



## EQUALITY/COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**ROCHDALE**  
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH  
**COUNCIL**

**1. What is the name of the savings proposal?**

PR103 Savings in Public Protection

**2. Which Service is responsible for this proposal?**

Planning and Regulation Service

**3. Does this proposal impact on other services or other service savings proposals and if so, have you discussed this proposal with the Service Directors from those other services?**

This does not impact on other Council Services

**4. Please state the name of the officer leading the EIA**

**5. Who has been involved in undertaking this assessment e.g. list the stakeholder groups which have been involved?**

This assessment is not complete and engagement with relevant groups has yet to be undertaken.  
Key Stakeholder groups will be  
RSPA  
Police  
Manchester Dogs Home  
Food Standards Agency  
Public Health Service  
Consumer Direct

**6. What is the scope of this assessment?**

- -what is included in this assessment
- -does this proposal link to any other proposals (i.e. previous or current). If so, please state

The context to the decision is that complaints from residents about stray dogs are falling and also there is a dramatic fall off in the number of owners collecting dogs from the home when they are picked up from the street. The cost of the service is increasing as a result of loss of income from the collection of dogs at a time when demand is also falling.  
Whilst the Stray Dog Service is statutory it is felt that a telephone advisory service meets our statutory

requirements.

There are no identified impacts on other services.

Consideration has been given to the risk of increased dog attacks from strays but these are at best infrequent and no records exist of such attacks.

2. Reduction of our service dealing with Contaminated Land. This team will have a retained expertise and the service does not cease. If demands exceed retained provision additional consultancy support can be accessed. We will be able to respond to development proposals and to investigate concerns about contaminated site but will reduce our proactive capacity to remediate sites.

3. Reduced Trading Standards activity. Again there is a retained function within Public Protection and the service does not cease.

4 Reduced food inspection programme. This relates only to the external provision of a service dealing with low risk premises and all inspections of medium and high risk premises remain. The proposal is to remove low risk inspections whilst retaining a full service for medium and high risk.

It is therefore considered that the retained services for elements 2,3, and 4 will ensure that residents receive a full service albeit at slightly reduced standards.

**7 a).What does the function currently do?**

**b).Describe the needs which this service meets?**

The service responds to reports of stray dogs on the streets and also to calls from owners about lost dogs. In the latter case owners can be told if a dog has been picked up answering the description and where it has been sent.

The three other strands will see a reduced service but will see a basic service maintained.

These are:

Contaminated land is a service which maintains records of contaminated sites across the Borough (200 in total) ; responds to consultations about development proposals and delivers a programme of site assessment and treatment. The changes will remove the latter function but retain the first two.

The Food safety proposal is to end a contract with an external provider of assessments of low risk premises. There is no proposal to remove our internal capability which is focussed on medium and high risk premises and we will retain the capacity to investigate complaints about low risk premises and to take necessary action.

The final proposal is to reduce capacity within our neighbourhood team. This team deals with community issues and is a team of four. The remaining three staff will continue to deliver a service supported by managers who have undertaken this work and much of our existing capacity is retained.

**8. What changes do you propose to make?**

The Service will continue to offer advice and contact points within the voluntary sector but will not offer the collection and temporary homing of strays. This will remain with the voluntary sector as per the current position albeit current practice has seen the costs met by the Council with re-imburement from pet owners collecting animals. As this has dramatically declined the voluntary sector will recoup its costs from the onward sale of abandoned animals.

The other elements (i.e. Contaminated Land, Trading Standards and Food Inspection ) affected are reductions in the standards of service which will have some impact but will not remove the principal of the service.

**9. Who are the key stakeholders who may be affected by the changes proposed?**

Police  
RSPCA  
Manchester Dogs Home  
Local residents' Associations in areas where problem has been most evident  
Consumer Direct  
Food Standards Agency  
Public Health Service

## **10. What impact will this proposal have on all the protected groups**

### **Race Equality**

There is no evidence of a differential problem across ethnic groups in relation to the Stray Dogs Service. In respect of the other 3 elements of the proposal there will be a retained service. With regard to reducing trading standards activity we will be monitoring loan sharking and counterfeiting impacts.

### **Disabled People**

There is no evidence that disabled people will be adversely affected by these proposals over other groups

### **Carers**

We do not see any particular impact on Carers from these proposals as they are universal services accessible to all and there is no particular provision for this group in food inspections, contaminated land, counterfeiting or stray dogs.

### **Gender**

There are no gender differential issues arising from these proposals as they have the same issues as above.

### **Older and Younger People**

Problems with stray dogs are at their lowest within these age groups. There are potential concerns about counterfeiting amongst younger people and loan sharking amongst older persons which will be addressed as the services are retained.

### **People who are Socio-Economically Disadvantaged**

The problems of stray dogs are most severe in areas of deprivation and there is a probable disproportionate impact on these areas as the problem of stray dogs worsens. Other elements of this proposal may also have an impact on areas of deprivation which is higher than

elsewhere but in these cases we are not ceasing the service and we will respond to issues of concern. It will be necessary to examine alternative methods of for example undertaking promotional activity to ensure a minimum impact on external clients and this will form part of the mitigation strategy. We will seek to prioritise work on counterfeiting in these areas and will continue to monitor food premises. There is the likelihood of contaminated sites existing in these areas and we will retain our investigatory and development assessment capability.

#### **Religion or Belief**

We do not see any issues of religion or belief arising from these proposals but are conscious of the implications of specialist food preparation requirements and provision which will be prioritised within our retained resource.

#### **Sexual Orientation**

There are no issues of sexual orientation arising from any of the services included within this proposal. We do not see any specific usage by this group and our services are universal.

#### **Gender Reassignment**

This is not an area where we can see any differential impact from the proposals for reducing contaminated land, trading standards or food inspections. Similarly no differential impact can be seen for the removal of the Stray Dogs Service.

#### **Pregnant Women or Those on Maternity Leave or Those who have given Birth in the Previous 26 weeks**

This is not a specific issue affected by this proposal to delete the Stray Dogs Service but we have considered whether there is a differential risk from a reduced contaminated land and food standards regime on pregnant women and do not believe there is a significant added risk.

#### **Marriage or Civil Partnership**

There is no evidence of this having an impact from these proposals. The retention of services for contaminated land, food inspections and trading standards will ensure that there is adequate statutory cover. The Stray Dogs Service has no differential impact in this area.

#### **11. What are the main conclusions arising from this analysis?**

With regard to the retained services we are confident that we will maintain an adequate base service and through the adoption of new approaches can maintain services around prevention and inspection. The main conclusion reached is that the need for the Stray Dog Collection Service is reducing and owners are less likely to collect dogs if picked up. Complaints about stray dogs are not significant and there have been no recorded incidents of stray dogs attacking individuals. It is therefore considered that the loss of this service will have a very limited effect.

**12. What measures do you propose to put in place to mitigate any adverse impacts?**

Possible Adverse Impact	Mitigation Measure
There will continue to be stray dogs	An advisory service will be maintained by the Council. Other voluntary and statutory agencies will remain.
Reduced preventative work in relation to Trading Standards and Food Safety..	We will be retaining a service in these areas but will undertake a review of our activities to ensure that high priority activities are maintained and that new approaches are made to low risk activities to ensure key functions such as preventative work are maintained.
Reduced level of Service on Low Risk Inspection of Premises	This will be mitigated by the retention in house of the inspection of high and medium risk premises. We will retain a full assessment and investigation service on low risk premises where complaints or concerns are received.

**What evidence do you have which demonstrates that these measures will be effective?**

We will closely monitor service delivery and accept that in some areas e.g. Contaminated Land, the proactive work will reduce considerably whilst maintaining a reactive and regulatory service. The bulk of the current service on stray dogs within the Borough is delivered by the remaining agencies. The reduced income shows a lack of demand from residents for the service provided. (Current year target is £11,000, current forecast is under £3000.)

**13. Please attach a copy of your consultation action plan.**

**Please briefly outline below who will be consulted and which consultation methods will be used.**

A consultation plan is being prepared but will comprise the following elements:

Consultation will take place with key Statutory Agencies such as Consumer Direct, and Food Standards Agency.

Consultation on stray dogs will be undertaken with key statutory and voluntary agencies

- Police
- RSPCA
- PDSA

We will also engage with local community associations in the areas considered to have the greatest issues around stray dogs. These include areas such as Kirkholt, Langley, Darn Hill and Back o Moss.

Initial contact will be by letter with the offer of meetings with key agencies and community groups. A meeting will be held with Manchester Dogs Home which currently receives our stray dogs and operates our collection service.

**14. Please complete the mitigation action plan below.**

***Mitigation Action Plan***

This plan will be further developed once the formal consultation has been completed. The findings of the consultation will inform our mitigation actions.

Mitigation Measure	Action	Responsible Officer	End Date	Status
Retained Advisory Service	Staff in Public Protection will remain able to deal with telephone enquiries and offer contact points for action.		Continuous	In Operation
Visiting Service	Field Officers in Public Protection will remain available to visit areas when complaints are made and to offer practical solutions and further contacts		Continuous	In Operation
Monitoring	Staff in Public Protection will monitor the problem and if there is evidence of worsening then the Service will consider what mitigating actions may be required.		Continuous	In Operation

**15. Equality impact analysis sign off by the Director of Service, and an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Representative**

Name	Position	Date
		3.9.12
		4.9.12