

## **REPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

(Meeting held 2 March 2000)

### **1. HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2000-2003 (MINUTE NO. 71) (REPORT B)**

The Committee have agreed comments on the draft of the second Health Improvement Programme (HIMP).

The HIMP is a multi agency document that covers the Health Authority District which includes the New Forest; Southampton City; Eastleigh and the southern part of Test Valley. It is designed to achieve a single shared programme that identifies local health need, decides priorities and sets targets. It covers all factors that can influence health such as transport; employment and environment and social care issues.

The process this year has seen the introduction of the Primary Care Groups (PCG's) and the inclusion of more locally focused action. For the New Forest this has involved the New Forest PCG and the Totton and Waterside PCG. The Council has been working with both PCG's and other partner agencies on the local programmes, which has been reflected in the content of the HIMP. The process is still in its early development and will be the subject of on-going work.

The construction of the HIMP is difficult and time consuming as it covers a wide geographical area; a large number of partners and a great number of subjects. This is compounded by many imposed issues, especially for the NHS, that arise from the Department of Health. There is also the need to learn much about the operation and different cultures that exist between all those taking part in the process. However, progress is being made especially with the greater input of local issues and, for the Council, the very good work that is taking place through the introduction of the PCG's.

There is still a need to continue to press the Public Health and well-being agenda which reflects the role the Council can best contribute.

A copy of the draft HIMP and the Council's response is available in the Members' Room.

### **2. SEIZURE AND KENNELING OF STRAY DOGS (MINUTE NO. 73) (REPORT D)**

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on the District Council to appoint a dog warden. One of the many duties of a dog warden is to seize any dog which is believed to be a stray and to detain it.

After a dog has been seized the District Council has a duty to feed and look after it for seven days after which time the dog can be re-homed. Currently the Council is able to take dogs to two nearby kennels, one situated at Ashley Heath, Ringwood run by the RSPCA, and the other in Southampton operated by the City Council.

The RSPCA have recently written to all Councils in the area who use their facilities stating that these contracts will not be renewed when they expire. The District Council's contract expires in August 2000. The RSPCA have been receiving increasing numbers of reports of ill treatment of animals and, as a result, are of the view that that work should take priority over stray dogs.

Southampton City Council have recently taken a decision to increase substantially the charges to kennel dogs with them. In addition they will be charging surrounding local authorities for kenneling dogs prior to re-homing. For New Forest District Council based on the current rate of stray dogs being seized, and the percentage of animals not claimed, this would result in additional costs in the region of £12,300.

The increased costs for 1999/2000 can be contained within existing budgets and off-set against income from the micro-chipping scheme run as part of the responsible dog ownership campaign. However, the Policy and Resources Committee have been recommended to agree a supplementary estimate of £12,300 for 2000/2001 to cover the additional costs for kenneling and re-homing of stray dogs.

Stray dogs are a particular problem in the New Forest area but it would not be financially viable for the Council to provide their own kenneling facilities at present. However, the New Forest and a number of other local authorities would support a regional Stray Centre being established and this may be a viable option for the future.

The Committee have agreed that discussions should be held with other neighbouring local authorities and the Local Government Association with a view to a more strategic approach and long-term solution to the problem of stray dogs including dog micro-chipping and licensing.

With regard to micro-chipping, a veterinary practice in Fordingbridge had suggested that the Council's charge of £15 per animal chipped was less than most veterinary surgeons were charging and this was having a damaging effect on local businesses.

The £15 charge made by the Council does include a small profit element and the Committee were of the opinion that dog micro-chipping needed to be provided as a service as cheaply as possible in order to engender responsible dog ownership. They have therefore agreed that the current charge should remain.

### **3. REVIEW OF REFUSE COLLECTION POLICY (MINUTE 76) (REPORT G)**

The Waste Management Sub-Committee on 17 February 2000 (Minute 3 refers) considered a number of options for the development of the Council's refuse collection service. They made a number of recommendations which the Committee have now considered.

In relation to household collections of glass for recycling the Committee have agreed that these proposals should not be pursued at this stage but that further publicity should be given to current opportunities available to the public for recycling. It would be more beneficial to increase the number of glass recycling banks around the district and to empty them more frequently rather than introduce household collections. The Committee agreed that greater publicity was needed to inform the public that items such as jars and food bottles as well as drinks bottles could be recycled.

As a result of changing lifestyles the amount of household waste produced has risen by 5% since 1995. The Committee were of the view that the greater capacity available in wheeled bins could encourage people to throw away more waste rather than recycle it. The visual impact of large numbers of wheeled bins would also be detrimental to the character of the District.

The Committee were not in favour of alternate weekly collections as the aim should be to improve the service rather than to reduce the costs. They have therefore

agreed that the introduction of wheeled bin collections or alternative weekly collections for household waste and recycled waste should not be pursued.

There is a particular problem in some areas where animals have access to waste in black sacks left out for collection. The Committee have therefore agreed that in selected areas where there are specific problems with animals the provision to householders of sack protectors/sack sleeves/bins with wheels will be investigated. The current policy is for 'back door' collection and residents have been asked to leave their rubbish inside the curtilage of their property but this has not always worked.

Under the new European Landfill Directives, garden waste will not be able to be deposited in landfill sites unless treated e.g. incineration. Garden waste taken to household waste recycling centres is composted and sold as 'pro-grow'. The demand for this product greatly outweighs supply. Currently, garden waste collected from households in grey garden sacks is not composted and the Committee have now agreed that a household collection of garden waste for composting should be evaluated by an incremental trial. Initially this will take place in the Everton area of the District which it is considered represents a self contained area and is representative in terms of population.

With regard to hazardous waste there is currently only one household recycling centre in Hampshire where it can be accepted. In the next few years the European Landfill Directives will require hazardous waste to be separated from ordinary household waste and the Committee have also therefore agreed that the possibility of providing household waste collections of hazardous substances should be investigated.

The Committee have strongly supported the need to provide more recycling centres in the west of the District to provide local facilities for the residents of these areas and to relieve the pressure on existing sites. A further report is to be made to the Waste Management Sub-Committee on the possible timescale for the implementation of the clear sack recycling scheme throughout the remainder of the District.

The Council carried out nearly 14,000 collections of bulky household waste in 1999. Apart from some items of furniture, most of the waste collected was not re-useable. The Committee are of the view that if the items were collected for recycling directly from the household rather than being recovered at some later stage from the waste stream, much more could be recycled. There are a number of voluntary schemes within the District that recycle furniture and the Committee have agreed that officers should investigate all such local opportunities to maximise the recycling prospects. The Committee have also agreed that local opportunities for recycling other specific items such as bicycles and computers should be investigated.

**Cllr J Waddington  
CHAIRMAN**

(ES020300/Report)