

**REPORT OF LEAD LICENSING OFFICER**  
**To: LICENSING COMMITTEE**  
**Subject: ANIMAL LICENSING POLICY**  
**Date: 8 MARCH 2023**

**Reference:**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To present to the Committee the responses to the recent consultation on the introduction of an Animal Licensing Policy.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

At the Licencing Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 members approved the consultation process for the introduction of the Council's first Animal Licensing Policy. The consultation was carried out between 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023. This report provides a summary of the feedback from the consultees.

**2. REPORT**

The Authority has consulted with the following organisations and individuals over an 8 week period.

- Current licensees
- Members of the public via the Council's website
- DEFRA
- Elected members

The following comments have been received.

I would like to object to the proposal that license applicants should send a DBS certificate along with their application on two grounds :

1) The Council cannot be sure that the certificate is genuine unless the Council itself applies for the certificate. The people who would fail the certificate are the very ones who would know how to forge one or circumvent the process. If a certificate comes from outside the Council must somehow check that it is valid or else there is no point in making people send one. It would be a more sensible use of Council time to apply for the certificate itself, know the certificate is genuine and not leave itself open to fraud, or the accusation of fraud.

2) The cost of the License plus vet. inspections is already prohibitive. Under this new proposal an individual must pay £35 extra to get a certificate and another £35 for every employee or volunteer who takes part in their business. This is huge! For us it will nearly double the cost of the license. In contrast the Council can get certificates for free. Therefore it is most unfair to expect applicants to get DBS certificates themselves.

Thanks for sending on your letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2023 about this Policy update, as I am also a licensed SIA Security Consultant I Yearly renew my DBS/CRB Check. So for myself I have no problem with this being added to part of the Animal Licensing Policy but would point out this will also add another cost to the current licensing fees am also unsure if adding this new policy would help as the current Licensing team can see how a Licence holder is with the animals in their care at anytime they may visit their locations, If a Kennel owner & Manager along with any staff have all the correct Certificates/Qualifications and have all the correct paperwork/ Kennel Policies,



I would think the TDC Animal Licensing team member would be able to see and feel how any kennel is being run, in turn not just ticks in the box meaning it's more a three way thing between Kennel Owner, Torridge Licensing team & DEFRA.

That was heavy reading and very long.

I would like to raise point 9.5 - it says the council will give 3 months notice for renewal of a license and that it must be submitted at least 10 weeks before the license expires this only gives the license holder about 2 weeks and possibly allowing for a holiday may not give sufficient notice and would suggest license application be submitted no less than 8 weeks before it expires. Applications may also be held up while waiting for the DPS certificate.

As I have said before it is still wrong that an excellent standard establishment is only graded at 3\* when another establishment can be given 4\* and have issues that need to be dealt with, we are fortunate that unlike human hotels the vast majority of our customer do not look at the star rating and many do not even realise we have to be licensed.

We had a discussion at our riding stables, and we concluded that anyone keeping livestock that needs a license should be DBS checked for any animal cruelty charges etc. Plus people running riding schools, if they are not affiliated to the ABRS or BHS (which insist on DBS checks on instructors/coaches) should also be checked for child protection purposes.

I am writing to you with regards to the above letter I received from you recently & to give my thoughts on the issue.

I have a boarding licence with Torridge Council for boarding dogs whilst their families go on holiday & I think it is a good idea that you will be asking new or renewal, or even current holders to have a valid DBS.

I feel, since starting this business recently, I have heard from clients that have had meetings with other boarders that don't seem to have a licence from what they can gather and are not following any guidelines that would be required for boarding dogs. This does concern me I must admit.

The final draft policy is included at Appendix B with changes highlighted in red.

### **3. IMPLICATIONS**

#### Legal Implications

There is no legal requirement to have a policy in place, however, such a policy does provide guidance and good practice for applicants, the Authority, members of the public and, ultimately in the case of enforcement action, guidance for the courts.

#### Financial Implications

None

#### Human Resources Implications

None

#### Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

None

#### Equality/Diversity

None



#### Risk Management

There are possible legal, reputational and financial risks if the Council does not maintain a Policy which reflects current legislation and the latest guidance.

#### Compliance with Policies and Strategies

All regulatory activity is carried out in accordance with current policy and procedures.

#### Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

None

#### Climate Change

None

#### Ward Member and Lead Member Views

Councillor McKenzie, Chair, has been consulted

### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The Policy sets out the Authority's approach to the regulation of animal licensing in the Torridge area and the standards it will apply. It is good practice to have a robust policy to provide guidance and good practice to applicants, the Authority's officers, councillors and members of the public.

### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members approve the policy.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Consultations:                      Date of Consultation – As detailed in report

Contact Officer: Chris Parkhouse

Background Papers: Licensing files

