

## **Matters arising update for Regulatory Committee 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Whilst considering previous proposed Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), members of the committee requested information that was added as Matters Arising to be responded to at a future date.
- 1.2 One request was that a comparison be carried out as to the costs of the District wide PSPO to tackle dog fouling, including enforcement, against the cost of employing a dog warden over a six month period.
- 1.3 The second was to have an update as to the success of all PSPOs, and how enforcement was to be carried out

### **2 Cost comparison**

- 2.1 In a search of current vacancies for dog wardens it was noted that the salary range for the post was circa £18000 - £21500. This is without on costs or expenses the role may incur.
- 2.2 It is difficult to put exact costs on the District wide PSPO, as much of the cost has been around resources. Enforcement of the PSPO has been encompassed in to other work roles, so is not proactively enforced, but has also not added to the wage bill. This has meant that there has been no income from PSPOs to date.
- 2.3 Costs in the last six months have included
  - £330 to procure new updated fixed penalty notice books – this would have been required with either option given the changes in legislation
  - £650 to train 9 Parish and Town Council Wardens to issue fixed penalty notices on our behalf. Again, this cost would have been required even with a full time dog warden, due to the size and rurality of the District.
  - £500 for internal officer training
- 2.4 Currently the comparison shows that it would be significantly more costly to employ a dedicated dog warden, even with the likely increase in income from issued fixed penalties.
- 2.5 This does not mean such a role has been totally disregarded however.

### **3 Enforcement**

- 3.1 Consideration is being given to creating a post dedicated to low level complaints, and supporting the PSPOs in the District, especially in the Gainsborough South West Ward and Hemswell Cliff (should the PSPO be made).

- 3.2 This post would be responsible for issuing fixed penalty notices for breach of all PSPOs, including the District wide order for dog fouling, the Trinity Arts Centre PSPO, and the proposed order in Hemswell Cliff.
- 3.3 The trained Parish and Town Wardens will still provide on the ground presence in their areas.
- 3.4 All Town and Parish councils have been provided with literature on the evidence needed to enforce the PSPOs and how to report it to the Council to help them act on it. This reporting is needed and will be further promoted to ensure resources can be best targeted.
- 3.5 Several internal staff have also undergone training to refresh their skills and knowledge and to enable delegations to allow them to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
- 3.6 CCTV is now available in Hemswell Cliff, and is available in areas of Market Rasen, Caistor and Gainsborough, including at the Trinity Arts Centre, to support the PSPOs. Should offences be witnessed, footage can be passed to enforcement officers to investigate.
- 3.7 It is not anticipated that targets will be set for issue of fixed penalties as this leaves the council open to challenge that tickets are issued unfairly to reach a target, and can lead to the focus being on 'quick wins' rather than trying to change embedded behaviour.
- 3.8 We intend to put out further publicity around the District wide order, and launch both the Trinity Arts and Hemswell Cliff (if made) orders in the new financial year.
- 3.9 Any paid fixed penalty notices or prosecutions will be publicised in the local media.

#### **4 Evaluation**

- 4.1 District wide PSPO: there have been no fixed penalty notices issued to date. In the past only a few penalties were given per year under previous legislation. Though we haven't yet made full use of the PSPO, it being in place allows us to enforce dog fouling which we couldn't do without it. With delegations being progressed for Parish and Town wardens, and the training of internal staff, we hope to see successes within the next financial year.
- 4.2 Trinity Arts Centre PSPO: this has not formally launched yet. Police have agreed support for a launch however we need to match this. Signage has been designed. Problems have reduced with colder weather. We aim to be in a position to launch in early spring to tackle the issue as it arises again.
- 4.3 It is early days for West Lindsey PSPOs, and it is likely that we will see more enforcement in the coming financial years. It is positive that we have these in

place, have the options for enforcement we wouldn't otherwise have, and can respond to the needs of our communities in this way.