

How we deal with dogs



1. Introduction



1.1

These procedures state how Charnwood Borough Council operates in relation to issues of Dog Control.

The main areas for dog control are:

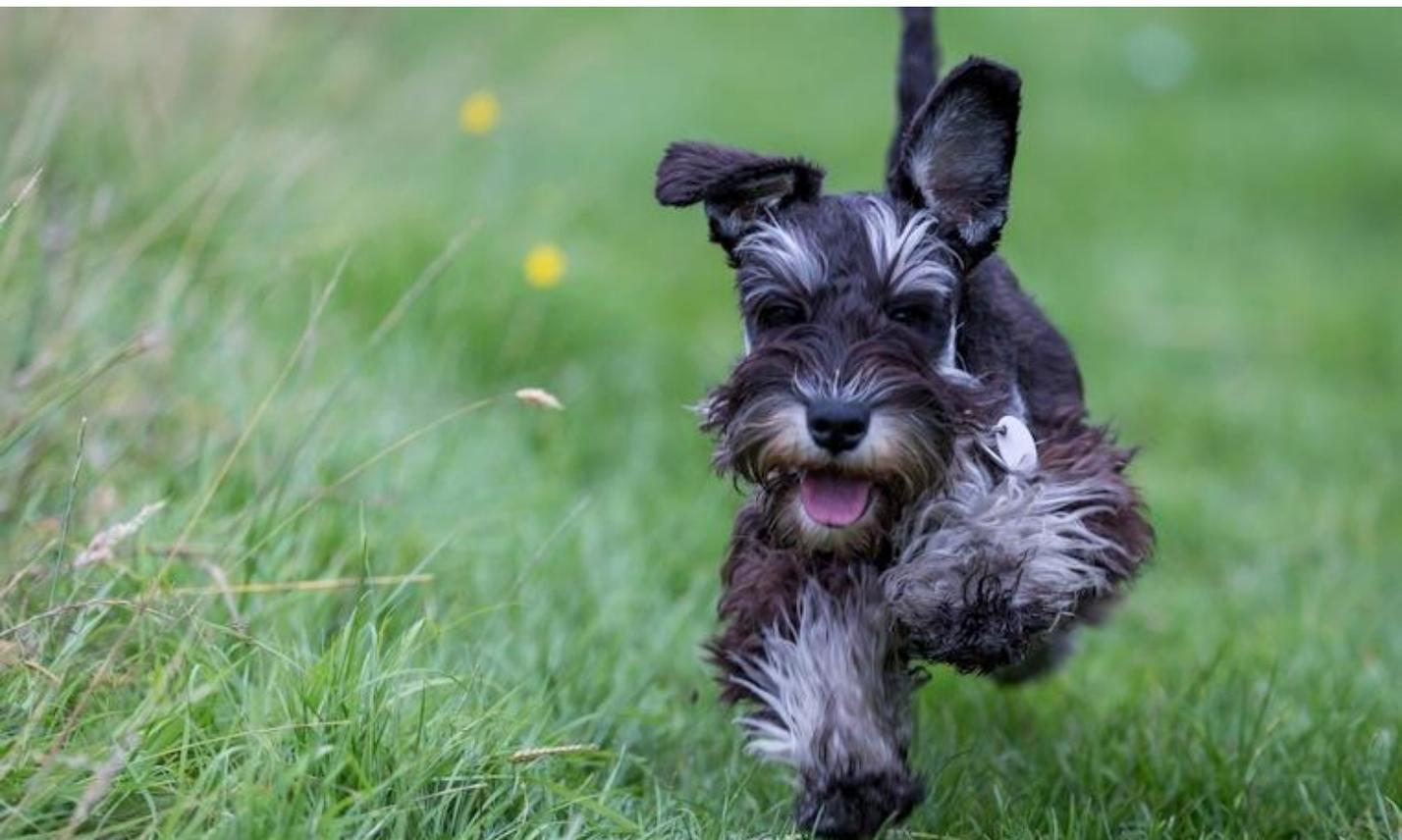
- Collection and kennelling for stray dogs;
- micro-chipping;
- responsible dog ownership.

2. Scope

2.1 These procedures cover the following activities in relation to dog control;

- Handling of stray dogs within normal office hours
- Handling of stray dogs outside of normal office hours
- Recovery of kennelling costs from known dog owners who fail to collect their dogs when they are found as strays
- Micro-chipping of dogs
- Investigation of dog fouling reports
- Enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) in relation to Dog Control
- Enforcement of Community Protection Notices (CPN's) in relation to Dog Control
- Dangerous dogs
- Requests for assistance from third parties
- Educational and promotional activities

2.2 This procedure document should also be read in conjunction with specific departmental written instructions and procedures concerning the operation of the dog control service.



3. Handling of Found (stray) dogs



3.1 The council has a web form where reports of found dogs can be reported. This form can be completed at any time.

The form will be forwarded to the Dog Warden/Kennels who will contact the finder in cases of found dogs (strays) and will aim to collect within 2 hours. The hours of operation are 9am – 10pm.

If the report is logged outside of operating hours, the kennels will contact the finder within 2 hours of next opening time (9am).

3.3 The Dog Warden will collect dogs which are secured at the finders' property. Once on site the Dog Warden will assess the situation.

A stray dog is defined as any dog which is roaming free without its owner being present prior to the finder securing the dog.

3.4 The Dog Warden is authorised to detain and seize any stray dog on public land. Where a stray dog is found on private land, the Dog Warden will only detain and seize where the permission of the land owner has been obtained.

3.5 If a dog is found as a stray, the kennels/Dog Warden will check any lost dog reports reported via the Council/web forms and make all reasonable enquiries to find out the identity of its owners, check for implanted microchips, check details on dog tags and talk to persons who reported the stray dog or who are in the immediate vicinity.

While the Council is not obliged to immediately return stray dogs to their owners, in circumstances where;

a) the owners can be easily identified and contacted, and;

b) where the dog has not been reported as a stray before the Dog Warden will attempt to return the stray dog to its owner at the point of it being secured and detained, thus avoiding the necessity to charge a release fee.

Where the above criteria is not met and/or where circumstances make this approach unreasonable or impracticable, the dog will be taken directly to the kennels and registered as a stray dog.

3.6 Where the owner of a stray dog can be identified, and where it hasn't been returned to the owner as per 3.5 above, the owner shall be given notice that their dog has been reported and collected by the Dog Warden as a stray dog. The notice will detail the appropriate release fee which is payable and arrangements needed for them to reclaim their dog.

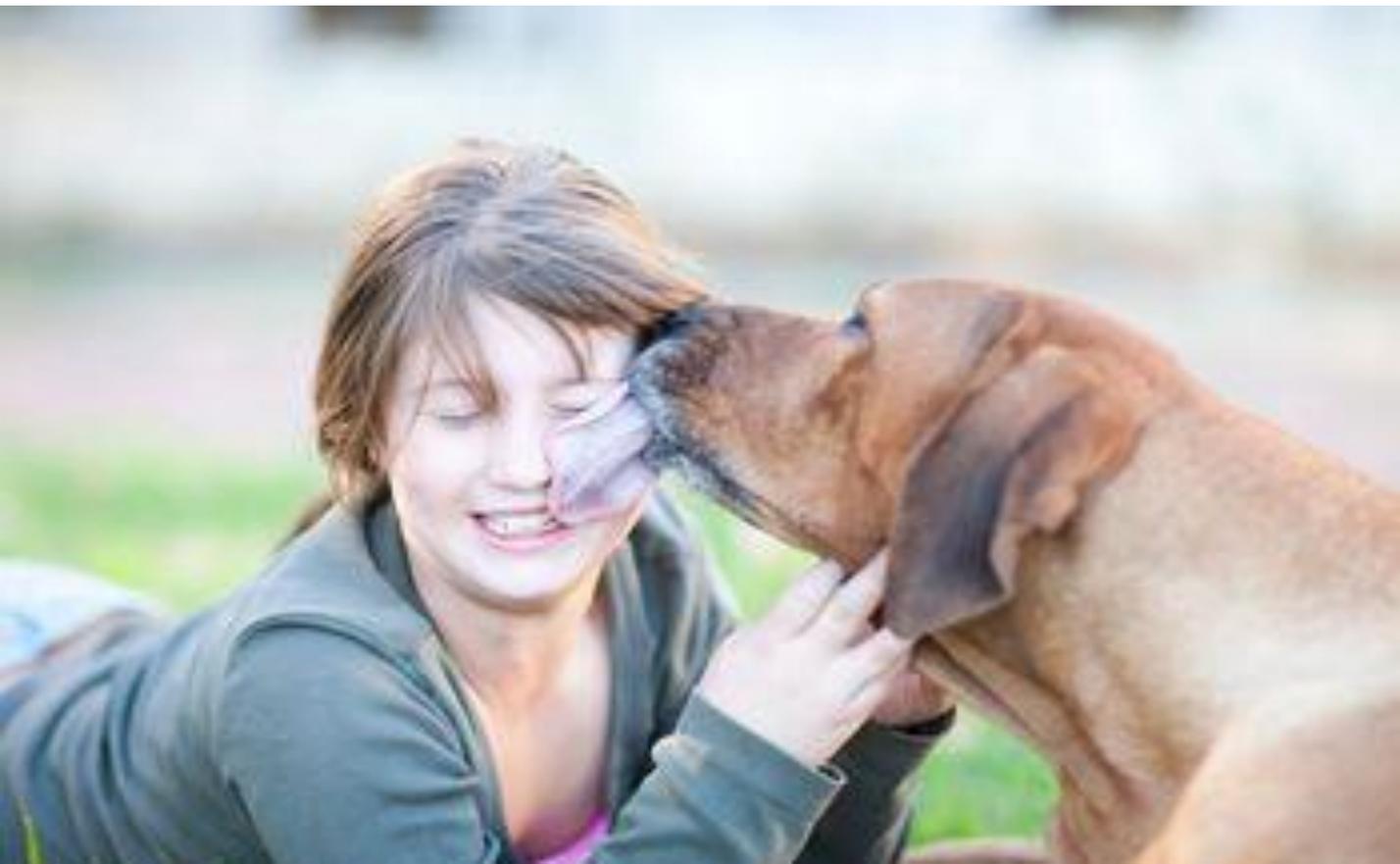
3.7 Stray Dogs seized by the Council are held for seven clear days at the Councils kennelling facility. During that seven day period the owners of a stray dog may come forward and reclaim their dog. To do so they must pay the appropriate costs.

Fine and administration fee

Per day kennelling costs

Found on Charnwood Borough Council website

3.8 Following the seven-day period, stray dogs which are not reclaimed then become the property of the kennels who will attempt to rehome them through the rescue agencies (where appropriate).



4. Handling of Lost dogs



3.1 The council has a web form where reports of lost dogs can be reported. This form can be completed at any time.

The form will be forwarded to the Dog Warden/Kennels who will contact the person reporting the lost dog if they have collected a found dog which matches the description of the lost dog.

Please note: The kennels will not have time to respond to lost dog forms but please rest assured if the dog is found they will be in touch.

4. Handling of Roaming dogs



3.1 The council has a web form where reports of roaming dogs can be reported. This form can be completed at any time.

The form will be forwarded to the Dog Warden/Kennels who will see if they can locate the dog if they have a staff member in the vicinity.

Please note: The kennels will not have time to respond to people reporting roaming dogs and may not be able to find the dog. **If you believe the dog is dangerous you should contact the Police on 999.**

5. Veterinary treatment of stray dogs kept within the Council's care

5.1 The Council will ensure that all stray dogs within its care receive appropriate veterinary care to ensure they are free from pain and kept in a comfortable condition.

5.2 The Council cannot undertake extensive veterinary care of stray dogs beyond section 5.1.

5.3 Where veterinary treatment is administered to a stray dog which is subsequently re-claimed by its owners, the costs for the veterinary treatment will be recovered from the owner.

5.4 No veterinary treatment of stray dogs under the Council's care will be undertaken without the permission of the authorised officer (in excess of the agreed nominated cost).

In all cases the officer above must be notified of any veterinary care given to a stray dog at the earliest opportunity. The Council is not responsible for any veterinary treatments administered to a dog prior to its submission and registration in the Councils Kennelling facility.

6. Recovery of kennelling costs from known dog owners who fail to collect their dogs

6.1 Unfortunately, there are circumstances where the owners of stray dogs are known and make contact with the Council, but yet choose to not re-claim their dogs. This means that the Council is forced to retain the dogs for a full clear seven days and then pass the dog to the rescue agencies.

6.2 The Council is limited in what legal action it can take in these circumstances, however it is not fair or equitable that an owner who effectively abandons their animal in such a way should be allowed to do so without re-course.

6.3 The Council therefore will invoice known owners for the costs incurred in keeping their dog for the whole seven days. This will be done via invoice with appropriate follow up should the invoice not be paid.

7. Micro-chipping of dogs

7.1 The Council actively promotes the micro-chipping of dogs.

7.2 Where the Council seizes a stray dog who is found to be without an implanted micro-chip, a micro-chip will be implanted before the dog is either returned to its owner or before it is re-homed by the kennels. Where the Council incurs costs undertaking such actions, the cost will be recovered from the dog's owners, however subject to availability, some of these micro-chipping services may be undertaken in partnership with external organisations such as the Dogs Trust, and therefore be free of charge.

7.3 The Council promotes responsible dog ownership and holds events in conjunction with external bodies such as the Dogs Trust to provide free micro-chipping and other responsible dog ownership advice.

7.4 The Council recommends owners contact their nominated vet or the Dogs Trust.

7.5 The Council is responsible for enforcing legislation in relation to the microchipping of dogs. Where it is made aware of a dog which is not microchipped, the Council will attempt to contact the owner to resolve the matter. Where adequate actions by the owner cannot be secured, the Council will legally require the dog to be microchipped.

A 21 day notice will be issued to the owner requiring them to:

- Have a microchip implanted in their dog: or
- Update contact and/or owner details on the existing chip.

Failure to comply may result in prosecution.

8. Investigation of dog fouling reports

8.1 Incidents of dog fouling reported to the Council will be recorded on the lagan database system.

An officer from the Street Management Team will investigate the report and take enforcement action as is appropriate for the circumstances.

8.2 Incidents of dog fouling will also be notified to the Street Warden Team who will assist the assigned case officer with patrols of the area and, where applicable, the erection of appropriate dog fouling signage.

8.3 All reported incidents of dog fouling will be collated by the Street Management Team and that information used to ensure Officers are aware of the problem when out on patrol.

8.4 Where applicable, the Council's Environmental Services Department will be notified in order to have dog fouling cleared from public spaces.

To report a dog fouling issue call: 01509 634564

Or use the web form at:

<http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/report>

9. Enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) in relation to dog control

9.1 The Council has a PSPO's in relation to dog control in place within the borough. These orders cover the following issues;

- Requiring owners to clean up after their dogs if they foul in a public space
- Requiring owners to put dogs on leads in specified cemeteries and burial grounds
- Prohibiting dogs from entering enclosed children's play areas.

9.2 These orders were implemented following a public consultation process and look to address the main issues affecting the public regarding irresponsible dog ownership.

9.3 The orders are in place for a 3 year period after which they are subject to review. At that stage each order will be reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate.

Additionally, consideration will be given to any additional orders or revisions of existing orders which may be required at that time.

9.4 At the review stage, those orders (existing and any new) will be reviewed according to the process specified in the appropriate legislation.

Our orders can be seen in full on the website:

<http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/dogcontrol>

10. Enforcement of Community Protection Notices (CPN's) in relation to dog control

10.1 The Council can issue Community Protection notices to deal with owners who have a dog which is

- (i) having a detrimental effect, of a persistent or continuing nature, on the quality of life of those in the locality; and
- (ii) the conduct is unreasonable.

A Community Protection Notice imposes any of the following requirements on the individual or body issued with it:

- a)** A requirement to stop doing specified things
- b)** A requirement to do specified things
- c)** A requirement to take reasonable steps to achieve specified results.

They can only be issued if the offender has been given a written warning that the notice will be issued if their conduct does not change and that they have been given enough time to have reasonably made those changes, and yet have chosen not to do so.

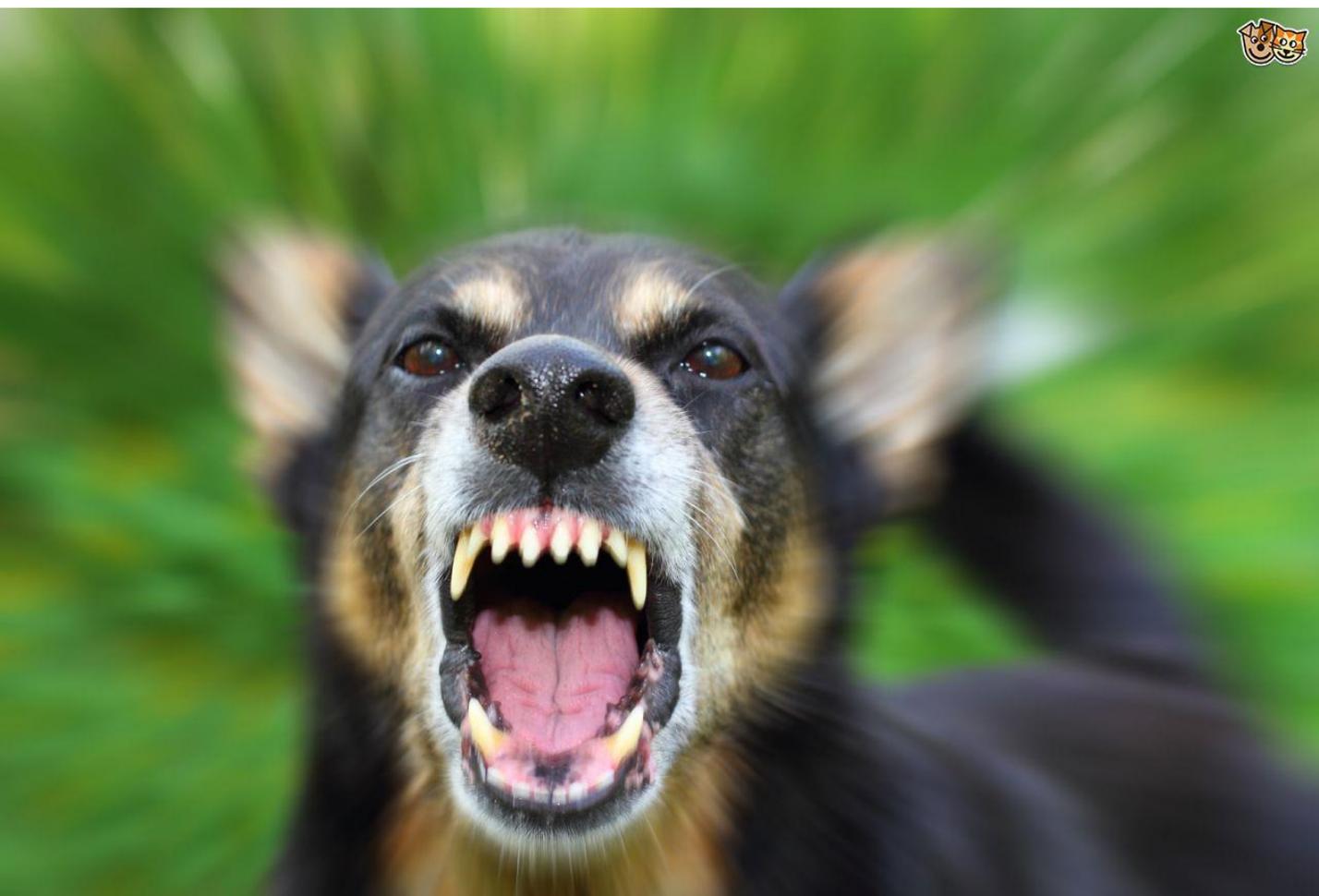
A person issued with a Community Protection Notice who fails to comply with it commits an offence which is punishable by prosecution or a fine.

Examples of conditions which may be imposed:

- Dog must be on a lead in public places
- Dog must wear a muzzle in public
- The owner must prevent escape by the dog
- The householder must secure their boundary to prevent escape.

This list is not exhaustive and each report would be assessed to see if it meets the legal test at section 10.1 and then dealt with on a case for case basis.

11. Dangerous dogs



11.1 Dangerous Dogs are predominately an area which the Police deal with. A memorandum of understanding is in effect between all local authorities and Leicestershire Police which confirms this and commits the Police to taking the lead on such matters.

10.2 The Council's Dog Control Service may where necessary and appropriate support the Police in certain cases.

12. Requests for assistance from 3rd parties

12.1 Requests for assistance from bodies such as housing associations are sometimes received by the Council's Dog Control Service. The Council's Dog Control Service will support and assist where possible, however the Council is not responsible and will not take on any costs in relation to the kennelling of such animals.

12.2 Third Parties or the agencies who request the Council assist with a dog which is not a stray will be informed that while we can provide support, the costs for housing such animals must be met by themselves. Where possible the 3rd party or other agency should be informed that they are responsible for arranging appropriate kennelling themselves and that all costs in relation to kennelling are their responsibility.

13. Educational and promotional Activities

13.1 The Council's Dog Control Service recognises the importance of education and promotion in tackling irresponsible dog ownership issues. The service is committed to undertaking educational and promotional activities to support and compliment the enforcement work undertaken.

13.2 The service has close links with bodies such as the Dogs Trust and RSPCA , and in conjunction with such partners has provided free drop in sessions across the borough to enable residents to have their dogs microchipped. The service will maintain such activities as appropriate.

13.3 The service will look to publicise successful enforcement cases where necessary to act as a deterrent for other potential offenders.

12.4 The service will work with the Communications team to maximise the potential of the use of media such as Facebook, Twitter, press releases, etc. in order to provide key messages to dog owners within the borough.

14. Procedure Review

14.1 To ensure these procedures remain current and up to date it shall be subject to full review and revision every year or following any significant changes to legislation, practice or procedure.



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