

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL
Report by Executive Director of Corporate Services
Corporate & Efficient Governance Committee: 22 June 2011

Subject: Pest Control Policy

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval of a revised policy to extend the range of pest control services provided by the Environmental Health Section.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1948 to take such steps as necessary to secure so far as is reasonably practicable that its district is free from rats and mice including;
- i. Carrying out inspections,
 - ii. Destroying rats and mice on premises which the local authority occupies and keeping the premises free from rats and mice,
 - iii. Enforcing duties on owners and occupiers of land to ensure that their land is free from rats and mice.
- 2.2 The Council has further enforcement powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to take action against individuals in respect of any insect infestations emanating from premises which are prejudicial to health or a nuisance.
- 2.3 The service was historically extended beyond the statutory duty to include treatments for certain household insect pests of public health significance.
- 2.4 The Environmental Protection & Leisure Services Committee approved a pest control policy on 5 June 1996 and some charges were introduced
- 2.5 The Corporate & Efficient Governance Committee approved a revised charging scheme on 26 March 2008 in respect of pest control services provided in line with the policy.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 The introduction of revised charges in 2008 and subsequent increases has resulted in a decrease in the number of requests dealt with by the Pest Control Service. This drop in requests has enabled expansion of services to all other council owned properties such as schools, halls etc. This work was previously outsourced to the private sector.
- 3.2 In order to provide a more comprehensive service and generate further income it is recommended that the pest control policy is extended to include additional pests previously excluded for treatments e.g. ants, birds, pigeons, gulls ,squirrels etc . (Appendix 1)
- 3.3 The service still aims to have discretion over what services it provides in line with the exigencies of the service however the main aim will always be to treat those pests of greater public health significance i.e. rats, mice, bed bugs, cockroaches, wasps.

4.0 People Implications

- 4.1 The pest control service currently employs two full time officers .

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Additional costs created by offering an expanded service are expected to be covered by the income generated.

6.0 Risk Analysis

- 6.1 Failure to expand the service may not sustain a desired cost neutral pest control service.

7.0 Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1 No significant issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of this report

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1 Committee is asked to approve the revised Pest Control Policy.

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Date: 16 May 2011

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Appendix: Proposed Pest Control Policy

Background Papers: Environmental & Leisure Services Committee 5 June 1996
Corporate & Efficient Governance Committee: 26 March 2008
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1948

Wards Affected: All

Appendix 1. Pest Control Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is concerned with the eradication of rats, mice and other pests such as wasps, fleas and cockroaches as well as disinfection of blood spill/body fluids within domestic/commercial properties. Services in respect of bird control (gull egg replacement and pigeons) and squirrels will also be considered. It is well documented that rats can be infected with a wide range of pathogens which are causative agents of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, Weil's disease and listeriosis. Rats can also cause damage to electrical cables, gas and water pipes by gnawing on them which has been known to cause fires and flooding in properties. Mice carry a wide range of food-borne pathogens and can spread these on work surfaces as they move in search of food. Many insects carry disease as well. Cockroaches for example carry a wide range of disease causing organisms and have been implicated in the cause and the spread of allergies and asthma.
- 1.2 The Council operates a pest control service which is managed within the Environmental Health Section . The service is delivered by two Pest Control Officers and a Dog Warden/Pest Control Officer.

The pest control store is based at Rosebery Place in Clydebank.

There is a 24/7, 365 days per year online facility for reporting pest control problems at <http://www.wdcweb.info/site/request-an-online-service/>

All telephone requests for pest control services are handled by the Customer Contact Centre at 01389 738282. Direct payments from customers prior to any chargeable treatment being carried out is necessary.

2 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to pest control treatments that are carried out at public and private residential properties, commercial premises (non-food), and other sections of the authority.

The policy applies to any pests which may cause distress and impact on a person's health and wellbeing and for which an appropriate treatment can be readily carried out. .

3 Principles of the Policy

- 3.1 The principle of this policy is to ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty in ensuring that, as far as practicable, its area is kept free from rats and mice. This duty is defined in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 Section 2 which in particular requires the Council to :-
- From time to time carry out such inspections as may be necessary
 - Destroy rats and mice on land of which the Council is the occupier

- Enforce the duties of owners and occupiers of land where infestations may be / are occurring.

In order to meet this duty a pest control service is provided which has been enhanced to cover a wider range of other pest control services e.g. insects, birds, squirrels etc.

Statutory enforcement powers are used to deal with infestations of rats or mice on non-council property or where harbourage may lead to an infestation of rats or mice. This may include the service of formal notices on any private individuals who do not keep their properties free from rats and /or mice.

Further enforcement action may also be taken against private individuals in terms of the nuisance provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in respect of any insect infestations.

3.2 Pest species for which a priority 2 day treatment service will be provided are as follows:-

Rats inside and outside properties
Mice inside a property
Wasps
Bed Bugs
Fleas
Cockroaches
Dermestes sp. beetle
Stored Product Insects

For other pest species a 5 day response will be provided although managers shall have a degree of discretion over which lower priority services are provided e.g. for treating some insects outwith a property. In some cases the customer may be advised to seek the services of a specialist private contractor where we are unable to offer certain services e.g. wood boring beetles. No particular contractor will however be recommended.

Blood spills and body fluid disinfections within premises shall also be treated as high priority.

3.4 Charging for the Service

3.4.1. The charges are detailed at Appendix 1 of the policy and on the Council's website. They are reviewed annually.

3.4.2 The charges applied cover the initial visit and a maximum of 4 revisits.

- 3.4.3 Payment in advance is required before any treatment is carried out and these can be made by debit card over the telephone or on-line using the Councils "Booking a Service On Line" facility on the web page.

Payments can also be made in person at our offices in Rosebery Place, Clydebank, at the Council Offices in Garshake Road or at the main Housing Office in Alexandria.

- 3.4.4 Due to the requirement to pre pay for the service customers will be refunded if a service is subsequently found no longer to be required or in cases where we advise a specialist contractor.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 The Council will meet its statutory obligations by providing a pest control service and will deliver that service to the highest standards of safety and best practice. Where pest species are not specified then the service shall have discretion about whether to undertake any treatment. For instance treatments are not available to eradicate bees, garden insects remote from a house or bats, the latter being a protected species. Bees are regarded as beneficial insects and only treated where they have entered buildings or otherwise pose a significant and unavoidable threat to health. Every effort will be made to contact a beekeeper to recover a swarm and provide assistance to the beekeeper where necessary.

A service for advice and identification of pest species will be provided. Advice will normally be provided over the telephone and be free of charge as will identification if the pest species is brought into the Environmental Health office in Rosebery Place, Clydebank in a suitable sealed container. Alternatively a visit can be arranged to collect any specimens for identification.

- 4.2 Prior to any treatment being carried out or advice given in respect of an insect infestation, a specimen must be positively identified.

5 Responsibility for implementing the Policy

The Environmental Health Section is responsible for implementing and reviewing this policy.

Appendix 1

Activity	Cost exc vat	Vat	Total
Pest Control (Commercial)	£61.50 + material	£12.30	£73.80 + material
Pest Control (Internal Depts)	£61.50 + material	£0.00	£61.50 + material
Pest Control (Reg Social Landlord)	£35.83	£7.17	£43.00
Pest Control (Domestic) – ALL	£35.83	£7.17	£43.00
Pest Control (Housing Block charge)	* £2.75 per household		Billed quarterly