

Appendix 1

Homelessness Temporary Dog Boarding Policy

- 1.1** Portsmouth City Council has agreed to assist homeless persons offered temporary accommodation which does not permit animals, by boarding their dogs at Portsmouth Stray Dog Kennels. The ethos is to temporarily house these dogs until such time that the person in temporary accommodation is offered a permanent home and is able to be reunited with their dog.
- 1.2** The stray dog kennels exist to meet the council's statutory requirement to accept a stray dog and are responsible for the welfare of the animal as defined by The Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 149 and 150. This act and relevant sections require that anyone finding a stray dog hands it over to the local authority. The council has a duty to accept it where practical to go and collect or recover it, and is responsible for the welfare of the animal.
- 1.3** The kennels are often not operating at full capacity and on those occasions, there is the potential for dogs whose owners present as homeless to Housing Options and are offered accommodation, to be offered temporary kennelling where the owner accommodation does not permit dogs.
- 1.4** This service will be provided free of charge to the owner until such time as they are able to find permanent 'dog friendly' accommodation.
- 1.5** All dogs boarding at the kennels through this policy must have up to date and documented vaccinations. If the owner is unable to pay then the kennels will make payment and arrange for the relevant vaccinations to the dog.
- 1.6** There is the potential that a boarded dog could kennel block and prevent Portsmouth from undertaking its statutory stray duty. Therefore stray dogs will always take priority over boarded dogs and if the kennels do not have room, advice about alternative provision will be provided. Should room then become available then with the kennels agreement, the owner can return the dog to the stray dog kennel. Portsmouth City Council will assist to try and find an alternative boarding placement and the charge would come from the current kennel budget.
- 1.7** There will be a weekly review of all dogs in the kennel including strays and those boarded to agree progress and any actions required.

2 Procedure

- 2.1** Housing Options identify temporary accommodation for a homeless person to a property that is unable to accept dogs. If the applicant agrees, housing options will contact the stray dog kennel team to check availability and complete a referral form to arrange for their dog to be admitted to a kennel space.
- 2.2** The owner will bring their dog to the kennel and complete an animal acceptance form to ensure contact details and any issues in relation to the dog is recorded. The owner will be expected to ensure their dog will have the necessary inoculations or make a payment for these to be completed as soon as possible to prevent the spread of disease in the kennel environment. Should the owner not be able to pay for any fees in relation to the above then the kennels would make the necessary arrangements and the cost would be charged to the kennel budget.
- 2.3** Once the dog has been accepted into the kennel it will receive the same care as that provided to other dogs within the kennels and will be fed, watered and have its kennel cleaned daily. The team will monitor the dog's welfare and take appropriate action should veterinary assistance be required.
- 2.4** The owner will be able to visit and remove their dog during usual office opening hours. An appointment must be booked to ensure that staff are able to be available to assist the dog leaving the kennel. The dog must be returned by 4.30 p.m. to ensure that it is able to be given a final feed and bedded down for the evening. The expectation is that the owner will ensure their dog is exercised and only if pre-arranged will a volunteer be asked to walk one of these dogs. A reason for this could be the owner is incapacitated and unable to attend the kennels for a period of time.
- 2.5** It is expected that as soon as the owner is able to secure accommodation that will allow animals, then arrangements are made to end the dog's stay at the kennels and paperwork completed to return the dog back to the owner.
- 2.6** Should there be a period of 7 days without contact by the owner then the kennel reserves the right to treat the dog as a stray and as such could invoke its procedures for managing a stray dog.