Report of the Service Director of Neighbourhood Environment

Agenda Item No:
Meeting: 8 July 2008

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT 1963

IMPLEMENTATION OF A LICENCE FOR HOME BOARDING OF DOGS

1. **OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

1.1 To adopt new conditions and system for home boarding of dogs.

1.2 To adopt a set of licence conditions based on the LACORS Guidance.

2. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2.1 The Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 requires that any business providing accommodation for other peoples dogs to be inspected and licensed. This includes incidents where dogs are looked after in private homes for payment.

2.2 The exception to this is where dogs are held overnight as a result of the main business, e.g. a veterinary surgery or where disease control has been implemented.

2.3 Currently the council licences 36 purpose built premises for the boarding of cats and dogs, however the council has no provision for the licensing of home boarding of dogs.

2.4 It is intended to adopt the LACORS (Local Authority Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services) Guidance conditions to adapt for purpose and to ensure compliance with the Act. These conditions are attached at Appendix A of this report.

2.5 The Licensing Division has been approached by a Pet Sitting organisation who wish to operate legally within North Lincolnshire. The organisation currently operates successfully throughout the country.

2.6 In order to licence such activities, the accompanying conditions need to be set, to ensure the welfare and safety of the animals concerned, the carers and their families and the general public. It is recommended that the conditions prepared by LACORS be used in this instance.

2.7 Licensing of home boarding establishments will follow the current process for dog boarding kennels. The licence will run from 1 January to 31 December annually, with each establishment receiving at least one inspection at the commencement of application. Further visits may be made during the following 12 months. Thereafter, visits will be made to ensure compliance as required.

2.8 It is proposed that the licence fee will be set at £80.00 for the year 2008/09. The fee for commercial animal boarding establishments for 2008/09 is currently £138.00.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Option 1 - Approve the adoption of the Home Boarding Licence, conditions and proposed fee.

3.2 Option 2 – Amend the Home Boarding Licence, conditions and proposed fee.

3.3 Option 3 – Reject the Home Boarding Licence, conditions and proposed fee.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1 – The approval of the Home Boarding Licence will allow persons to be regulated, thereby safeguarding the public and the welfare of the boarded dogs.

4.2 Option 2 – The Licensing Committee will have the opportunity to consider the licence and conditions to discuss any amendments they feel are necessary to improve conditions and the welfare of the animals.

4.3 Option 3 – To reject the licence will allow persons to operate unregulated therefore putting the public and the welfare of the dogs at stake.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 There will be financial implications, although these are expected to be minimal.

5.2 There are no staffing, property or IT implications.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 There are no other implications expected.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation will take place with those involved in the specific animal welfare matters and a further report will be submitted if found to be necessary.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the regulations under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, relating to home boarding be adopted;

8.2 That the conditions provided by LACORS attached at Appendix 1 be adopted;

8.3 That the fee for a Home Boarding Licence in 2008/09 be set at £80.00.

SERVICE DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: -
Compliance and Enforcement Documentation.

LICENCE CONDITIONS FOR HOME BOARDING OF DOGS

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT 1963.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Unless otherwise stated, these conditions shall apply to all buildings and areas to which dogs have access and/or which are used in association with the boarding of dogs.

1.2 Normally planning permission will not be required for the home boarding of animals on the scale proposed, however should complaints be received because of particular noise or odour problems, then the Council reserves the right to consider whether there has been a change of use which requires a planning application to be submitted.

1.3 The Licence holder must ensure that the establishment is covered by adequate and suitable public liability insurance and, where necessary, adequate and suitable employers liability insurance.

1.4 No dog registered under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 must be accepted for home boarding.

1.5 Dog hybrids registered under the Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976 (e.g. Wolf Hybrids) are not to be accepted for home boarding.

1.6 Entire males and bitches in season or bitches due to be in season during the boarding, must not be boarded together or boarded with resident dogs. Puppies under 6 months of age must not be boarded with other dogs including resident dogs.

2. LICENCE DISPLAY

2.1 A copy of the licence and its associated conditions must be suitably displayed to the public in a prominent position in, on or about the premises or made available to each boarder.

3. NUMBERS OF ANIMALS

3.1 The maximum number of dogs to be kept at any one time is (enter number).

3.2 Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at any one time. Dogs must not be boarded with any cat, unless they normally live together in the same household.

3.3 Where there is a resident dog or cat kept at the household, written consent from the owners of the boarded dog must be gained following a trial familiarisation session.

3.4 The Licence holder will be required to make an assessment of the risks of home boarding to include the risk to or caused by children who are likely to be at the property.

4. CONSTRUCTION

4.1 Dogs must live in the home as family pets. There must be no external construction of buildings, cages or runs.

4.2 The premises shall have its own entrance and must not have shared access e.g. communal stairs.

4.3 There must be adequate space, light, heat and ventilation for the dogs.

4.4 As far as reasonably practicable all areas/rooms within the home to which boarded dogs have access, must have no physical or chemical hazards that may cause injury to the dogs.

4.5 There must be sufficient space available to be able to keep the dogs separately if required.

4.6 If a collection and delivery service is provided, a suitable vehicle with a dog guard or cage in the rear must be provided.

5. MANAGEMENT

5.1 TRAINING

5.1.1 A written training policy for staff must be provided. Systematic training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out.

5.2 CLEANLINESS

5.2.1 All areas where the dogs have access to, including the kitchen etc must be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and must be kept in such a manner as to be conducive to maintenance of disease control and dog comfort.

5.2.2 All excreta and soiled material must be removed from all areas used by dogs at least daily and more often if necessary. Disposal facilities for animal waste must be agreed with the Licensing Authority.

5.2.3 All bedding areas must be kept clean and dry.

5.2.4 Facilities must be provided for the proper reception, storage and disposal of all waste. Particular care should be taken to segregate clinical waste arising

from the treatment and handling of dogs with infectious diseases. The final route for all such waste shall comply with current waste regulations.

5.2.5 Measures must be taken to minimise the risks from rodents, insects and other pests within the premises.

5.3 FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES

5.3.1 All dogs shall have an adequate supply of suitable food as directed by the client.

5.3.2 Fresh drinking water must be available at all times (unless advised otherwise by a veterinary surgeon) and the drinking vessel cleaned daily. The water must be changed at least twice a day.

5.3.3 Clients must be encouraged to provide each dog with its own bedding, bowls, grooming materials etc. These items must be cleaned regularly to prevent cross-infection. The Licence holder however should also be able to provide extra bedding material.

5.3.4 Where necessary, eating and drinking vessels must be provided, and where so, they must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross-contamination. They must also be maintained in a clean condition. Feeding bowls must be cleaned or disposed of after each meal and each dog must be provided with its own bowl.

5.4 KITCHEN FACILITIES

5.4.1 Airtight containers must be provided for the storage of dry foods. Uncooked food and the remains of opened tins must be stored in covered, non-metal, leak proof containers in the fridge.

5.4.2 All bulk supplies of food shall be kept in vermin proof containers.

5.5 DISEASE CONTROL AND VACCINATION

5.5.1 Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious disease and parasites amongst the dogs, staff and visitors.

5.5.2 Proof must be provided that boarded and resident dogs have current vaccinations against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis (Canine adenovirus), Leptospirosis (*L. canicola* and *L. icterohaemorrhagicae*) and Canine Parvovirus and other relevant diseases. The course of vaccination must have been completed at least four weeks before the first date of boarding or in accordance with manufacturer instructions. A record that this proof has been supplied must be kept on-site throughout the period that the dog is boarded.

5.5.3 Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought in case of signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any dog is sick or injured, any instructions for its

treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon, must be strictly followed.

5.5.4 A well-stocked first-aid kit suitable for use on dogs must be available and accessible on site.

5.5.5 The Licence holder must be registered with a veterinary practice that can provide 24-hour help and advice. The clients own veterinary practice must be known and consulted if necessary.

5.5.6 Precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of fleas, ticks, intestinal parasites and other parasites in both boarded and resident dogs. Proof must be maintained of all routine and emergency treatment for parasites.

5.5.7 The premises shall be regularly treated for fleas and parasites with a veterinary recommended product.

5.5.8 Veterinary advice must be sought in relation to cleaning substances so that they or their fumes cannot be harmful to an animal.

5.6 ISOLATION AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAK.

5.6.1 Dogs showing signs of any disease or illness shall be isolated from any other dogs until veterinary advice is obtained. There must be sufficient facilities within the licensed premises to ensure effective separation of any sick animal.

5.6.2 The Licence holder must inform the Licensing Authority on the next working day if a dog develops an infectious disease.

5.6.3 Following an episode of infectious disease during any stay, the premises must undergo a reasonable quarantine period before new boarders are admitted. This period will be specified by the Licensing Authority as agreed with their authorised veterinary surgeon.

5.6.4 The Licensing Authority must be informed of any animal death on the premises. The Licence holder must make arrangements for the body to be stored at a veterinary surgeons premises until the owners return.

5.7 REGISTER

5.7.1 A register must be kept of all dogs boarded. The information kept must include the following:

- Date of arrival
- Name of dog, any identification system such as microchip number, tattoo
- Description, breed, age and gender of dog
- Name, address and telephone number of owner or keeper
- Name, address and telephone number of contact person whilst boarded
- Name, address and telephone number of dog's veterinary surgeon
- Anticipated and actual date of departure
- Proof of current vaccinations, medical history and requirements

- Health, welfare nutrition and exercise requirements

5.7.2 Such a register is to be available for inspection at all times by an officer of Licensing Authority, veterinary surgeon.

5.7.3 The register must be kept readily available for a minimum of 2 years and kept in such a manner as to allow an authorised officer easy access to such information.

5.7.4 If medication is to be administered, this must be recorded.

5.7.4 Where records are computerised, a back-up copy must be kept. The register must also be available to key members of staff of the establishment at all times.

5.8 SUPERVISION

5.8.1 A fit and proper person with relevant experience must always be present to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies whenever dogs are boarded at the premises. This person must not have any conviction or formal Cautions for any animal welfare related offence.

5.8.2 Dogs must be visited at regular intervals, as necessary for their health, safety and welfare, and must not be left unattended for longer than 3 hours at a time and then not on a regular basis.

5.8.3 No home where there are children under 5 years of age will be licensed.

5.8.4 Only people over 16 years of age are allowed to walk the dogs in public places.

5.9 EXERCISE

5.9.1 Dogs must be exercised in accordance with their owner's wishes. If dogs are taken off the premises, they must be kept on leads unless with the owners written permission.

5.9.2 There must be direct access to a suitable outside area. The area / garden must only be for use by the homeowner (not shared with other residents). The area must be kept clean.

5.9.3 The exercise/garden area of the premises and any other area to which the boarded dogs may have access, must be totally secure and safe. Fencing must be adequate to offer security to prevent escape and be safe, with no dangerous sharp objects or protrusions. Gates must be able to be locked.

5.9.4 If there is a pond, it must be covered to avoid drowning.

5.9.5 Dogs must wear a collar and identity tag during their time in boarding. The tag must display the name, address and telephone number of the boarding premises.

5.9.6 The Licensing Authority must be informed on the next working day if a dog is lost.

5.10 FIRE / EMERGENCY PRECAUTIONS

5.10.1 Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of the dogs in case of fire or other emergencies.

5.10.2 The occupier of the property must be aware of the location of the dogs in the property at all times.

5.10.3 Careful consideration needs to be given to the sleeping area for dogs to ensure that they can be easily evacuated in the event of a fire, without putting the occupiers of the property at risk.

5.10.4 A fire warning procedure and emergency evacuation plan – including details of where dogs are to be evacuated to in the event of a fire or other emergency - must be drawn up, brought to the attention of those involved in the home boarding arrangements and/or displayed in a prominent place on the premises. The Licence holder must have suitable arrangements for the temporary boarding of dogs in the event that the licensed premises is rendered uninhabitable.

5.10.5 Fire detection equipment must be provided in accordance with general advice given by the Fire Safety Officer. The home must have at least 2 working smoke detectors located at the top & bottom of the staircase, or other appropriate location.

5.10.6 All doors to rooms must be kept shut at night.

5.10.7 All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. No dog must be left in a room with loose or trailing cables or wires.

5.10.8 All heating appliances must be free of risk of fire as is reasonably practicable. There must be no use of freestanding gas or oil appliances.

5.10.9 A relative, friend or neighbour within 5 minutes travelling time must have a spare set of keys and access to the premises in case of an emergency. These details must be made available to the Licensing Authority.

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