

AGENDA ITEM No. 17(b)

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	Subject: Consultation Document Scottish Office Consultation - Report by the Advisory Group on Rabies
From: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
Date: 10th November, 1998. Ref: GB/MC	

PROPOSED DECISION

To send a response to the Scottish Office as per the Recommendation contained in this Report.

REPORT

The Government set up an Advisory Group on Quarantine to look at alternatives to the current system. That Group's Report has now been published and is the subject of a consultation exercise by the Scottish Office.

The alternative system proposed is that a new system based on microchip identification of cats and dogs, vaccination against rabies with blood testing to check the vaccine has proved effective together with official health certification indicating that the animal has been treated against certain parasites prior to entry be introduced over a three year period.

The Scottish Office would like a response to the undernoted questions:-

- (a) Does the proposed new system offer adequate safeguards against the importation of rabies into the UK?
- (b) How would pet owners be affected by the proposed new system?
- (c) What should happen to those animals arriving at a British port whose microchip cannot be read or whose paperwork is not in order?
- (d) What views do you have on the proposed timescale for implementation of up to 3 years?
- (e) What views do you have on the proposals for animals other than cats and dogs, where non carnivores from European countries and rabies free islands would no longer be subject to quarantine, carnivores would be subject to 6 months quarantine, and bats would be subject to quarantine for life?
- (f) Whether animals admitted to the UK under the new arrangements should be treated against certain tapeworm and tick infestations not currently found in the UK (and notably *Echinococcus multilocularis* and *Rhipicephalus sanguineus*)?

The Department after consideration of the above would recommend that the following responses to each question be sent in reply:-

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- a) The proposals appear to be adequate in a perfect world but there is no indication of the steps to be taken other than stop and search powers to avoid deliberate falsification or fraud within the system. There will also be an increased cost to the public of monitoring the new scheme, the setting up of the computer database and the construction/adaption of "separate entry lanes" at ports of entry.
- (b) Pet owners wishing to bring animals into the country will obviously be pleased with the proposals and the savings in quarantine costs. However the vast majority of pet owners who will not have the need to avail themselves of these new rules may be somewhat apprehensive about the disease coming into the UK.
- (c) The existing quarantine rules should apply.
- (d) The timescale is not as important as ensuring that the new system will work and cannot be abused.
- (e) While the Report's recommendation with regard to non-carnivores is noted and that there is no history of such animals being responsible for initiating rabies, the new relaxation should only apply to cats and dogs where the safeguards of the new system can be introduced. All other animals should be subject to the existing quarantine rules at least until the new regime is proven, if put in place.
- (f) All animals admitted to the UK should be treated against the tapeworm and tick infestations noted in the question even if not currently found in the UK.

RECOMMENDATION

To send to the Scottish Office the above response contained at (a) to (f) above.

M. Kenzie L. Hutton