

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 20 November 2012

Lead Member / Officer: David Smith
Lead Member for Public Realm

Report Author: Hywyn Williams
Corporate Director: Customers

Title: **Anti-Fouling Strategy**

1. What is the report about?

Denbighshire County Council has developed an Anti-Fouling Strategy and Action Plan, which is included as an Appendix to this report.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The reason for making this report is to seek Cabinet approval to the Strategy and Action Plan which links to the Corporate Plan priority of 'Clean and Tidy Streets'.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Cabinet approve the Anti-Fouling Strategy and agree the next steps as described in the attached Action Plan.

4. Report Details

This Strategy (Appendix 1) has been prepared as a result to the increasing problems associated with dog fouling within the County. Our most recent Residents Survey highlighted dog fouling as one of the main issues that residents wanted to be addressed, and regular communication with our residents and from our Elected Members, have highlighted this as a serious concern. Developing this strategy is aligned to the corporate priority of 'Providing Clean and Tidy Streets'.

The Anti-Fouling Strategy aims to reduce the prevalence of dog fouling in public spaces within Denbighshire, and is divided up into three main areas, namely:

- ❖ Increased awareness to the issues associated with dog fouling, and the actions being taken by the Council in a communications and marketing campaign
- ❖ To ensure that there is adequate provision of public litter bins that can be used to dispose of bagged dog faeces and to highlight the collection arrangements that are in place within all our communities
- ❖ To increase a robustness of enforcement measures that are available to the Council

The Council intends to work very closely with Town & Community Councils and any other organisation/groups within communities that have a role to play in assisting us to deliver this Strategy. The Strategy outlines details under these three main areas. A Head of Service has been assigned to the three strands identified, as follows:

- ❖ Communications and Marketing – Jamie Groves

- ❖ Collection Arrangements – Steve Parker
- ❖ Enforcement – Graham Boase

Each of the three strands identified have implementation plans (Appendix 2) in order to ensure that the Council delivers the strategy effectively, and within a proposed timeframe. In addition to this, it is intended that the impact of this Strategy is measured against indicators that will be developed to evaluate the delivery of the corporate priority of 'Providing Clean and Tidy Streets'. These measures are yet to be developed fully, but are likely to include measures such as:

- ❖ levels of complaints received by the Council relating to dog fouling
- ❖ the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for dog fouling related issues
- ❖ public perception, and that of Town & Community Councils, about the cleanliness of their streets and communities

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities

The development and implementation of this Strategy will contribute to the corporate priority of 'Providing Clean and Tidy Streets'.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The cost of implementing this strategy are largely contained within service budgets, although there will be some additional funding required for the communications & marketing strand. This amounts to circa. £12-15k and will be funded from the Capacity for Change Fund. It is likely that additional income will be generated through the issuing of more Fixed Penalty Notices than has previously been the case. Procuring the services of XFOR will not require additional funds, as this will be paid directly from the income generated through the Fixed Penalty Notices. The above cost pressure is viewed as start-up costs in the main and sustaining this Strategy into the future will be renewed via the Budget Challenge and priority led funding routes.

7. What consultations have been carried out and has an Equality Impact Assessment Screening been undertaken?

The importance of producing this Strategy has stemmed from comments made by members of the public, through the Residents Survey, and through other communication channels with the Council, and from information that has been gathered from concerns expressed to and by Members.

The Communities Scrutiny Committee considered this issue at the meeting held in June 2012, and requested that a Members Seminar be organised to discuss this matter in greater detail. Town & Community Councils have also requested that the Authority provides some direction to this area of work, and asked for this matter to be discussed at the cluster meetings that were held during late September and early October. Furthermore, a Members Seminar was held on 7 November 2012 and the comments of members in attendance are captured in Appendix 3.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed before the report is discussed at Cabinet.

8. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The on-going costs of the proposal are likely to be met through existing budgets or additional income through enforcement. One-off funding to pay for the initial marketing activity will be made available through the capacity for change fund. Should any proposals require additional funding

then either compensating savings will be required or consideration given during the service challenge and budget setting processes.

9. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

There are a number of risks associated with not producing an Anti-Fouling Strategy, namely:

- ❖ A reputational risk of the Council being seen as not offering any direction in this area of concern for our residents
- ❖ There is also an additional risk of not responding to an identified Corporate Priority, namely 'Providing Clean and Tidy Streets' as this is a major issue for our communities
- ❖ Providing a clear, well communicated and robust strategy to deal with dog fouling issues will reduce this reputational risk, make our communities cleaner and reduce the risk of ill health that can stem from public contact with dog faeces

10. Power to make the Decision

Section 59 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, Section 119 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides the Authority with the power to make this decision.