

## **Briefing Note: Animal Cruelty**

I would like to address the People and Communities Committee following on from the discussion at the most recent council meeting regarding animal cruelty.

Responsibility for the protection of animals at risk has been delegated to Local Government as a consequence of the Review of Public Administration. Yet a recent piece of research conducted by Millward Brown showed that very few people were aware of this fact, with lots of people still believing that if they see a case of animal cruelty or neglect then they should get in touch with the USPCA.

It therefore falls to local councils to make people aware. A well-informed population knowing who to contact if they see neglect or abuse represents a valuable means of stamping out such behaviour. One way in which I believe we could raise public awareness in a cost effective way is to place a sticker on everyone's black wheelie bin advertising the number of the relevant council authorities that people should contact if they suspect cruelty or neglect.

There is a precedent in this area. Council has placed stickers on the bins advertising changes to bin collections due to holidays etc. so this is something we have done in the past. This is merely one suggestion, but I feel it would be effective. Not everyone reads the magazine the council distributes, but almost everyone would see such a sticker and it hopefully would have a positive impact on tackling animal cruelty.

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