



HILLINGDON
LONDON

OFFICIAL EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE PUBLISHED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Notice is hereby given that the following decision(s) have been made today by Cabinet Members at the London Borough of Hillingdon:

Title of decision	TENDER OF THE STRAY DOG & REHOMING SERVICE CONTRACT
Reference No.	1385
Date of decision	Tuesday 15 April 2025
Call-in expiry date	Thursday 24 April 2025
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee
Relevant Wards	All

Decision made

Cabinet Members making the decision	Cllr Ian Edwards, Leader of the Council Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Community & Environment
Decision	Approved That the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community & Environment: 1. Accepted the tender from SDK Environmental Services Ltd for the provision of a stray dog and rehoming service to the London Borough of Hillingdon for a three-year period from 1st July 2025 to 31st March 2028 at the estimated value of £240,035. 2. Noted the increase in fee payable to reclaim a dog that has been collected as a stray was increased from £70.00 to £150.00 for the 25/26 financial year, approved as part of the 2025/26 budget.
Reason for decision	Following a competitive tender process carried out in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, SDK Environmental Ltd ('SDK') is recommended as the provider of the services. The bid submitted by SDK Environmental Ltd is the most financially advantageous and complies with the Council's specifications and requirements. The stray and lost dog service operates on a 24 hour, seven days per week basis and includes transportation to licensed kennelling facilities, collection of statutory fines and

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	<p>administrative duties (such as taking front line calls and issuing statutory notices on behalf of the Council).</p> <p>With the recent introduction of XL Bullies to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, there has been an increase in the number of these being abandoned which will have an impact on the operational costs of the new contract.</p> <p>Subject to Cabinet Member approval, this recommended contract award will provide the Council with a single supplier with sufficient resources, technical knowledge and experience to deliver stray dog and kennelling services in accordance with statutory requirements. It will also ensure that the Council complies with its statutory duties to provide a dog warden/stray dog service.</p> <p>The previous contract ended on 30 September 2024 and a short-term rolling extension is in place until, and subject to, approval for a new contract.</p> <p>The yearly cost of the contract is estimated to be c.£80,012 which is based upon volumes and care of stray dogs from June 2022 – May 2024. This cost could be offset by approx. £7,178 if fees and charges are increased in line with the recommendations below. This would result in a net monthly cost of approx. £6,070.</p> <p>It should be noted that the proposed charging model submitted by SDK is broadly similar to their current charging model which costs the Council £5,750 per month on average so it is expected that the costs will remain similar. Although, the proposed costs are estimated based on previous volume of activity and will be entirely dependent on variable fees i.e. days in kennels, veterinary care, number of dogs rehomed etc.</p>
<p>Alternative options considered and rejected</p>	<p><i>Option 1 – Cease to provide the service</i> Ending the stray and lost dog collection service in the Borough would mean the Council fails to meet its statutory obligations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (s149), the Control of Dogs Order 1992, and the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.</p> <p><i>Option 2 - Bring the service in-house</i> Officers considered the setting up an in-house operation but determined it was not feasible. Creating this service internally would involve hiring skilled personnel, acquiring equipment, and providing vehicles and kennelling facilities, all of which would require substantial initial investment. Currently, this option is not cost-effective.</p>

	<p><i>Option 3- Reduce hours of operation to 9-5</i></p> <p>Officers also considered reducing the hours of operation to 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, excluding evenings, weekends, and bank holidays. They clarified this alternative option with both bidders to determine any commercial benefit to the Council.</p> <p>Whilst there is no statutory requirement for an out of hours collection service for stray dogs, there is a risk to the reputation of the Council in not providing one, as in declining to do so relies on the goodwill of residents to capture and transport strays to a designated acceptance point. Between August 2024 and December 2024, there were 16 collections between the hours of 07:00am and 15:00pm, and 27 collections between 15:00pm and 07:00am.</p> <p>Switching from a 24-hour service might lead to higher costs, as the Dog Warden will try to reunite the dog with its owner on-site and only take the dog to the kennels if necessary.</p> <p>Whilst both bidders confirmed the call out rate is the same for 'in' and 'out' of hours, providing an 'out of hours' reception point would involve significant adjustments to existing 'out of hours' infrastructure to accommodate the high volume of stray dogs, including additional staffing, enhanced security, and safety measures for employees whereby one of the bidders is unable to provide an 'out of hours' reception point.</p> <p>Reducing the service to business hours may place a burden on residents, expecting them to transport stray dogs themselves. This could discourage prompt action, leaving strays to roam, heightening public safety risks, increasing emergency response costs, and potentially harming the Council's reputation in animal control.</p> <p>In summary, while a 9-to-5 model with a reception point could simplify certain aspects, it introduces significant logistical, financial, and reputational concerns, ultimately making this option impractical.</p>
Classification	Part II - Members' Only and Not for Publication
Link to associated report	That this report be declared as exempt from publication as it involves the disclosure of information in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

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Relevant Officer contact & Directorate	Dan Kennedy - Corporate Director- Homes & Communities
Any interest declared by the Cabinet Member(s) / dispensation granted	N/A

Implementation of decision & scrutiny call-in

[Internal Use only]	
When can this decision be implemented by officers?	<p>Officers can implement Cabinet Member decision in this notice only from the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period which is:</p> <p>5pm on Thursday 24 April 2025</p> <p>However, this is subject to the decision not being called in by Councillors on the relevant Select Committee. Upon receipt of a valid call-in request, Democratic Services will immediately advise the relevant officer(s) and the decision must then be put on hold.</p>
Councillor scrutiny call-in of this decision	<p>Councillors on the relevant Select Committee shown in this notice may request to call-in this decision. The request must be before the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period above.</p> <p>Councillors should use the Scrutiny Call-in App (link below) on their devices to initiate any call-in request. Further advice can be sought from Democratic Services if required:</p> <p>Scrutiny Call-In - Power Apps (secure)</p>

Further information	<p>These decisions, where applicable, have been taken under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>This is the formal notice by the Council of the above executive decision, including links to the reports where applicable.</p> <p>If you would like more information on this decision, please contact Democratic Services on 01895 250636 or email: democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk.</p> <p>Circulation of this decision notice is to a variety of people including Members of the Council, Corporate Directors, Officers, Group Secretariats and the Public. Copies are also placed on the Council's website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Democratic Services London Borough of Hillingdon Civic Centre High Street Uxbridge UB8 1UW</p>
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