

---

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> 9
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2002</b>	<b>CATEGORY:</b> <b>DELEGATED/ RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>SANDRA WHILES</b>	<b>OPEN</b> <b>PARAGRAPH NO: N/A</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>ALAN TWELLS EXT 5945</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>UPDATE ON THE STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH DOG FOULING WITHIN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: ES14</b>

---

### **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 That Committee note the progress made in the implementation of the Strategy for Dealing with Dog Fouling within South Derbyshire (October 2001)
- 1.2 That Committee approve the revised Action Plan detailed within this report.

### **2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To outline the work undertaken in line with the Dog Fouling Strategy over the past 12 months since approval at Community Services Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001.
- 2.2 To outline proposed actions for the continuation of the enforcement and educational work to combat the problem of dog fouling.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 The Environmental Services Committee approved the revised Dog Fouling Strategy in October 2001, in response to concerns raised during the Cleansing the Environmental Best Value Review, which included dog fouling within it's scope.
- 3.2 The revised strategy, a copy of which is attached in Annex A, proposed a number of activities. These included a review of problem areas, enforcement patrols and visits, improved publicity and educational and training work.
- 3.3 The Following briefly outlines the activities and outcomes of the work undertaken during the year.

#### **Review of Problem areas**

- 3.4 In order to undertake this, initially all District Councillors and Parish Councils were written to try and identify the worst locations within the District. As a result of this 7 responses were subsequently received. Following this more than 40 sites were surveyed in order to determine the extent of the problem. Each site was then given a

rating of between 1-10 (1 satisfactory and 10 bad with a lot of fouling identified). This assessment was then subsequently repeated in September 2002 to identify any improvements. Annex B contains the rating scores for each site undertaken. This highlights a significant improvement in the areas surveyed.

### Enforcement

- 3.5 A programme for patrolling the identified 'hotspots' was undertaken in order to catch any offenders. Following the above review enforcement visits were then targeted by the dog warden. From these visits it became evident that the main bulk of the dog owners did pick up the dog faeces.
- 3.6 However, 2 Fixed Penalty Notices were served following offences observed by the Dog Warden and there was also a successful prosecution in Swadlincote Magistrates Court. Both of these were then subsequently highlighted within a press release, to try and get across the message that dog fouling will not be tolerated. It should be noted that previous to this last year there had only been one successful prosecution.
- 3.7 In addition to this the following table outlines the number of complaints investigated by the Dog Warden. Each complaint involved patrolling the area and also putting up 'no fouling signs' to try and reduce the problem.

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Complaints.</b>
1997/98	37
1998/99	37
1999/00	48
2000/01	39
2001/02	34
Apr'02-Sep'02	14

- 3.8 In addition to this the 'Clean Team' have responded to approximately 80 calls since December 2001. As this clean up operation has never been undertaken before it is difficult to determine any trends over a number of years. Some of these cases are reported by the Dog Warden and the Clean Team also inform the Dog Warden of any particular problem areas that may need signs or patrolling.

### Improve Publicity

- 3.9 Press releases were issued during the year to highlight issues concerning dog fouling. 3 items were published within the Burton Mail and 2 within the Swadlincote Times. In addition to this 2 reports were put in the Members Bulletin and Inside out to raise awareness of the publicity work being undertaken.
- 3.10 The Publicity Caravan was used to visit 10 problem sites and also twice at Swadlincote Town Centre. Information and free poop-scoops was given out to in excess of 250 people visiting the caravan.
- 3.11 In addition to this, customer survey forms were given out to people who had complained about dog fouling. For the 6-month period covering April-September 2002 the results are attached within Annex C. From the results it can be seen that thought the service was good or very good.

## Education and Training

- 3.12 Information packs for dog fouling were produced and circulated to primary schools within the South Derbyshire area. These were aimed at young children to promote responsible pet ownership and to highlight the health implications.
- 3.13 During the year the dog warden attended a number of courses on both legal enforcement work.
- 3.14 From all of the above it can be seen that a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in relation to the implementation of the strategy. There has been some positive outcomes with the press releases, enforcement work and also customer surveys.
- 3.15 However, on going work is still required to try tackle the problem further and promote the non-toleration of dog fouling within public areas. It is proposed that the work for the strategy should now concentrate on the enforcement and educational activities. The outcome of the actions and on-going work would then be reported through the Service Plan reporting mechanism to Committee.
- 3.16 The following Action plan is, therefore, proposed:-

<b>Action</b>	<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1. Review and update 'hot spot' areas for Dog Fouling.	Annual review	To identify problem areas to target enforcement work.
2. Undertake enforcement patrols generally of problem areas and in response to complaints.	On-going.	The issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices and/or prosecutions in line with Enforcement Policy.
3. Undertake press releases to highlight problems and enforcement work.	On-going.	To aim for a minimum of 2 press releases a year.
4. Issuing of subsidised 'poop-scoop, bags.	On-going	To make the bags readily available and cheap to encourage take up and use.
5. Review effectiveness of work by Customer feedback, enforcement & hotspot survey.	Annually.	No. of fixed penalty notices, customer satisfaction levels & reduction in level of fouling
6. Report the outcomes of the on-going work through the service plan process.	Annually with 6 month monitoring.	Outline work within divisional plan reports.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The main financial implications will involve the purchase of materials for the educational material, the purchase of poop scoops and also the on-going training of the Dog Warden.
- 4.2 The training requirements have been included within the training budget for the Department. The other costs will be met within the existing Dog Control budget as a result of savings made on the new kennel contract.

## **5.0 Corporate Implications**

- 5.1 The implementation of the strategy will be met within existing staff resources.
- 5.2 All enforcement work will be undertaken in line with the principles outlined within the Enforcement Concordat and the Enforcement Policy of the Environmental Health Division.

## **6.0 Community Implications**

- 6.1 The continuation of the implementation of the action plan may have an impact across the whole of South Derbyshire due to the patrolling and enforcement of the provisions of the legislation to catch and take action against offenders. It is also hoped that the publicity work will also reach a wide section of the community.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

- 7.1 The Best Value review undertaken by the 'Cleansing the Environment Team' indicated that the public within South Derbyshire are concerned about the level of dog fouling and the lack of enforcement of the Legislation.
- 7.2 The implementation of the revised strategy for dog fouling has had some positive outcomes. However, as outlined within the Action Plan, on-going action is still required to continue to combat the problem of dog fouling within South Derbyshire.
- 7.3 The Action plan detailed above, if approved, will be implemented and Committee will be updated on the success through the Service Plan process on an annual basis.

## **8.0 Background Papers**

- 9.1 The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996
- 9.2 Revised Strategy for addressing the problems of dog fouling within the geographical area of South Derbyshire, October 2001