

<b>MEETING</b>	THE COUNCIL
<b>DATE</b>	1 MARCH 2012
<b>TITLE</b>	THE CONTROL OF SEAGULLS
<b>PURPOSE</b>	TO RESPOND TO A NOTICE OF MOTION
<b>REPORT BY</b>	ALED DAVIES - HEAD OF REGULATORY DEPARTMENT
<b>PORTFOLIO LEADER</b>	COUNCILLOR STEPHEN CHURCHMAN, PORTFOLIO LEADER

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 A notice of motion was submitted to the Council on this matter on 20 October, 2011. The Council decided to refer the notice for consideration by the Environment Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 The Head of Regulatory Department's report on The Control of Seagulls was submitted to the Environment Committee on 1 December, 2011.

## **2. CONCLUSIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

- 2.1 The Committee was notified that complaints had been received by businesses and visitors regarding seagulls in Caernarfon and that the Council implements a practical work programme of installing purpose made bins to prevent seagulls from picking food from them and installs signs to warn the public not to feed seagulls.
- 2.2 The success of the programme is monitored as part of the assessments undertaken of the condition of the streets and also by monitoring the volume of complaints received in relation to cleanliness. Work is also afoot to emphasise to businesses the importance of encouraging customers not to feed seagulls and to clean tables regularly.
- 2.3 It was heard how seagulls are protected under legislation and that this restricts what the Council is able to do to take steps to control them.
- 2.4 The Committee considered potential measures to control seagulls and it was noted that the most effective measure for controlling them in towns is to reduce the amount of food available to them by:
- Encouraging people not to feed the birds;
  - Reminding the public and businesses not to overload their bins;
  - Ensuring that food waste is left out in a suitable receptacle using a suitable method.

- 2.5 The Committee considered potential action such as removal of eggs for nests and oiling eggs. Such actions are generally fraught with legal, resource and health and safety issues. Evidence demonstrates that the effect of such actions is to create a localised dip in seagull population whilst the practice is carried out. The Committee considered a short term solution to be ineffective.
- 2.6 It was noted that there was no statutory duty for the Council to control the seagull numbers, however the Council could influence the situation by considering the matter when shaping and implementing its work programmes, especially in relation to Street Care and waste collection.
- 2.7 The Committee considered what the Council is currently doing, and what else was done in addition by a very small number of councils to control seagulls. The options available to the authority were considered further, along with the financial, staffing and legal implications of implementing those options.
- 2.8 It was noted that the financial implications of extending the current provision was substantial.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

- 3.1 The Committee acknowledged that seagulls occasionally cause a nuisance.
- 3.2 The Committee reached the conclusion that the Authority does attempt to deal with the basic problem, namely the availability of food for seagulls, through its current work programmes and that an effort is being made to strengthen these programmes by raising awareness and working with businesses.
- 3.3 It was noted that there were options available to improve the efficiency of the current service, however there are substantial financial implications to expanding the provision on a service that is not statutory.
- 3.4 The Committee resolved to recommend adhering to the current procedure used by the Council and to continue to concentrate on raising awareness and street cleaning.