

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE – 21ST MARCH 2001

CONTROL OF DOG FOULING

Report by the Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Local Committee on measures available to the Council for dealing with dog fouling.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Three years ago the Council launched an initiative to highlight the problem of dog fouling. Each Local Committee was invited to nominate an area where dog fouling was considered a problem and these areas were the subject of regular patrols made jointly by the Council's Dog Warden and Community Police Officers.
- 2.2 At the same time the Council's Community Newspaper "Headlines" carried an extensive article reminding the public of the following key points:-
- 2.2.1 That any person in charge of a dog who failed to remove its faeces was committing an offence and could be the subject of a report to the Procurator Fiscal.
- 2.2.2 That it was the responsibility of dog owners to clear up after their pets;
- 2.2.3 That dog waste properly wrapped could be placed in any litterbin within the Council area;
- 2.2.4 That dog wardens and Police Officers would be patrolling areas which had been highlighted by the Local Committees.
- 2.3 While the initiative had a positive impact in a number of areas of East Ayrshire, the increased number of complaints recently received by Council staff and Elected Members alike suggest that a new initiative is required.
- 2.4 At present where complaints of dog fouling are received, Council staff can erect appropriate notices on lampposts (which unfortunately have no statutory basis) and increase the number of patrols by Dog Wardens.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The early months of the original initiative were quite successful with a number of dog owners being approached and given advice on responsible pet ownership. Inevitably when one dog owner was being interviewed, others in the area tended to move away in a short time.
- 3.2 One dog owner was the subject of a successful prosecution (using the Fixed Penalty Notice system) but unfortunately the information was not made available to either the Police or Council staff for some considerable time and the opportunity to publicise the fact was somewhat diminished.
- 3.3 Discussion with the Police Liaison Officer and the Sub-Divisional Commander indicate a willingness for the Police to become more involved in dealing with the problem as part of a "Spotlight" campaign.
- 3.4 The intention would be for Police Officers to patrol not only the areas originally identified by the Local Committees but also those which have been the subject of recent complaint by members of the public.
- 3.5 At the same time the patrols would be co-ordinated with supporting visits by Dog Wardens who would give advice to dog owners encountered in the area.

4. FINANCIAL/POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Nil.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Three years ago this Local Committee selected Fenwick as an area where dog fouling was considered a problem and to be the subject of joint patrols by Dog Wardens and Community Police Officers.
- 5.2 While the original initiative provided a degree of success, the situation has now deteriorated to such an extent that further more intensive action is required.
- 5.3 It is proposed where possible to increase the number of Police patrols with the emphasis this time being on prosecution rather than giving appropriate guidance as was done previously.
- 5.4 To successfully prosecute persons sufficient evidence is required. It is unusual for dog owner to allow their pets to foul an area whilst there is a Police presence. Therefore it may be necessary for member of the public to supply statements and appear as witnesses to secure a successful prosecution.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Committee is invited to:-

- (i) review the area previously chosen as being the subject of dog fouling complaints; and
- (ii) otherwise note the report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

1st March 2001

WS/JFC/RRS

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

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AGENDA