



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

**UPDATE ON PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (DOG CONTROLS)**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETCARE SERVICES**

**AUTHOR: Nigel Wheeler, Director Highway & Streetcare Services**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the success of Public Spaces Protection Order ('PSPO') implemented on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2017 which introduced dog controls in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee scrutinise the content of the report; and
- 2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any further matters contained in the report

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Prior to the introduction of the PSPO, dog fouling was a significant concern for the Council. Despite considerable efforts to promote responsible dog ownership and to enforce the provisions of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, there remained a minority of dog owners who did not clean up after their dogs or keep them under control. Dog fouling is unpleasant and a risk to human health, particularly amongst children.
- 3.2 The PSPO allowed the Council to introduce a range of reasonable and proportionate restrictions on the use of publicly accessible land across the County Borough. This enabled the Council to better control the harmful activities of irresponsible dog owners whilst enabling responsible dog owners to continue to exercise their dogs without undue restrictions.



#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Dog fouling is unsightly, unpleasant and can lead to serious illness in humans such as toxocariasis. This disease can be controlled if dog faeces are disposed of immediately in a responsible manner.
- 4.2 The majority of dog owners are responsible, clean up after their dogs and keep them under control. However, the Council received many complaints each year about dog fouling in public places. In addition, many of our playing fields needed to be routinely checked for dog fouling before they can be used.

#### **5 Facts and Figures since the introduction of the PSPO**

- 5.1 Since the introduction of the PSPO, the council has issued 246 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)
- 5.2 The offences are broken down below
- Dog fouling 74
  - On a restricted area 159
  - Off their leads 13
- 5.3 Below is the current position in regard to payments made:
- 170 paid in full resulting in £17,000
  - Paid partially 2 resulting in £90
  - Taken to court – 34, (22 awaiting court action)
  - Cancelled 18
- 5.4 It is clearly overwhelming that public support for the PSPO despite some higher profile issues in nearby councils.
- 5.5 Below are the top 10 worst affected areas in the County Borough:
- Aberdare the Ynys – 25
  - Ystrad – 15
  - Mt Ash(Gerwnifor/Brynifor) – 12
  - Talbot Green – 10
  - Aberaman – 9
  - Aberdare Park – 9
  - Hopkinstown(Western Field) – 9
  - Clydach Vale – 8
  - Maerdy – 8



- Trealaw - 8

## **6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 In developing the proposals for the PSPO, an Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken to ensure that:
- The Council meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties, and
  - Due regard has been taken of the likely impact of the decision in terms of equality and discrimination.
- 6.2 The provisions of this Order did not apply to a dog trained by a registered charity to assist a person with a disability and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.
- 6.3 For the purposes of the Order, a 'disability' means a condition that qualifies as a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and upon which a disabled person relies for assistance.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 7.1 Funding to support these requirements was available from available earmarked reserves, confirmed as part of the closure process for the 2016/17 accounts. Base budget funding has been built into 2018/19 budgets and beyond following implementation.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The PSPO introduced a range of reasonable and proportionate prohibitions and requirements on the use of publicly accessible land whilst enabling responsible dog owners to continue to exercise their dogs without undue restrictions. The PSPO was subject to a comprehensive public consultation which confirmed that there was overwhelming public support for a PSPO to introduce dog controls across Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 8.2 Since its introduction the number of fines have slowed down as the first year has progressed, this is hopefully down to the irresponsible dog owners now doing what all responsible dog owners always did.



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