

Report of the Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Petition requesting installation of dog bins at outside Carr Junior School

Summary

1. This report advises the Executive Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods of the receipt of a petition from pupils, staff and parents of Carr Junior School together with a petition from pupils and staff of Carr Infant School. It sets out recommended actions in response to the petition.

Background & Context

2. On 8 April 2010 Councillor Simpson-Laing presented the petition, on behalf of Carr Junior and Infant schools, to a meeting of the full Council. The petitions request that a dog dirt bin be installed on Ostman Road.
3. The petitions state that the pupils, staff and parents are concerned about dog dirt in the streets around the schools, that dog dirt on the street is disgusting, is a health hazard and for this reason a dog dirt bin is needed.
4. Councillor Simpson-Laing states that a number of Carr Junior Year 6 pupils wrote to herself and Councillor Horton earlier this year complaining about the amount of dog dirt in the streets around the school and that after they, as Ward Councillors, had been informed that no more dog dirt bins were to be issued they suggested that the pupils set up a petition to show how strongly they feel about the issue.
5. The failure of irresponsible dog owners to pick up after their dogs and dispose of the dog dirt properly is the main reason for dog dirt appearing on the streets together with mess caused by dogs whose owners allow them to roam. Responsible owners will pick up after their dogs and dispose of the waste either by taking it home or by putting it in the next bin that they pass, which can be a dog dirt bin or general waste bin.
6. The installation of dog dirt bins alone will not deter irresponsible dog owners. It is necessary to stop dog fouling and counter the belief of some dog owners that dog fouling is acceptable.

Update

7. Neighbourhood Pride Service is carrying out an audit of all waste bins and dog waste bins throughout the city, including position and usage. The installation of new bins is on hold whilst the audit is being undertaken. This does not mean that new bins will not be installed in the future. As an interim measure the intention is that the dog bin from Tostig/Viking snicket, which is regularly damaged, is removed and installed near the schools on Ostman Road.
8. Service requests or complaints relating to dog fouling received by the Dog Warden Service, Street Environment Service and Neighbourhood Pride Service do not indicate that the area around the schools have been a trouble hotspot. However, the concerns raised by the schools in relation to their experience are appreciated and understood.

Consultation

9. As part of the recommended action and response to the petition engagement with the schools, including working with them to address the issue, will be undertaken.

Options

10. The following options can be considered in response to the petitions:

Option 1

11. A joint approach to tackling the problem of irresponsible dog owners involving the Dog Warden Service, Street Environment Service and the schools. The area will be subject to increased patrols by the Dog Warden whilst the Ward Street Environment Office will co-ordinate a campaign in the local area to raise the awareness of the problems dog fouling causes to encourage dog owners to clean up the mess in the first place. Visits will be made to the schools to enlist their help in this. It is proposed to display information around the schools and circulate similar posters and flyers in the immediate area. This work could also be publicised through the local Ward newsletter and by a press release. Following this it is proposed that the area is re-assessed in relation to the amount of dog fouling including the use of the interim re-positioned dog bin.

Option 2

12. Re-position the dog bin as described in paragraph 7 as an interim measure and assess the use/effect or otherwise in consideration of a permanent bin once the waste/dog bin audit has been undertaken.

Analysis

13. Option 1 will enable a more comprehensive approach to address the issue of irresponsible dog owners failing to clear up after their dogs in the area.
14. Option 2 will enable an assessment to be made as to whether dog owners use

the dog waste bin. The installation of a bin may not in itself resolve the issues raised by the petition.

Corporate Priorities

15. The engagement, education and enforcement activities of the council's Dog Warden Service, Street Environment Service and Neighbourhood Pride Service all contribute to the council's strategic ambitions of creating a Safer City, Sustainable City, Healthy City and Inclusive City.

Financial Implications

16. Any financial implications arising from this report will be managed within the existing resources of the services.

Human Resources

17. There are no human resources implications.

Equalities

18. There are no equalities implications. Engagement with the schools and local will be undertaken in a variety of ways and therefore any equality issues will be taken into consideration and addressed.

Legal Implications

19. There are no legal implications.

Crime and Disorder

20. There are no crime and disorder implications.

Information Technology (IT)

21. There are no IT implications.

Risk Management

22. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy, there are no risks associated with the information in this report.

Recommendations

23. That the Executive Member adopt Option 1 in paragraph 11 and approve the actions proposed.

Reason: To address the issue raised by the petition through the implementation of a comprehensive and partnership approach to tackle the problem of irresponsible dog owners failing to clear up after their dogs in the area.

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Wards Affected: Acomb

All

For further information please contact the author of the report