

Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

A review of the dog breeding licensing function of the Consumer and Business Affairs Animal Health team

Draft Planning & Scoping Document

Task & Finish Objective	To review the dog breeding licensing function of the Consumer and Business Affairs Animal Health team
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee has a key role to play in monitoring services, development of key policies and strategies, as well as identifying areas for improvement or development within their remit. • During the Environmental and Public Protection (now Place, Sustainability and Climate Change) Scrutiny committee meeting held on the 15th of November 2019, the committee unanimously resolved that dog breeding in Carmarthenshire be the subject for Committee's next Task and Finish review. (Delayed due to Covid). • The Animal Health Team (7.8 FTE (Full Time Equivalent)) sits within the Consumer and Business Affairs Service. • In additions to animal licensing responsibility (detailed below), the Animal Health Team regulates over 12,500 known animal premises within the county in relation to animal welfare, import/export of animals, performing animals, animal mutilation (e.g., cropped ears), animal disease, stray horses, food chain traceability and market / slaughterhouse surveillance. • 1.8 FTE officers are dedicated to all animal licensing duties, which include dog breeding, animal breeding, animal boarding, pet shops, dangerous wild animals, zoos, animal exhibitions, breeding clinics / artificial insemination, quarantine, bully XL breed, performing animals, animal mutilation (e.g., cropped ears), import/export and horse riding establishments along with the welfare of animals within such establishments and investigating those trading without a licence (illegally). • With 71 licensed dog breeders, Carmarthenshire is home to among the highest number of licensed breeders in England and Wales • Around 10 of the licensed breeders have over 100 dogs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team also proactively monitor online selling platforms to identify potential illegal breeders. • Many farmers have diversified, and dog breeding has become an important part of their income, supporting employment in some of our most rural areas. • Dog breeding is on the increase nationally and seen by some organised criminals as a high yield/low risk enterprise with a turnover of anything between £10,000 and £15,000 per month. • It should also be recognised that there is a growing disconnect between certain breeders who see dogs as a commodity to trade and the public’s perception in terms of animal welfare and what is reasonable - whilst the law permits large scale dog breeding, many of the public are against it in principle. • Some dog breeders sell on to a third party rather than direct to the public. They in turn sell on again to retailers all over the UK. With tens of thousands of dogs being traded from the county it makes it complex and resource intensive to monitor. Currently we have more dedicated resources than many counties but not nearly enough to meet public expectation of the service in regulating such a dynamic and complex industry. • New legislation known as Lucy’s Law intended that puppies and kittens could no longer be sold by a third-party seller – such as a pet shop or commercial dealer – unless they have bred the animal themselves. In practice, this legislation has raised new challenges in terms of animal welfare and an increase in workload due to the increase in the number of people falling within the increasingly complex licensing regime.
<p>Membership</p>	<p><u>Elected Members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be agreed at the Place, Sustainability and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee scheduled to take place on • Up to 6 Elected Members appointed to reflect the political balance of the Council as whole. <p><u>Advisors / Support Officers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Morgan – Head of Housing and Public Protection • Heidi Neil - Consumer & Business Affairs Manager • Aled Thomas – Business and Regulation Lead • Jane Clarke – Senior Animal Health Officer • Nicola Mason – Animal Health Officer • Janine Owen – Democratic Services Officer

<p>The scope and main aims of the review</p>	<p>To explore how we currently deliver the regulation of dog breeding licensing and recommend areas for improvement aligned to applicable corporate objectives.</p> <p>The aims of the review are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess the current provision, integration of services, information sharing and strategy responses of key stakeholders and to explore opportunities for improvement. 2. Explore whether current service provision is sufficiently robust, consistent, coordinated, non-duplicitative, provides measurable outcomes and presents value for money. 3. Review current dog breeding licensing conditions against the Welsh Government review and proposed all-Wales licensing conditions. 4. Research new ways to raise the profile of the service and to attain recognition of the specialist body of skills, knowledge and support Consumer and Business Affairs provide to businesses and residents of Carmarthenshire. 5. Formulate recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet.
<p>How it will contribute to achieving corporate / community objectives and well-being objectives</p>	<p>In line with Council’s vision of “<i>Developing Carmarthenshire Together: One Council; One Vision; One Voice</i>”, undertaking this review will provide an opportunity to critically assess our performance and seek feedback from stakeholders so we can learn and improve the way we work.</p> <p>In so doing, the review will examine our contribution to the thematic priorities aligned to Carmarthenshire’s Well-being Objectives, as detailed in the County Council’s corporate-strategy-2022-27.pdf (gov.wales)</p> <p>Well-being Objective 1: Start Well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health Lives</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensuring the integrity of the food chain. <p>Well-being Objective 2: Live & Age Well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tackling Poverty</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting businesses through the cost-of-living crisis. ○ Protecting the public from illegal businesses. <p>Well-being Objective 3: Prosperous Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Economic Recovery and Growth</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting business resilience and growth, particularly in rural areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community Safety, Resilience and Cohesion</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ tackling criminal behaviour to ensure residents feel safe in their communities. <p>Well-being Objective 4: Our Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organisational Transformation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Making the best use of our resources to provide more value and benefits to businesses and residents.
<p>List of key stakeholders [not exhaustive]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer and Business Affairs Service • Police (Incidents recorded, feedback) • Welsh Government • Animal Plant Health Agency • Animal Health in Wales • Licensed Dog Breeders • Charities • Carmarthenshire Financial Investigations Unit • Others as identified
<p>What information / documents are required to inform the work of the study? [not exhaustive]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer and Business Affairs Business Plan • Budget • Animal Health data • Complaints and other statistical data in relation to dog breeding • Academic Literature • Local and national policy documents.
<p>Timescale for completion of the review</p>	<p>To be determined by the Task and Finish Group</p>