

# **ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE**



**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**at 9.00 am**

**in Committee Room "C"**

Councillor R Waller, Cabinet Member responsible for Adult and Public Health will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**  
No items

2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**  
2.1 Pest Control Services – *Head of Public Protection and Housing*

3. **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**  
No items

## **ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder  
12<sup>th</sup> June, 2006



**Report of:** Head of Public Protection & Housing

**Subject:** PEST CONTROL SERVICES

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the current, and possible future expansion of, the pest control service.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report highlights the current pest control services provided by the Council and pressures to provide an improved service.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

Portfolio member is responsible for Environmental Health Services.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Portfolio Holder only.

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

To support Option 2 as set out in the report, subject to identification of adequate resources and include the proposals as part of the budget process for 2007/2008.

**Report of:** Head of Public Protection & Housing

**Subject:** PEST CONTROL SERVICES

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider the current and possible future expansion of the pest control service.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council currently operates a pest control service by employing two fully trained Pest Control Officers. The service deals with a wide range of pests (rodents, fleas, cockroaches and wasps) following requests from both residents and businesses.

**3. ISSUES**

- 3.1 The demand for services increases year on year and there has been a 30% increase in service requests since 2001/2002 making it increasingly difficult to meet expectations in response times.
- 3.2 There has also been an increase in the number of enquiries to control other pests such as feral pigeons and gulls. Complaints relate to public health nuisance from droppings, hazardous walking surfaces, the blocking of rainwater drainage systems and insect infestations. There has also been increased concern in attacks from gulls which become aggressive in the protection of eggs and rearing young. Given the current limited staffing and financial resources, it is not possible to provide effective services to minimise concerns arising from such birds.
- 3.3 Any bird control service would require consideration of obtaining a DEFRA licence to kill or trap birds and would undoubtedly result in some adverse reactions from the public and local environmental groups. A DEFRA licence would also require the authority to demonstrate control of the pigeons and gulls is necessary to preserve public health or public safety. This would normally involve a survey being undertaken in the spring or early summer to establish the current gull and pigeon population as well as the taking of swabs to establish the presence of

certain bacteria, viruses or other pathogens which could be prejudicial to human health. It should also be noted that experience of other authorities who have embarked on bird control measures suggests little benefit unless controls are enforced over a period of several years.

#### **4. OPTIONS**

##### **4.1 Option 1**

To continue with the current level of pest control service and provide advise only (not control or treatment) to customers on feral bird control.

##### **4.2 Option 2**

To enhance the current level of service by consideration of appointing a third qualified pest control operator or outsourcing additional services from external contractors. Any additional resources could be offset to some extent by consideration of establishing business contracts with private companies to undertake pest control services. A recent questionnaire survey in the town highlighted interest from 70 businesses out of 221 surveyed, in utilising a Council inspection and pest control treatment service. Any increased pest control service would involve consideration of a feral bird control service and a suitable ornithological survey which is expected to cost up to £3,000.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 To support Option 2 above, subject to identification of adequate resources and include the proposals as part of the budget process for 2007/2008.