company for a 'one off blitz' on dog fouling and litter offenders.
6. To check if the Council can name and shame an offender who has been prosecuted for littering/dog fouling offences.
7. To review the phasing out of dedicated dog waste bins.
8. To check whether the Council has the authority to increase fines for littering and dog fouling.
9. Once a notice on dog fouling notice/poster has been agreed, deploy them at sites of known dog fouling.
10. Officers to continue with the mapping exercise that has been started.
11. John Heap to oversee the preparation of a report that takes into consideration the above actions and addresses and considers the issues as set out in Agenda Item 5.

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#### DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting closed at 11:00.

The next meeting is arranged for Friday 4 June 2021 at 09:30.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk  
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