



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Health and Environmental Services Committee
Subject:	Dog Identification Tags
Date:	4th March, 2015
Reporting Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health/Lead Operations Officer, ext 3281
Contact Officer:	Sam Skimin, Head of Cleansing Services, ext 5273

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members may recall that the Council, at its meeting on 2nd February, in ratifying the minutes of the Health and Environmental Services Committee, agreed, at the request of Alderman Stoker, that a letter be forwarded to the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development requesting that, in the interest of safety, consideration be given to removing the statutory requirement for a dog to bear the name and contact details of its owner and making micro chipping the sole source of identification.
1.2	A response has now been received from Minister O'Neill, a copy of which is attached. The Minister explains that there is a requirement, under the Dogs (Licensing and Identification) Regulations 2012, for the keeper of a dog for which a licence is required to ensure that the dog wear a collar with the name and address of the keeper inscribed on it or on a plate or badge attached to it. That has been a legislative requirement since 1983 and was subject to a full consultation exercise in the lead up to the Dogs (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2012.
1.3	The Minister points out that DARD officials have provided clarification around the requirement to display the keeper's name and address on a dog's collar and have requested the Council's Dog Warden Service to amend the information which it provides in, for example, City Matters to reflect that there is no additional requirement under the aforementioned Regulations for an owner to display a telephone number.
1.4	The Minister concludes by stating that she has requested DARD officials to consider including the issue raised by Alderman Stoker within the review of dog licence fees which will be undertaken once the revised Local Government structures have bedded in.

2	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p>
3.2	<p>None</p> <p><u>Assets and Other Implications</u></p>
3.3	None

4	Equality Implications
4.1	There are no equality or good relations issues.

5	Recommendation
5.1	The Committee is requested to note the correspondence from the DARD Minister.

6	Decision Tracking
N/A	

7	Document attached
Letter from Minister O'Neill MLA	