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|---------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| REPORT TO:                                              |    | Communities & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee |  |
| DATE:                                                   |    | 30 July 2026                                          |  |
| PORTFOLIO:                                              |    | Councillor Paul Cox - Environmental Services          |  |
| REPORT AUTHOR:                                          |    | Craig Haraben (Head of Environmental Services)        |  |
| TITLE OF REPORT:                                        |    | Dog Warden Service                                    |  |
| EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A) | No | Not applicable                                        |  |
|                                                         |    |                                                       |  |
| KEY DECISION:                                           | No | If yes, date of publication:                          |  |

## 1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Communities & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee about the dog warden service

## 2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Communities & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the report

## 3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Council has had a dog warden service for over 25 years as a response to concerns from residents about dog fouling and stray dogs.
- 3.2 The dog warden's main roles are:
- (i) to undertake enforcement action relating to the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) in the Borough
  - (ii) to deal with stray dogs
  - (iii) to undertake education and enforcement action relating to the Microchipping of Cats and Dogs (England) Regulations 2023
  - (iv) to educate the public on responsible dog ownership
  - (v) to promote awareness and guidance relating to dog legislation
  - (vi) to deal with situation where dogs are aggressive to other dogs

- 3.3 The dog warden does not investigate reports of dogs which fall within the Dangerous Dogs Act (as this is the responsibility of the police), noisy/barking dogs (as this would be dealt with via environmental health) or animal welfare concerns (as this usually lies with the RSPCA).
- 3.4 However the dog warden will work with and support other agencies such as the police or RSPCA to deal with dog related issues which the other agencies lead on.
- 3.5 The Dog Fouling Act 1996 made it a criminal offence for a person in charge of a dog to fail to clean up its faeces immediately after it fouls on public land. This Act was superseded in 2014 by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which introduced PSPO and allowed local Councils to enforce local fines and tailor the designated areas. PSPOs are designed to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in an area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life (in this case dog fouling and out of control dogs not on leads). A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £100 can be issued to a person who fails to comply with the PSPO.
- 3.6 The Council currently has in place a Public Space Protection Order relating to dogs. This PSPO makes it an offence for a person in charge of a dog to:
- (i) fail to clean up the dogs faeces immediately after it fouls on publicly accessible land
  - (ii) not have the dog on a lead in designated cemeteries, sports pitches, town centres, in the rose garden at Haworth Park and in the grounds of Churchfield House in Great Harwood
  - (iii) to allow the dog to enter designated play facilities and bowling green areas throughout the Borough
- 3.7 The current PSPO will be reviewed in 2027 in line with the legislation
- 3.8 In addition to dog control, the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 also allows Council Officers to issue Community Protection Notices (CPN) to individuals who are above the age of 16. The CPNs are designed to stop people from committing unreasonable anti-social behaviour that negatively affects the local community on a persistent basis.
- 3.9 The dog wardens use this legislation when owners have dogs which are persistently out of control and are causing distress to other residents. For example, if a dog is persistently aggressive towards other dogs, the dog warden can issue a CPN to the dog owner which requires them to muzzle a dog in public or keep it on a lead at all times when in public places.
- 3.10 Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 local Councils have the authority to seize stray dogs and return them to their owners or seize stray dogs and impound them in kennels for up to 7 days. After the 7 days if the owner cannot be traced or have refused to pay the fee to reclaim their dog, then the Council can sell or rehome the dog.
- 3.11 Rehoming of dogs is usually done via local dog's charities such as Pendle dogs in need.

- 3.12 Historically there has been one dog warden working in the Borough. However in April 2024 funding was made available by Cabinet to employ a second dog warden. This was in response to residents wanting more enforcement action taken relating to dog fouling and out of control dogs.
- 3.13 Having two dog wardens has meant the service has the capacity to double the patrols and undertake more investigations relating to dog fouling and out of control dogs.
- 3.14 The table below outlines the work the dog warden service has undertaken. The table shows that the amount of work the dog wardens have been able to undertake has increased with having two dog wardens.

|                           | 2026 (to<br>end<br>May) | 2025 | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Abandoned Dog             | 2                       | 5    | 7    | 0    | 0    |
| CPW                       | 9                       | 10   | 11   | 0    | 0    |
| CPN                       | 8                       | 6    | 2    | 0    | 0    |
| CPN Breach - FPN          | 0                       | 9    | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Dangerous Dog Complaint   | 32                      | 48   | 77   | 57   | 25   |
| Stray Dogs Reported       | 29                      | 93   | 121  | 123  | 105  |
| Dogs taken to the Kennels | 14                      | 44   | 86   | 63   | 55   |
| Dogs rehomed              | 3                       | 22   | 35   | 30   | 20   |
| Dogs Returned to Owner    | 6                       | 18   | 8    | 4    | 0    |
| Dogs Reclaimed by Owner   | 6                       | 9    | 10   | 26   | 30   |
| Dogs Fouling Complaints   | 41                      | 129  | 125  | 74   | 38   |
| FPN - Fouling             | 7                       | 16   | 8    | 1    | 0    |
| FPN - Off Lead            | 9                       | 20   | 1    | 1    | 12   |
| Microchip Notice Issued   | 11                      | 18   | 7    | 0    | 0    |
| Microchip Notice Complied | 7                       | 15   | 7    | 0    | 0    |
| Microchip Notice Breach   | 1                       | 3    | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Microchip Notice Court    | 0                       | 2    | 0    | 0    | 0    |

#### **4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 Do not have a dog warden service. This has been rejected because having no dog warden service would mean enforcement action relating to dog fouling and breaches of public space protection orders would not be prioritised and dog fouling is a key concern for Borough residents.

#### **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 The portfolio holder and officers in the pest control & dog warden team were consulted in the writing of this report.

## 6. Implications

|                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)</b> | The Council receives income from issuing FPNs however it is hoped that issuing FPNs acts as a deterrent to further anti-social behaviour, rather than being an income generator to the Council.                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Legal and human rights implications</b>                                                 | All FPNs and CPNs are issued in accordance with the requirements set out in the Act and is a process which has been agreed by the Council's legal service.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Assessment of risk</b>                                                                  | Increasing the amount of the FPNs may lead to more individuals refusing to pay the FPNs, which in turn could see an increase in the amount of work required to take debt recovery action. However, there is a right of appeal against the FPN and the Council may see an increase in the number of appeals they have to deal with. |
| <b>Equality and diversity implications</b>                                                 | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

## 7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers

7.1 There are no background papers to this report

## 8. Freedom of Information

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.