

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Correspondence Report</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Environmental Services Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> May 2024</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>To be discussed In Committee</b>	<b>No</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Leader and Champion
Outcome	Establish key relationships with Government, agencies and potential strategic partners
Lead Officer	Director of Environmental Services

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Legal Considerations</b>	
Input of Legal Services Required	<b>NO</b>
Legal Opinion Obtained	<b>NO</b>

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	<del>Yes/No</del> N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	<del>Yes/No</del> N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	<del>Yes/No</del> N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	<del>Yes/No</del> N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	<del>Yes/No</del> N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	<del>Yes/No</del> N/A	Date:

## **1.0 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

**2.0** The following correspondence has been received:

**2.1 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024** (copy attached)

### **Summary**

#### **Re. Animal Welfare Funding for Councils**

Correspondence from DAERA dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 in response to a letter sent by Fermanagh & Omagh District Council regarding funding for the Council delivered animal welfare enforcement service.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended** that the Environmental Services Committee consider the correspondence.

**From the Office of the  
Minister of Agriculture,  
Environment and Rural Affairs**



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil  
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment  
an' Kintra Matthers**

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

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Telephone: 028 9052 4140  
Email: [REDACTED]@daera-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: COR-1112-2024

Date: 22 April 2024

Dear Alison

### **Animal Welfare Funding for Councils**

Thank you for your letter, received on 15 March 2024, asking that I take a decision to restore funding for the council delivered animal welfare enforcement service, in advance of the Judicial Review hearing on this matter, which is set for May 2024.

The Welfare of Animals Act 2011 clearly places upon local councils the statutory obligation to deliver the non-farmed animal welfare enforcement service. The Department is conscious that while it was able to provide financial support to councils to assist them in advancing their legal obligations in previous years, the responsibility for funding the service still remains with local councils.

As you are aware, in the face of a difficult budgetary settlement, the Department took a number of decisions to help ensure we could discharge our own statutory obligations and live within our budget allocation. This meant that there was no funding available to local councils to support this service (which is not a DAERA responsibility) for the last financial year.

This remains the position of the Department and in the absence of any additional future funding from the Northern Ireland Executive to support you in delivering this service I do not anticipate, at this juncture, that finance will be available in future years.

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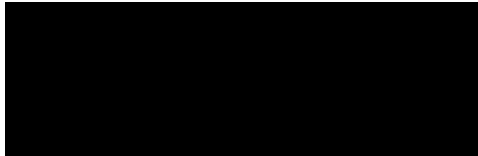
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Nevertheless, I am conscious that my Permanent Secretary did give an assurance that, should the budgetary position change for 2023/24, the Department would consider if any support could be provided to councils for that financial year.

Following an additional allocation of Resource DEL to my Department by the Executive in February 2024 I have accordingly decided that a one-off allocation of £625k is now made available as a contribution towards costs incurred for delivery of the non-farmed animal welfare enforcement service for 2023/24.

Yours sincerely



**ANDREW MUIR MLA**  
**Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs**