

| Report of  | Meeting           | Date         |
|--|-------------------|--------------|
| Director of People and Places<br>(Introduced by the Executive Member for Places) | Executive Cabinet | 21 June 2012 |

## ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 2006 – AUTHORISATION OF INSPECTORS

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To seek adoption of the powers available under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to authorise appropriately trained and competent officers as 'inspectors' under the Act.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- Members are asked to approve adoption of the authorisation powers and inspector appointment powers within the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and to give delegated powers to the Director of People and Places to make the appointment of inspectors under the Act.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The Animal Welfare Act 2006 makes provision to ensure that the welfare of animals can be protected to deal with poor or inappropriate treatment of animals.
- Historically whilst lower tier local authorities have had powers to deal with stray dogs and informally provide support to other agencies in cases of welfare, the role of enforcement has been with upper tier authorities, departments within DEFRA and the RSPCA.
- This legislation makes provision for district councils to appoint inspectors who can act in cases of animal maltreatment.
- In order to appoint such inspectors a delegated power to the Director of People and Places is required.

|  |     |           |
|--|-----|-----------|
| <b>Confidential report</b><br>Please bold as appropriate | Yes | <b>No</b> |
|--|-----|-----------|

|  |     |           |
|--|-----|-----------|
| <b>Key Decision?</b><br>Please bold as appropriate | Yes | <b>No</b> |
|--|-----|-----------|

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

- To enable a comprehensive animal welfare enforcement service to be provided by the Council and enable appropriately authorised officers to act as inspectors for the purposes of carrying out enforcement work under the terms of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

8. None

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

9. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Strong Family Support   |   | Education and Jobs                                   |   |
| Being Healthy   |   | Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Neighbourhoods      |   |
| Safe Respectful Communities   | X | Quality Community Services and Spaces                |   |
| Vibrant Local Economy   |   | Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages |   |
| A Council that is a consistently Top Performing Organisation and Delivers Excellent Value for Money |   |  | X |

## BACKGROUND

10. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 provides a number of powers and creates several offences in relation to the welfare of animals. Persons who mistreat animals or fail to ensure their proper welfare can be subject to a number of sanctions.
11. In addition the Act provides powers for authorised inspectors to remove animals who are suffering from inadequate welfare arrangements.
12. Currently officers with in the Neighbourhood Officer Team provide support for a number of agencies including Lancashire County Council and the RSPCA in dealing with animal welfare cases, but currently do not have the authorisation to utilise enforcement powers themselves.
13. If Members are minded to approve the recommendation in this report a small number of Neighbourhood Officers with the appropriate training will be duly authorised under the Act as 'Inspectors' to undertake enforcement activity directly in relation cases of animal cruelty and inappropriate animal welfare.

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Finance                                  | X | Customer Services                      |  |
| Human Resources                          | X | Equality and Diversity                 |  |
| Legal                                    | X | Integrated Impact Assessment required? |  |
| No significant implications in this area |   | Policy and Communications              |  |

## COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

15. The additional responsibilities gained as a result of adopting the Animal Welfare Act 2006 powers are already accommodated within the job description of the officer who will take the lead on the associated animal welfare activity. It has been identified that there may be an increase in court action being taken but it is considered that the anticipated level will be able to be accommodated within business as usual. Therefore with regard to the contents of this report there are no financial implications identified that will adversely impact on the Council's budget.

## COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

16. The proposal provides the Council with Inspectors and enables additional enforcement activity to be undertaken to protect against the continued commission of animal cruelty and welfare offences.

## COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Currently there is a Neighbourhood Officer who is specifically responsible for animal welfare and technical issues, and the grading of this post is reflective of these additional responsibilities. It is therefore recommended that this officer takes the lead in being authorised to carry out inspections, with support from other Neighbourhood Officers should the frequency or volume of work require this.

JAMIE CARSON  
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

There are no background papers to this report.

| Report Author | Ext  | Date        | Doc ID            |
|---------------|------|-------------|-------------------|
| Simon Clark   | 5732 | 22 May 2012 | Animalwelfare2012 |