

<b>OUTCOME OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>	

<b>Linkage to Corporate Plan</b>	
<b>Strategic Priority</b>	Resilient Healthy & Engaged Communities
<b>Objective</b>	Enforcement of Statutory Duty
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Bryan Edgar
<b>Cost: (If applicable)</b>	N/A

## **WELFARE OF ANIMALS ACT (NI) 2011**

The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members regarding a successful prosecution under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 in relation to a dog kept at a property in the Quickthorn area of Coleraine.

A Coleraine woman was sentenced at Coleraine Magistrates Court on Friday 1st April 2016 after pleading guilty to causing the unnecessary suffering of a Schnauzer type dog for which she was responsible.

The charges were brought under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011. The charges related to findings following an investigation by Animal Welfare Officers regarding offences, which related to an underweight dog whose coat was matted in its own faeces and a bloody discharge at its back end. Upon veterinary examination, it was diagnosed this dog was suffering from a womb infection which was causing a swollen abdomen and a bloody discharge. It was also noted that the dog was underweight and lethargic.

The conditions of the dog were such that to prevent further suffering and pain, upon veterinary advice it was euthanized.

After considering the representations made on behalf of the defendant, Deputy District Judge Hamill acknowledged that she had difficult personal circumstances at the time of the offence and imposed a two year conditional discharge and also ordered her to pay costs of £166.

A proactive press statement was issued on behalf of Council. There was coverage of this successful prosecution by various media outlets including Belfast Telegraph.

Council are charged with the enforcement of the Welfare of Animals Act. Currently Mid and East Antrim Borough Council provide this Service on behalf of Council. This successful prosecution sends a clear message that animal welfare offences will not be tolerated by Council. All associated legal costs will be met through the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development animal welfare grant.

On consideration of the above, it is recommended that Council note this successful prosecution under Section 4 of the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011.