

## CABINET

2 FEBRUARY 2012

### REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

**Campaign to Raise Awareness, Understanding, and to achieve a Reduction in incidents of Dog Fouling across the Borough of Tamworth.**

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

#### PURPOSE

To seek Cabinet approval:

- A) for the branding and proposal for an anti-dog fouling education and awareness campaign.
- B) to further raise awareness of the impact of dog fouling on the environment.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet approve the branding and proposal for the Mucky Pup- Clean it Up concept and related educational anti-fouling campaigns.**

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At their meeting of 14 December 2011 approval for the consultation phase for the introduction of Dog Control orders in Tamworth was granted (Minute 104 refers) The process is set to continue until 28 February 2012.

As a further step to improving our local environmental quality, it is proposed that an ongoing educational and awareness campaign is introduced, initially at local hot spots in a focussed effort to reduce the incidents of dog fouling.

Dog fouling issues continue to be a major topic of complaint from the public both via Customer Services, Environmental Management Business Support, the Council website 'Report it', anecdotally and as a re-occurring raised at Community PACT meetings. Citizens Panel's reports have indicated a high level of perception that dog fouling is a concern, with 70.5% of people questioned (Citizens Panel Feb 2011) supporting powers for Street Wardens to deal with litter and dog fouling issues. CRM requests for clean up during the last quarter (Oct-Dec 2011) represented 13% of complaints received by Street Scene. In order to assist with other measures already in place to reduce incidents of dog fouling and improve perception it is proposed to introduce an easily identifiable branded campaign entitled 'Mucky Pup Clean it Up' beginning in March 2012.

It is proposed the campaign will be a series of focussed effort in identified hotspots (for dog fouling) across the Borough each lasting 3 weeks per location, with adhoc unannounced patrols thereafter. The campaign is intended to start in March 2012. Sample poster design attached as Appendix 02.

It is further proposed that all dog related campaigns will be spearheaded by the "hero" dog 'SAXON HOUND' (Appendix 01) as instantly identifiable branding.

The aims of the campaign are;

- To increase awareness of the issues associated with dog fouling.
- To increase awareness of the penalties associated with dog fouling.
- To highlight that public litter bins can be used to dispose of bagged dog faeces.
- To increase the number of 'intelligent' dog fouling reports received by the council.
- To reduce the number of complaints received by the council with regard to dog fouling.
- Engage with dog walkers and promote responsible ownership
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A series of notices and information, featuring Saxon Hound will also be made to promote dog welfare issues, entrance signs to parks etc. (Sample attached as Appendix 03)

To promote the campaigns, the Community Safety Partnership, the Police, Housing officers and other Registered Social Landlords will be encouraged to assist in the promotion of the messages. Street Wardens will also hand out cards and posters at PACT meetings and other residents groups.

Full media releases and information will be made on the Council's website and a specific email address created to report in dog fouling.

At the end of the first year, the results of the campaign will be reviewed for effectiveness.

As part of the overall monitoring for local environmental quality indicators (formally NI195) an additional indicator has been created to include fouling incidents. This will initially give a baseline to use to identify improvements in the measured area. Resident's satisfaction surveys will also inform this review.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The costs of the campaign to be met from existing education and campaign budgets as follows:-

Posters design and production - £500

2 x 6 foot Saxon Dog Mascots - £300

Report it cards for handing to dog owners and other members of the public featuring Saxon - £350

20 x Temporary re-useable 'tri sign' lamppost signage branded to Saxon Hound - £500  
(Sample sign type Appendix 04)

Soluble paint spray - £80

Magnetic vehicle stickers for warden's vehicle (£300)

Street Wardens will deliver these campaigns into existing workplans, consisting of early and late patrols, based on intelligence received.

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

Risk assessments will be as per patrolling officers

Ongoing programme will be dependent on available revenue budgets

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Saxon can be used year on year to promote the dog fouling and dog education message. On-going funding will be dependent on future budgets currently contained within the Neighbourhood Services revenue budget.

Hotspot areas will form part of Neighbourhood Services annual team plans for educational and enforcement campaigns.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Most dog owners are very responsible, but a small group of people choose to ignore the rules. Dog owners are encouraged to bag their dogs' mess and get rid of it safely. However, for those who continue to ignore the rules, a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by a Street Warden, Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer or other authorised staff.

Often dog fouling is caused by people not watching their dog and not realising that it has fouled. Dog owners (or persons in charge of the dog) are responsible for their dogs, whether it's on or off the lead and this will be the key feature of the campaign.

In direct response to complaints from the community, a campaign to tackle dog fouling in Tamworth entitled MUCKY PUP – CLEAN IT UP is proposed, using an identifiable mascot to promote this and other dog related messages.

The aim of the campaign is to seek to reduce the amount of dog faeces in public spaces and raise awareness for the public to report in problem areas for action.

### **MUCKY PUP – CLEAN IT UP CAMPAIGN**

It is proposed that an identified hotspot area will receive an initial visit and accumulations of dog fouling will be sprayed bright pink or orange with soluble paint, left for 24 hours to raise awareness of the problem and then cleaned away. During the first week the street wardens will engage with members of the public regarding the issue and explain how to report. Offenders caught will receive penalty notices.

During the second week, any further mess will be sprayed and noted with a clean up the following day with adhoc patrols undertaken.

All temporary signage will be left in situ for two weeks during the campaign and then removed for use at other locations.

During the third weeks, patrols will continue on a rota basis and at the end of the week accumulations will then be sprayed again to monitor any improvement.

The campaigns will then move on to another location over the next 6 months, with records kept. In areas where the campaign has been done, records will be kept of issues. It is intended that without warning, a further intensive week of activity will be undertaken without notice no later than 3 months after the first campaign in an area.

### **GENERAL DOG WELFARE**

Saxon Hound will be used to promote a wide range of dog related messages including signage to parks and responsible dog ownership including all matters relating to dog control orders.

The Dogs Trust, as a consultee on the dog control orders have indicated that they are willing to assist with any community events to promote the care and welfare of pets. It is the intention also to promote all message at Council and other events.

Feedback received from the Dog Control orders consultation will also seek to ensure that the dog owners are fully aware of the implications of fouling, where to get doggy poop bags from (consultation is underway with a major local supplier) and to ensure that available bins are sited correctly within resources available.

**REPORT AUTHOR**

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**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS****APPENDICES**

APP 01 – Saxon Hound Design

APP 02 – Mucky Pup proposed poster design

APP 03 – Sample Lamp post sign