

# **Move to tighten controls over boarding in wake of XL bully risk**

**A rise in the popularity of XL bully dogs has led to a call to tighten regulations around animal boarding kennels in Midlothian.**

Councillors are being asked to approve additional conditions for owners applying for a licence to run boarding facilities in the county. They include having a register of all dogs staying, their breed, owners and home addresses, available for inspection at all times and keeping the information for two years.

A report to a meeting of Midlothian Council next week will tell elected members that the additional conditions, which will also extend to catteries, will ensure more controls over kennels.

It says: "The recent increased popularity of XL Bully ownership demonstrates the changing risks involved with animal welfare premises.

"Strengthening licence conditions provides an opportunity for tighter regulation and control."

Among the amendments to the licence conditions are regulations covering the general conditions, accommodation, exercise facilities, disease control measures and supervision criteria.

The report says adopting the proposed conditions will provide

authorised inspection officers with “improved scope for ensuring compliant premises operation and sufficient standards of animal welfare”.

The licence also calls for someone to be residents at the kennels at all times with animals checked regularly to ensure their welfare and the provision of isolation facilities in case of disease.

The register of animals staying at the kennels and catteries will include information on identification chips and tattoos, contact details for owners and a contact person while they are board, vet details and proof of vaccination as well as medical history.

As well as making the register available for inspectors at all times it must also be available to any authorised vet on the premises.

The conditions will go before councillors next week for a decision.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter