

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

CONFIDENTIAL

Title of Report: Request to suspend dog dosing for one treatment on Wednesday 25th August 2010
Paper No: 175/10
Date: 29 July 2010
Report of: Senior Veterinary Officer/Director of Natural Resources

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The veterinary section of the Department of Agriculture would like to conduct a trial on all the dogs in the Falkland Islands in the continued mission to eradicate hydatidosis. This will involve the collection of a faecal sample from each individual dog (approx. 500 farm dogs and 100 Stanley based dogs). In order for the testing to give a valid result it is preferable that the dogs have not been given a worming treatment against the hydatid tapeworm for at least 6 weeks prior to the sample being collected. The test will indicate if any individual dog has been exposed to the worm *E. granulosus* recently.

2. Recommendations

That Executive Council be advised to recommend that the following actions be implemented:

- (a) Dogs are wormed as normal on Wednesday 14th July 2010.
- (b) The normal dog dosing that should take place on Wednesday 25th August is suspended. Faecal samples will be collected from all farm and town dogs throughout the month of September 2010.
- (c) Normal dog dosing will resume on Wednesday 6th October 2010 until the results are received and further action can be discussed.

3. Summary of Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no additional financial implications other than the cost of the tests which are estimated at approximately £4,500.00 which have already been provided for in the budget.

4. Background

- 4.1 As part of the public health campaign to eradicate hydatid disease from the Falkland Islands dogs have been routinely dosed with Droncit (a drug which kills the adult tapeworm in the dog's intestine) every 6 weeks since the mid 1970's. Since that time the incidence of hydatids in the sheep population (the intermediate host for the tapeworm) had declined dramatically from a level of about 30% in the mid 1970's to a level of about 0.008% today. There have been no new human cases since 1989. The best way to monitor the prevalence of the disease is at post mortem inspection when sheep and lambs are killed at the abattoir or on a farm. This has been done for many years now. However, the disease has still not been eradicated and we think the time is now right to take a look at what is happening in the dog population to check that all dog owners are dosing their dogs correctly.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications other than the cost of the tests which are estimated at approximately £4,500.00 which have already been provided for in the budget. In the longer term if hydatids can be eradicated there will be a cost benefit in that 'dog dosing' for hydatid control will no longer be necessary. This will save costs in terms of drugs and the time involved. Some dosing will still be advisable for general worm control. The other benefit of eradication is the reduction in risk to human health and the positive message that the Falkland Islands is free of another disease.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Regulation 4 of the Hydatid Eradication (Dogs) Order provides that hydatid dosing of dogs must be carried out at a frequency and manner specified by the Governor in Council.

Because hydatid dosing of dogs has occurred every six weeks since the 1970's, it is assumed that this dosing regime has been specified by the Governor in ExCo at some point in the past; although no record has specifically been found to indicate what regime was approved by ExCo, and it is not known whether ExCo might have given delegated authority to the DoA to change the regime. In the absence of that detailed information, it must be assumed that approval is required from ExCo to change the existing regime.

Approval is only being sought for a change to one dog dosing date at this stage, and once the trial results are known, further proposals may be made to ExCo for change to the regime.

7. Human Resources Implications

- 7.1 There are no human resources implications