

## POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	<i>Environment and Community Panel</i>		
DATE:	12 <sup>th</sup> June 2019		
TITLE:	Littering and Dog Fouling		
TYPE OF REPORT:	<i>Update</i>		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Environment		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Mark Whitmore		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	No

### **REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE**

<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:</b>
To bring a detailed fully costed report to members outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scale of the problem of littering and dog fouling across the borough</li> <li>• The resources required to deliver a robust littering and dog fouling enforcement strategy that address the problem effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>KEY ISSUES:</b>
Costs of delivery of a littering and dog fouling enforcement program
<b>OPTIONS CONSIDERED:</b>
Redraft job description for vacant Neighbourhood Officer post to create an enforcement focussed role.
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
To redraft the job description for the vacant Neighbourhood Officer post to create enforcement focussed role.
<b>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
The recommendation will enable an improved focus on enforcement of dog fouling and littering across the borough without the need for a growth bid and increase in establishment within the Community Safety and Neighbourhood Nuisance Team.
This approach will allow the effectiveness of the role to be determined and, if necessary, a growth bid for further posts could be submitted, which would be based on a clearer understanding of the requirements of the role.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

### **1. Introduction**

In February 2018 a report was presented to the panel outlining the law as it relates to dog fouling and littering and how the council managed this service. The report recommended that a detailed fully costed report be brought back to the panel. The report to outline; the scale of the problem of littering and dog fouling across the borough and the resources required to deliver a robust littering and dog fouling enforcement strategy that addresses the problem effectively. This report is the culmination of that work.

### **2. Public Perception of Dog Fouling and Littering**

Over the last two weeks of June and all of July 2018 the council ran an online survey to determine the scale and type of problems residents, businesses and parish councils were facing in relation to dog fouling and littering. The consultation was publicised through a press release, links on the council's web pages and through social media.

Response rates to the consultation were initially high with over 200 responses in the first few weeks. The number of responses declined over the remaining weeks, however, the overall response rate was good and the council received 289 responses. Of these 270 were from members of the public, 13 from parish councils and 6 from businesses. Responses were received from 41 of 101 parish councils.

#### **Statistical Confidence:**

The survey was open to everyone within the borough and, as such, care needs to be taken when determining confidence levels, specifically because it is more likely that respondents have been affected by either littering or dog fouling and this has driven their desire to respond. To account for this where there is no response to a specific question it has been assumed that the respondent has not been affected or their response would not be supportive of change.

The sample size for members of the public (270 respondents) is large enough to give a confidence level of 95% with a confidence interval of +/- 6.

The level of confidence in parish council responses is much lower with a confidence level of 95% giving an interval of +/-25. On this basis the responses from the parishes cannot be considered statistically valid and should be treated with caution. The responses from parish councils have not been included in this report due to the poor level of confidence described.

There were not enough business responses to generate any confidence in the results and as such they have not been included in this report.

The responses to all questions have been tabulated and are included in the appendices of this report.

#### **The Questions and Responses**

As discussed, only the responses made by members of the public provided a sample size large enough to provide a degree of confidence on which any assumptions or recommendations could be made. These responses were collated in a spreadsheet and are presented in graphical form in the appendices to this report. In the analysis below percentages have been rounded to 1 decimal point.

All responses relate to replies by members of the public.

### Q1 Response being made by?

To determine if a member of the public, parish council or business was responding. No analysis of this question is required.

### Q2 Have you witnessed dog fouling, littering or both?

With hindsight this question required some additional clarification as to whether this means witnessing of an offence as it is occurring or not. It is likely that respondents will have interpreted this differently. As such where no response was made this has been taken to mean the respondent has not personally witnessed dog fouling or littering taking place or does not consider the issue to be sufficiently important, the results for members of the public are Table 1 below:

Have you witnessed dog fouling or littering?				
No	Yes			
	Dog Fouling	Littering	Both	No response
0	79	27	58	106
0.0%	29.3%	10.0%	21.5%	39.3%

Table1: Respondents witnessing dog fouling, littering or both (Sample size 270) (% rounded to nearest 10<sup>th</sup>)

Table 1 shows that 60.8% of respondents have witnessed dog fouling, littering or both in their area, it is therefore likely that 55% to 67% of residents have been affected by dog fouling or littering.

In order to try and better understand how recently offences had occurred the respondents were asked to categorise incidents into the last month, six months or twelve months. Table 2 shows the responses:

Dog Fouling			Littering			Both		
Within last month	Within last 6 months	Within last 12 months	Within last month	Within last 6 months	Within last 12 months	Within last month	Within last 6 months	Within last 12 months
64	1	14	19	1	7	43	5	10
81.0%	1.3%	17.7%	70.4%	3.7%	25.9%	74.1%	8.6%	17.2%

Table 2: Incidents of offences witnessed (Sample size 164) (% rounded to nearest 10<sup>th</sup>)

It can be seen that the majority of respondents in each section had witnessed an offence in the last month, suggesting that the problem is still relevant and not historic.

### Q3 – Have you reported this and if yes who to?

Respondents were given a number of reporting options; parish council, borough council, county council, housing association, borough and other council and other agency. Table 3 provides these responses:

Reported?							
No	PC	Borough Council	County Council	Housing Association	BC & Other Council	Other Agency	No Response
179	19	31	2	2	11	3	23
66.3%	7.0%	11.5%	0.7%	0.7%	4.1%	1.1%	8.5%

Table 3: Cases reported to authority (% rounded to nearest 10<sup>th</sup>)

The data indicates that there is a significant under reporting of littering and dog fouling with 66% (2/3rds) of respondents not reporting at all. 15.5% of reports were made to the council.

It is not possible to determine from the data if the reports to other authorities were passed to the council for any action.

The council receives approximately 160 reports of dog fouling a year, from the survey responses it can be reasonably assumed that there are in the order of another 320 offences that are witnessed and not reported. In addition when the number of reports of both littering and dog fouling being witnessed is considered there are another 116 possible unreported offences.

In total this means that the number of dog fouling offences per year is likely to be in the region of 590. Some care needs to be taken in extrapolating these figures as it is not possible to determine if responses include duplication (the same offence being reported by more than one respondent). Nonetheless the responses received coupled with anecdotal and officer observations suggest that there is a significant under reporting of dog fouling and littering offences.

The survey did not ask how many incidents had been witnessed by the reporter so each report has assumed only one offence. In reality this number may be higher.

It has not been possible to determine the likely incidences of littering across the borough as these numbers are not recorded in the same way. However the number of occurrences of littering reported was lower. The regular street sweeping undertaken in high footfall areas such as the town centres is likely to have reduced these issues. However as described in the 2018 report littering, specifically of cigarette waste, does occur regularly and could be addressed with appropriate resources.

The consultation also sought views on the number, location and size of dog waste and litter bins and whether or not respondents were aware that bagged dog waste could be placed in a normal litter bin. The responses to these questions are shown in the appendices to this report.

### **3. Issues for the Panel to Consider**

The survey provides a, statistically relevant, degree of certainty that both dog fouling and littering are a current and under-reported problem across the borough and that there is the potential for the council to do more to combat these offences.

The large number of responses received, when compared to other consultations, also suggests that this is an issue that the residents of the borough are affected by.

The panel may also be aware that the King's Lynn BID are in the process of recruiting Street Rangers. This has been discussed with the BID and there are opportunities for collaborative working on issues with the town centre. The recruitment of Street Rangers does not adversely affect the recommendation made in this report.

### **Resources Required**

#### **Amending vacant post to create an enforcement focussed post**

The February 2018 report to this panel highlighted that the Community Safety and Neighbourhood Nuisance (CSNN) team did not have the resources to address this matter. However, following the retirement of a Neighbourhood Officer an opportunity to redraft the role to create an enforcement focussed post has arisen and been approved by Management Team. The job description for this post has yet to be formally graded by the Job Evaluation Panel, however it is expected to be in the range of PG10 to PG 11. The current post is for 3 days and it has been agreed at Management Team that this can be extended to 5 days with salary costs being met from savings elsewhere in the CSNN budget.

The role of the officer will be to undertake proactive patrols based on areas where reports of regular or persistent littering or fouling is taking place. The officer will assist local parish and town councils with initiatives to reduce environmental offences as necessary and in conjunction with the existing Neighbourhood Officers within the team run education campaigns across the borough. In addition they will be authorised to serve fixed penalty notices for offences of littering and dog fouling. This role will enable the CSNN team to offer a more proactive approach to dog fouling and littering across the borough.

#### **4. Corporate Priorities**

This report supports Priority 3 – Work with our communities to ensure they remain clean and safe.

Specifically ensuring streets and open spaces are clean and pro-actively addressing anti-social behaviour.

This corporate priority is currently on target.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

The increase from 3 days to 5 days will require the salary budget to be increased by approximately £14k pa. This is being met through savings elsewhere in the CSNN budget. Income from FPN's will be returned back into the CSNN team which will offset some of these savings.

However, it is important to note that Fixed Penalties will only be served where there is clear evidence of an offence and use of an FPN is in accordance with national and council guidance.

#### **6. Any other Implications/Risks**

There is a risk that the use of FPN's for low level offences could be seen as an income generation initiative by the public. To that end the use of fixed penalties will be clearly defined and the outcomes of interventions and initiatives that achieve reductions in fouling and littering without the use of FPN's will be recorded. Members are reminded that the funding of either post must not be linked to fpn receipts.

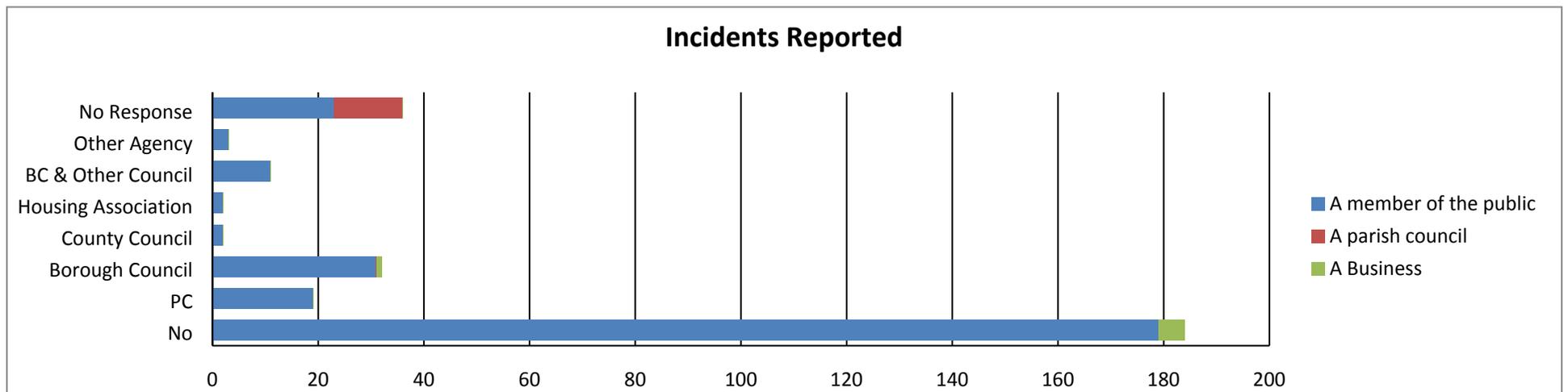
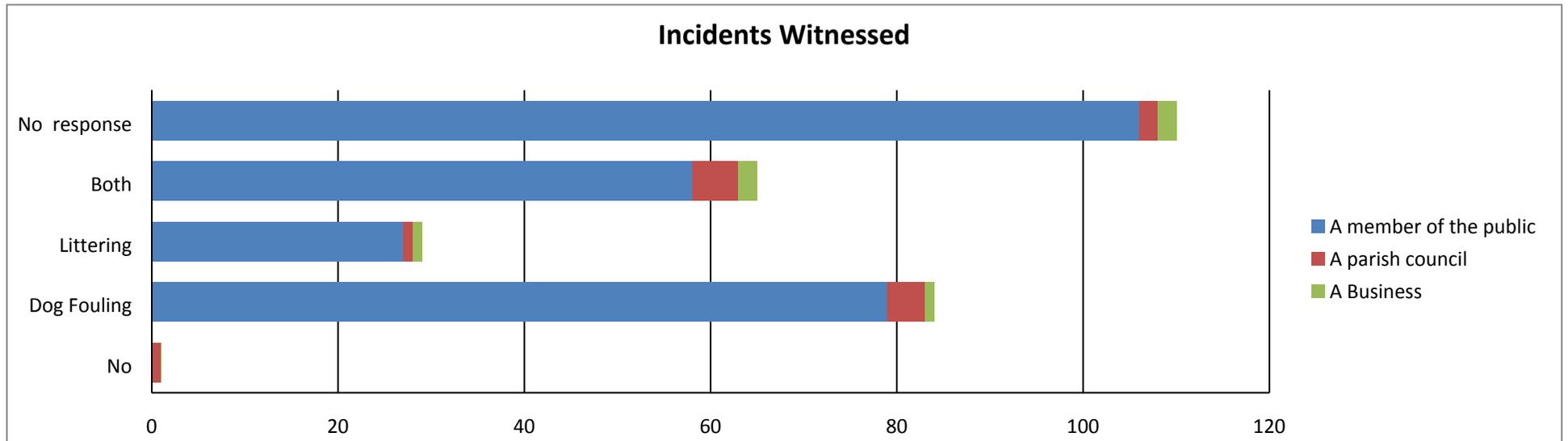
#### **7. Equal Opportunity Considerations**

None, any action taken will be in line with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy.

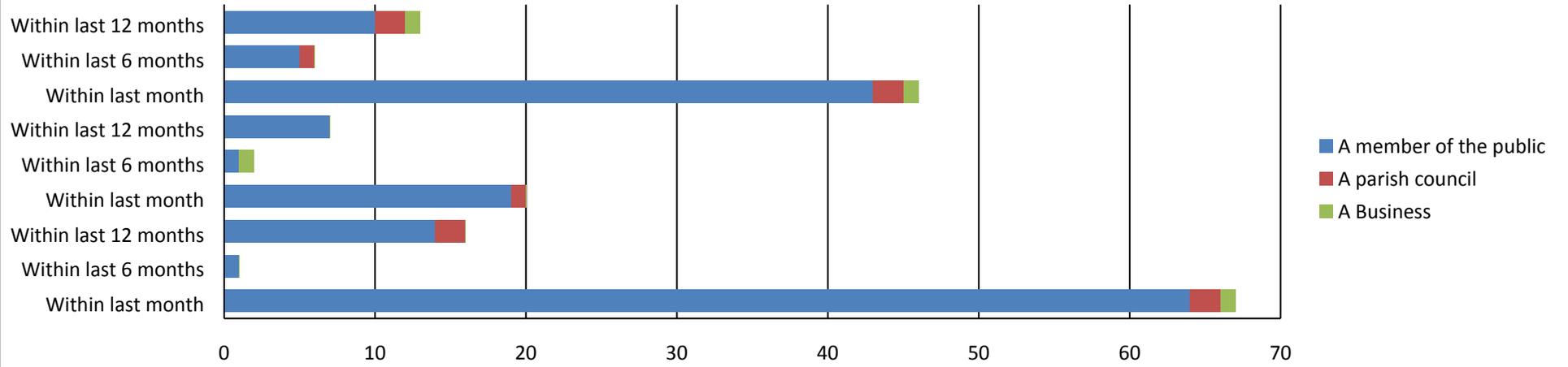
#### **8. Consultation**

Cllr. Devereux, Cabinet Member, Environment  
D Gates, Executive Director  
N Johnson, Public Open Space Manager

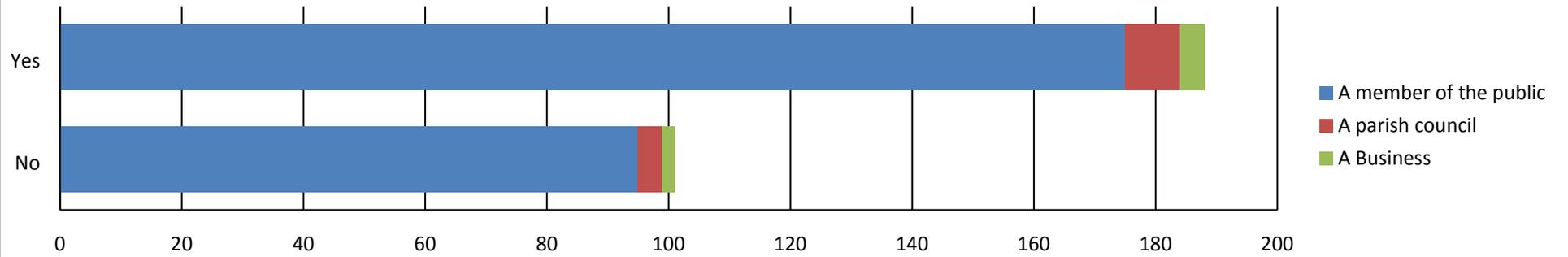
## Appendix 1 – Graphical Summary of Responses Received



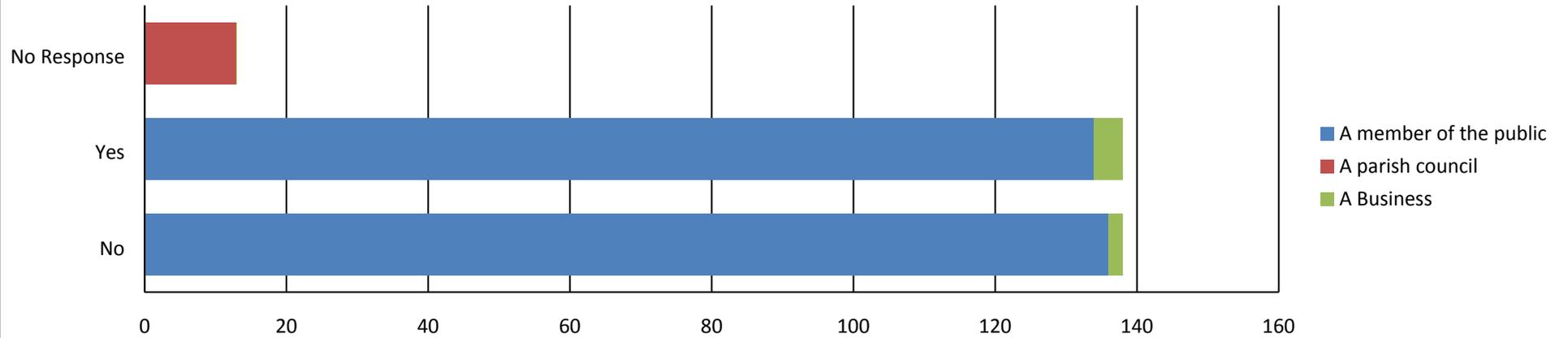
### Number of incidents witnessed



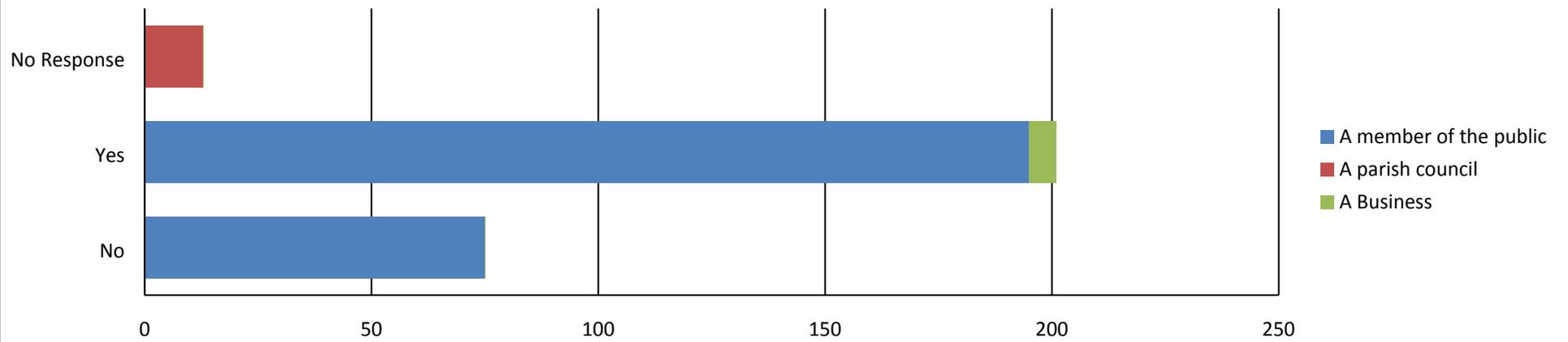
### Aware dog waste can go in a litter bin



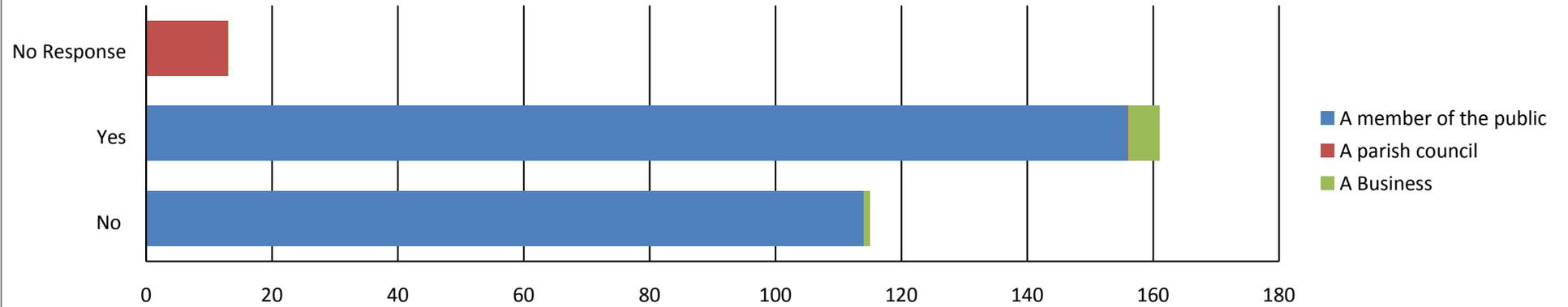
### Are there sufficient dog bins?



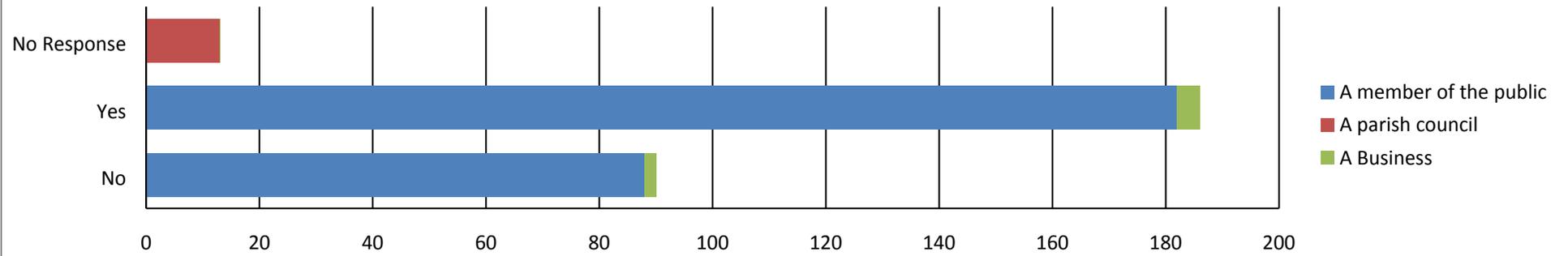
### Are dog bins large enough



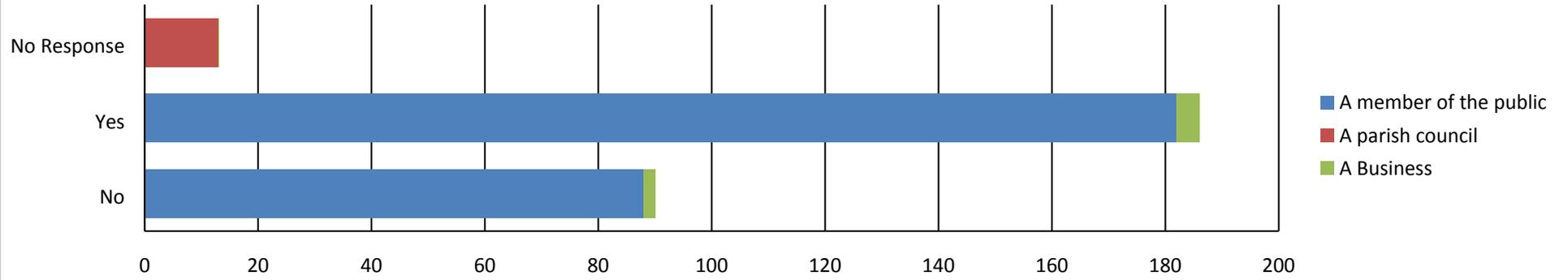
### Are dog bins in the right locations



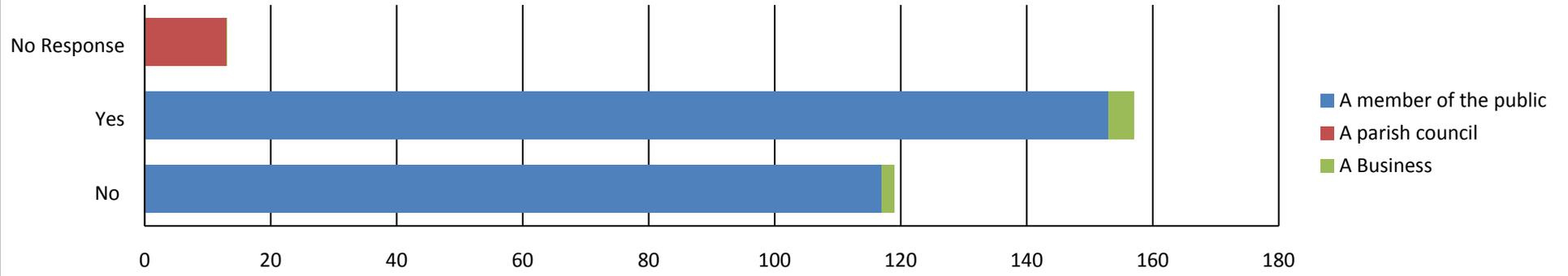
### Are there sufficient litter bins?



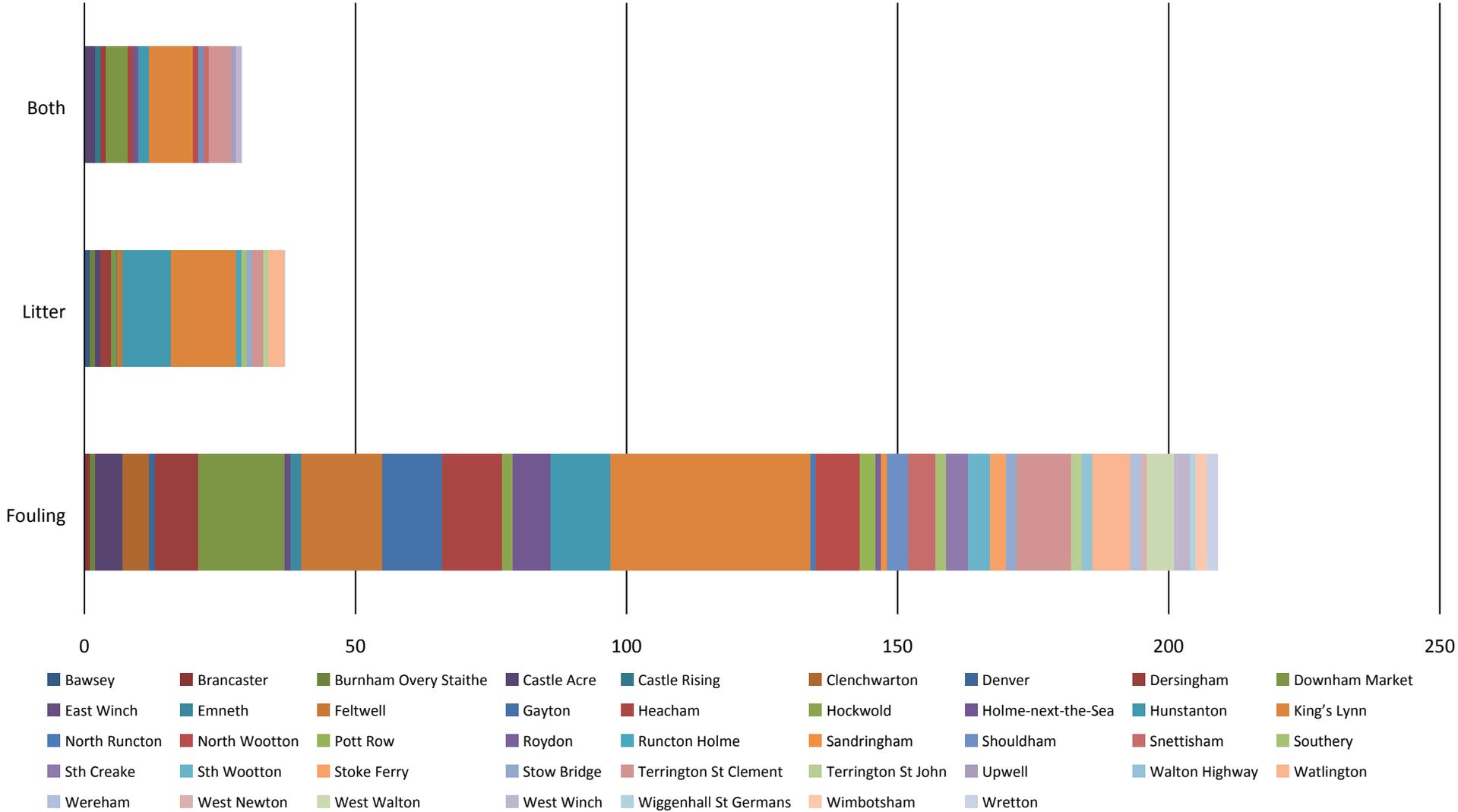
### Are litter bins large enough



### Are litter bins in the right locations



### Incidents by Location



## Appendix 2- Analysis of responses

Responses received from members of the public (sample size 270)

Question	Response	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Have you witnessed dog fouling or littering	No	0	0
	Dog Fouling	79	29.3
	Littering	27	10
	Both	58	21.5
	No response	106	39.3
Have you reported dog fouling or littering	No	179	66.3
	Parish Council (PC)	19	7
	Borough Council (BC)	31	11.5
	County Council (CC)	2	0.7
	Housing Association (HA)	2	0.7
	BC & other council	11	4.1
	Other agency	3	1.1
	No response	23	8.5
Are there sufficient dog fouling bins	No	136	50.4
	Yes	134	49.6
	No response	0	0
Are the dog bins large enough	No	75	27.8
	Yes	195	72.2
	No response	0	0
Are the dog bins in the right location	No	114	42.2
	Yes	156	57.8
	No response	0	0
Are there sufficient litter bins	No	157	58.1
	Yes	113	41.9
	No response	0	0
Are the bins large enough	No	88	32.6
	Yes	182	67.4
	No response	0	0
Are the bins in the right location	No	117	43.3
	Yes	153	56.7
	No response	0	0
Aware waste can go in a litter bin	No	95	35.2
	Yes	175	64.8

Responses received from parish councils (sample size 13)

Question	Response	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Have you witnessed dog fouling or littering	No	1	7.7
	Dog Fouling	4	30.8
	Littering	1	7.7
	Both	5	38.5
	No response	2	15.4
Have you reported dog fouling or littering	No	0	0
	Parish Council (PC)	0	0
	Borough Council (BC)	0	0
	County Council (CC)	0	0
	Housing Association (HA)	0	0
	BC & other council	0	0
	Other agency	0	0
	No response	13	100
Aware waste can go in a litter bin	No	4	30.8
	Yes	9	69.2
How are incidents dealt with	Dealt with by PC	0	0
	Passed to BC	1	7.7
	No Response	12	92.3

Responses received from businesses (sample size 6)

Question	Response	Number of Respondents
Have you witnessed dog fouling or littering	No	0
	Dog Fouling	1
	Littering	1
	Both	2
	No response	2
Have you reported dog fouling or littering	No	0
	Parish Council (PC)	0
	Borough Council (BC)	1
	County Council (CC)	0
	Housing Association (HA)	0
	BC & other council	0
	Other agency	0
	No response	0
Are there sufficient dog fouling bins	No	2
	Yes	4
	No response	0
Are the dog bins large enough	No	0
	Yes	6
	No response	0
Are the dog bins in the right location	No	1
	Yes	5
	No response	0
Are there sufficient litter bins	No	4
	Yes	2
	No response	0
Are the bins large enough	No	2
	Yes	4
	No response	0
Are the bins in the right location	No	2
	Yes	4
	No response	0
Aware waste can go in a litter bin	No	2
	Yes	4

Number of incidents of dog fouling, littering or both witnessed (all respondents)

Number of incidents of dog fouling, littering or both witnessed										
	Dog Fouling			Littering			Both			Totals
	Within last month	Within last 6 months	Within last 12 months	Within last month	Within last 6 months	Within last 12 months	Within last month	Within last 6 months	Within last 12 months	
A member of the public	64	1	14	19	1	7	43	5	10	164
	81.0%	1.3%	17.7%	70.4%	3.7%	25.9%	74.1%	8.6%	17.2%	
A parish council	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	2	10
A Business	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	4
Totals	67	1	16	20	2	7	46	6	13	178