

POLICY FOR THE RE-HOMING OF ANIMALS THAT COME WITHIN COUNCIL CARE	7th February 2017
TO: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
FOR DECISION	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Innovation and Transformation
Outcome	To agree a Policy for the re-homing of animals that come within Council care
Lead Officer	Bryan Edgar
Cost: (If applicable)	Estimated £2,500

Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is the enforcing authority for the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended and the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. To date there has been no formal policy in any of the legacy Council areas with respect to this matter. The draft policy sets out the principles and approach for Council and any appointed service provider to follow so as to provide an effective and fair service and to ensure consistency. It will apply to all animals seized by Council officers or surrendered by owners either under the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 or the Welfare of Animals (Northern Ireland) Act 2011.

The Policy has been prepared following consideration of current best practice and contains definitions from relevant legislation. Anyone wishing to re-home an animal from Council care will be required to choose the animal in person as is currently the case. However, to ensure that animals are re-homed appropriately a home visit will be carried out by the service provider and an assessment made to ensure that the potential owner and the animal are suitable for each other. Potential owners living in rented accommodation will require permission from the landlord to keep an animal. Information will be given regarding good animal husbandry and responsible ownership. Any dogs re-homed by Council or our service provider will only be done so where a licence application has been completed and the appropriate fees paid. A copy of the draft policy has been included at Appendix II to this report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council adopt the Animal Re-Homing Policy as drafted.



**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

ANIMAL RE-HOMING POLICY

DRAFT

Policy Number	
Version Number	1
Author	BE

Date of Screening of Policy	
EQIA Recommended?	YES/NO
Date Adopted by Council	
Date Policy Revised	

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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ANIMAL RE-HOMING POLICY

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1. Introduction

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is the enforcing authority for The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended and the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. This enforcement role has been delegated to the staff of the Environmental Services Directorate.

The following policy helps us to make sure that every stray, unwanted or rescued animal that comes into the care of the Council where possible, finds a home where they can live a happy, healthy life. Our rehoming process aims to make sure animals and owners are well matched.

2. Policy Statement

This policy sets out the principles and approach which the Council's Health & Built Environment section its officers and service providers will follow so as to provide an effective and fair service, and to ensure consistent service delivery. It is written for the guidance of the Council and its officer's and will be made available to any members of the public who enquire about our policies and procedures. It applies to all dogs seized by Council officers or surrendered by owners under either the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended or the Welfare of Animals (Northern Ireland) Act 2011.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Mayor
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chief Executive
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

3. **Accountability and Responsibilities**

The Council and its officers fully recognise that they are accountable to the public for their actions. Consequently policies and standards have been put in place against which the Council's actions can be judged and procedures exist for dealing with comments and handling complaints.

4. **Associated Guidance**

In addition to this policy, officers will also refer to any centrally issued guidance or Codes of Practice in reaching decisions on re-homing of animals including that issued by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

5. **Definitions**

As a result of a number of pieces of legislation enforced by Council, animals will come into the care of council for a number of reasons, whether that be by way of a dog straying, the finding of unaccompanied dog or as a result of the investigation of a complaint under either the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 or the Welfare of Animals Act 2011.

The following definitions are deemed relevant.

Stray Dog

Article 22 (a) The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended.

a dog—

(a) which is—

(i) off land owned or occupied by the keeper of the dog and, if the keeper of the dog is a person other than its owner, off land owned or occupied by its owner also; or

(ii) off other land on which it may be by permission of the owner or occupier of that land; and

(b) which is unaccompanied by any person;

shall be treated as a stray dog.

Seized Dog

Article 23 (1) The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended.

An officer may seize any dog which is a stray dog.

Unaccompanied Dog

Article 24 The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended.

Any person who finds a dog—

(a) which is—

(i) off land owned or occupied by the keeper of the dog and, if the keeper of the dog is a person other than its owner, off land owned or occupied by its owner also; or

(ii) off other land on which it may be by permission of the owner or occupier of that land; and

(b) which appears to him to be unaccompanied by any other person;

may detain the dog.

(2) Where a person detains a dog under paragraph (1), he shall, within 24 hours of the finding, give notice to a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary at the nearest police station or to the district council for the district in which he resides.

(3) Where notice of a finding is given to a district council whether under paragraph (2) or by a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, an officer shall make arrangements for the collection of the dog from the person detaining it under paragraph (1) and paragraphs (2) to (8) of Article 23 shall apply to any dog collected under this paragraph as they apply to a dog seized under paragraph (1) of that Article.

Unwanted Dog

Article 48 The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended.

(1) A district council may, at the request of the owner of an unwanted dog or his personal representative, arrange for the collection, and disposal, of that dog.

(2) No dog disposed of under this Article shall be given or sold for purposes of animal experimentation.

(See Appendix 1 with respect to a surrendered dog form).

Animal in distress

Article 17 Welfare of Animals Act 2011

(1) If an inspector or a constable reasonably believes that a protected animal is suffering, the inspector or constable may take, or arrange for the taking of, such steps as appear to the inspector or constable to be immediately necessary to alleviate the animal's suffering.

(5) An inspector or a constable may take a protected animal into possession if a veterinary surgeon certifies—

(a) that it is suffering, or

(b) that it is likely to suffer if its circumstances do not change.

(7) The power conferred by subsection (5) includes power to take into possession dependent offspring of an animal taken into possession under that subsection.

(8) Where an animal is taken into possession under subsection (5), an inspector or a constable may—

(a) remove it, or arrange for it to be removed, to a place of safety;

(b) care for it, or arrange for it to be cared for—

(i) on the premises where it was being kept when it was taken into possession, or

(ii) at such other place as the inspector or, as the case may be, the constable thinks fit;

(c) mark it, or arrange for it to be marked, for identification purposes.

Deprivation

Article 32 (1) Welfare of Animals Act 2011

(1) If the person convicted of an offence under any of sections 4, 5, 6(1), (2), (11) and (15), 7, 8(1) and (2), 9, 10(6), 12(6) and 14 is the owner of an animal in relation to which the offence was committed, the court by or before which that person is convicted may, instead of or in addition to dealing with that person in any other way, make an order depriving that person of ownership of the animal and for its disposal.

As a consequence the animals that come into Council possession will become available for re-homing.

6. Re-Homing Applicants

No animal will be rehomed to anyone without identification and proof they are over 18 years old and have not been excluded from keeping an animal. (Article 4 Dogs (NI) Order 1983, Section 33 Welfare of Animals (Northern Ireland) Act 2011).

Potential owners will need to choose an animal in person. The potential owner will make an arrangement to visit the animal holding facility and be accompanied by a re-

homing officer of the Council or our service provider. No animal will be rehomed over the internet, social media or telephone.

No animal will be rehomed to a person if doing so would be illegal or create undue risks to humans or other animals. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will not rehome animals, to those who are likely to use them to hunt live animals or for use as guard dogs.

7. Animals not to be used for experimentation

No animal may be purchased for use in experimentation that requires a Home Office licence. (Art 23(4) and 48(2) Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983).

No animal may be rehomed to countries lacking adequate animal welfare legislation or requiring journeys that compromise their welfare.

8. Prohibition on Sale of Animals

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will not sell an animal at a market or be given as a prize.

9. Home Assessment Visits

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will take all reasonable steps to make sure that any animals that we re-home will have a good quality of life. A home visit will be carried out by our service provider to make sure potential new owners have thought about the implications of owning an animal. Potential owners who live in rented accommodation, will need permission from the landlord to keep an animal. A home visit form will be completed by our service provider as detailed at Appendix 2 for each animal rehomed.

10. Veterinary and Behavioural History

It will not always be possible to provide a veterinary history of animals in our care which are offered for re-homing. However, we will provide information of the behavioural history of the animal while they have been in our care.

11. Neutering of Dogs

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council strongly encourages all potential owners to ensure that all dogs are neutered and vaccinated, as soon as they have taken possession. Appropriate information will be provided on the welfare of animals and the benefits of neutering and veterinary examination and treatment.

12. Licensing of Dogs

Any dogs re-homed by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, will only be done so where a licence application form is completed and the appropriate fees paid. As part of the licensing requirement, all rehomed dogs will be identified by an implanted microchip.

13. Re-homing Puppies

All puppies will be at least eight weeks old before rehoming

14. Accountability & Customer Complaints

The Councils and its officers are accountable to the public for their actions. In the event that the “customer” is dissatisfied with the service provided, there are a number of forms of recourse available as outlined below, which officers will ensure the customer is made aware of. The exact procedure followed in any particular case will depend not only upon the nature of the grievance itself but also the course of action the complainant wishes to pursue.

The Council’s formal complaints procedure will be used to investigate those complaints which relate to dissatisfaction with the service, for example:-

- Failure to follow Council procedure policy or standards;
- Discrimination;
- Failure to respond quickly enough to requests for service and
- Conduct of authorised officers.

15. Public Access to Information

This policy will be made freely available to all members of the public on request.

16. Evaluation and Review Of The Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Environmental Services Directorate at least every two years or as necessary to ensure that it satisfies legal requirements, government policy and our customers’ expectations of the service.

17. Section 75 Equality and Good Relations

Causeway Coast and Glens Council is fully committed to meeting its obligations in relation to Equality and Good Relations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. In this regard this policy will be screened using Section 75 guidelines and will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment if found necessary as a result of the screening process.

18. Contact Details

The Council welcomes comments on this policy and on how we can improve our services. Any issues or queries relating to this policy should be addressed to:

Chief Executive

Telephone: 028 7034 7034

Address: Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Cloonavin, Portstewart Road, Coleraine, BT52 1EY

Email: info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

DRAFT

APPENDIX 1**Article 48 Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended**
SURRENDERED DOG FORM

I: _____

Residing at:

do solemnly and sincerely declare that I am the owner of the dog detailed below, which I now surrender to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, thereby relinquishing all claims. The information that I have provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand and accept that whilst the Council will endeavour to re-home the dog, it may be necessary to have the dog humanely destroyed. I understand that I shall be liable for and do hereby undertake to pay the costs incurred by the Council for the disposal of my dog.

Details of Dog

Breed:			Used to Children	Yes	No
Sex:	Male	Female	Used with other dogs	Yes	No
Name:			Used with Lead	Yes	No
Colour:			House Trained	Yes	No
Age:			Barks a lot	Yes	No
Vaccinated	Yes	No	Aggressive	Yes	No
Friendly	Yes	No	Bites	Yes	No
Licensed	Yes	No	Chews	Yes	No
Used to Car	Yes	No	Neutered	Yes	No
Hyperactive	Yes	No	Worried sheep	Yes	No
Where did the dog sleep					
Preferred Food (Tinned, dry left overs)					
Microchip Number					

Signed: _____

Date _____ Time _____

Animal received by:
_____Reason for surrendering dog:
_____**For Office Use Only**

Council Reference Number	
Shelter Reference Number	
Checked by	
Date	

Appendix 2**Animal Re-Homing Visit Form**

Applicant Information			
Name			
Address			
Town		Post Code	
Email			
Phone		Mobile	

Family & Housing			
No of Adults		No of Children	Ages
Owner/Occupier	Y	N	
Landlord			
Address			
Town		Post Code	
Phone		Mobile	
Written Permission from Landlord to keep pets	Y	N	
Is your household	Active	Noisy	Quiet
			Average

(By providing this information you are allowing Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council a to contact your landlord. Please inform them of this call so they will speak with us)

Welfare Considerations			
Why do you want this type of pet?			
Have you any experience of this type of Pet?			
How much exercise will the pet receive?			
Will the pet be left alone during the day?	Y		N
If Yes, where & How Long?			
Will the pet be kept outside at any time?	Y		N
If Yes, where & How Long?			
Do you have a garden?	Y		N
What is the approximate size? (m2)			
Is the garden secure on all boundaries?	Y		N
What is the height of your wall/fence? (m)			
Where will your pet sleep?			
What will the pet be fed?			
Who will look after the pet while you are on holidays?			
Will the pet be regularly health checked?	Y		N
By whom?			
Does anyone in the family have allergies to animals?	Y		N
Is everyone in the family in agreement to adopt a pet?	Y		N

Welfare Considerations Continued			
Who will be the primary carer for the animal?			
Do you intend to purchase pet insurance?	Y		N
Do you intend to have the pet neutered?	Y		N
How would you cope with behavior issues?			

Other Pets			
What other Pets do you have?	Number		
Type			
Are their vaccinations up to date?	Y		N
Are they spayed or neutered?	Y		N
Have you given away a pet?	Y		N
Have you re-homed a pet?	Y		N
Have you had a pet euthanized?	Y		N
If you answered yes to any of the last 3 questions, please provide details			

Declaration

The above information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge:-

Signed (Applicant) _____ Date _____

For Office Use Only

Council Reference Number	
Shelter Reference Number	
Checked by	
Date	



**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

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- Discrimination;
- Failure to respond quickly enough to requests for service and
- Conduct of authorised officers.

15. Public Access to Information

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16. Evaluation and Review Of The Policy

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Chief Executive

Telephone: 028 7034 7034

Address: Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Cloonavin, Portstewart Road, Coleraine, BT52 1EY

Email: info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

DRAFT

APPENDIX 1**Article 48 Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 as amended**
SURRENDERED DOG FORM

I: _____

Residing at:

do solemnly and sincerely declare that I am the owner of the dog detailed below, which I now surrender to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, thereby relinquishing all claims. The information that I have provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand and accept that whilst the Council will endeavour to re-home the dog, it may be necessary to have the dog humanely destroyed. I understand that I shall be liable for and do hereby undertake to pay the costs incurred by the Council for the disposal of my dog.

Details of Dog

Breed:			Used to Children	Yes	No
Sex:	Male	Female	Used with other dogs	Yes	No
Name:			Used with Lead	Yes	No
Colour:			House Trained	Yes	No
Age:			Barks a lot	Yes	No
Vaccinated	Yes	No	Aggressive	Yes	No
Friendly	Yes	No	Bites	Yes	No
Licensed	Yes	No	Chews	Yes	No
Used to Car	Yes	No	Neutered	Yes	No
Hyperactive	Yes	No	Worried sheep	Yes	No
Where did the dog sleep					
Preferred Food (Tinned, dry left overs)					
Microchip Number					

Signed: _____

Date _____ Time _____

Animal received by:
_____Reason for surrendering dog:
_____**For Office Use Only**

Council Reference Number	
Shelter Reference Number	
Checked by	
Date	

Appendix 2**Animal Re-Homing Visit Form**

Applicant Information			
Name			
Address			
Town		Post Code	
Email			
Phone		Mobile	

Family & Housing			
No of Adults		No of Children	Ages
Owner/Occupier	Y	N	
Landlord			
Address			
Town		Post Code	
Phone		Mobile	
Written Permission from Landlord to keep pets	Y	N	
Is your household	Active	Noisy	Quiet
			Average

(By providing this information you are allowing Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council a to contact your landlord. Please inform them of this call so they will speak with us)

Welfare Considerations			
Why do you want this type of pet?			
Have you any experience of this type of Pet?			
How much exercise will the pet receive?			
Will the pet be left alone during the day?	Y		N
If Yes, where & How Long?			
Will the pet be kept outside at any time?	Y		N
If Yes, where & How Long?			
Do you have a garden?	Y		N
What is the approximate size? (m2)			
Is the garden secure on all boundaries?	Y		N
What is the height of your wall/fence? (m)			
Where will your pet sleep?			
What will the pet be fed?			
Who will look after the pet while you are on holidays?			
Will the pet be regularly health checked?	Y		N
By whom?			
Does anyone in the family have allergies to animals?	Y		N
Is everyone in the family in agreement to adopt a pet?	Y		N

Welfare Considerations Continued			
Who will be the primary carer for the animal?			
Do you intend to purchase pet insurance?	Y		N
Do you intend to have the pet neutered?	Y		N
How would you cope with behavior issues?			

Other Pets			
What other Pets do you have?	Number		
Type			
Are their vaccinations up to date?	Y		N
Are they spayed or neutered?	Y		N
Have you given away a pet?	Y		N
Have you re-homed a pet?	Y		N
Have you had a pet euthanized?	Y		N
If you answered yes to any of the last 3 questions, please provide details			

Declaration

The above information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge:-

Signed (Applicant) _____ Date _____

For Office Use Only

Council Reference Number	
Shelter Reference Number	
Checked by	
Date	