

INFORMATION NOTE

Feedback on PSPO Consultation on Proposed Dog Control Measures in Fylde

At the November 2016 Operational Management Committee it was RESOLVED to approve the recommendations detailed below with regards to the proposal on the introduction of public space protection orders for dog control in Fylde and to instruct officers to carry out the necessary public consultation as required by the legislation. It was further agreed that the results of the consultation would be reported back to a future meeting of the Committee, and if PSPO's are subsequently approved, a recommended implementation date of 1st June 2017 would be suggested:

- a borough wide PSPO requiring dogs to be kept on leads on all public highways at all times
- a borough wide PSPO requiring the removal of dog faeces at all times
- a borough wide PSPO excluding dogs from all children's play areas
- a borough wide PSPO limiting the number of dogs under the control of one person to a maximum of 4
- a PSPO requiring dogs to be kept on leads at various locations across the borough
- a PSPO excluding dogs at various locations across the borough
- the introduction of a fixed penalty notice (FPN) for breaching a PSPO to the value of £100, reduced to £50 if paid within 7 days
- after an introductory, educational period, a zero tolerance approach to be followed in relation to any PSPO made following the consultation
- to recommend to full council that existing dog related byelaws are repealed, to avoid conflicting restrictions
- to recommend to full council to include a 2017/18 one off budget item of £12,000 to fund a communication campaign and appropriate signage to support of the introduction of any dog related PSPO's made following the consultation
- to approve the purchase and use of body worn CCTV cameras (subject to procedural requirements) by the Dog Enforcement Wardens as a Health and Safety measure to be funded from existing service budgets
- to recommend appropriate officers investigate the use of PSPO to control other ASB issues such as BBQs and public drinking and to make recommendations to the relevant committees

Following the Committee, a six week consultation was carried out via Survey Monkey from 2 December 2016 – 15 January 2017 to gauge public opinion on the proposals. The survey included questions on each specific area/order proposed as well as the opportunity to add free text commentary. It was circulated to key interest groups and organisations including but not limited to the Kennel Club, the Dogs Trust, the RSPCA, local licensed boarding facilities, Vets, Parish Councils, Lancashire County Council and Duchy of Lancaster, all Fylde Councillors and Staff, all interested parties who had previously contacted the Council regarding the PSPO proposals and relevant service requests (106) and a bank of residents' email addresses retained on file by the Council. The consultation link was also promoted via the Council Website, Social Media, Regional TV and Radio, Local Newspapers and via the Dog Enforcement Wardens who handed out 187 consultation link cards to interested individuals; paper versions of the survey were available on request (7 returned and inputted electronically).

The email included the following text:

Dog Control - Public Space Protection Orders Consultation

The dog enforcement service are seeking your views on dog control within the borough.

New legislation under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 allows for the

introduction of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) which offer a more effective way of enforcing dog control in Fylde, than the existing byelaws. We are aware that not only do we all work in Fylde, but many people also live in or visit the borough socially, and we hope you will complete the consultation to share your views on this issue.

*There are 4 types of orders being proposed at various locations across the borough, the consultation is open to everyone and we estimate it should take 15 minutes to complete. The consultation is open for six weeks, and closes on **Sunday 15 January 2017**. To complete the consultation please visit:- <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/fyldedogcontrol>*

If you are aware of anybody else who may be interested in this matter, please highlight the consultation to them.

Thank you in advance

1996 consultation responses were received in total: 1319 from residents, 390 from non-residents (362 regular visitors), 241 from Fylde business owners, 22 from professional dog walkers and 1,105 from dog owners. 948 respondents added commentary under the free text section. In total 114,547 words were reviewed and the commentary was categorised into the following themes: Enforcement (217), Dog Welfare (124), Economy (110), Confusion over proposals (75), Number of dogs (72), Professional dog walkers (66), Elderly or disabled concerns (48) and Health and Environment (30). 533 responses objected to the proposals, 301 supported the proposals and 181 included general statements and comments both in support and against the proposals. Detailed responses were also received from the Kennel Club and the Dogs Trust.

A random selection of the free text commentary is detailed below:

247: I am a regular walker and runner in many of the areas listed and often encounter problems with dogs who not on a lead. The most recent being last week , near Fairhaven lake when 5 dogs were let out of a vehicle and allowed to run off on their own!

300: Professional dog walkers are insured to walk 6 dogs. I see no reason to set a limit below this level. I do however see the benefit of having a limit to preclude the example given of one person walking 12 dogs.

593: I agree that dog fouling is disgusting if owners do not pick up, both on the green and main pathway along Lytham Green, a fine is in order if it's not removed. People who walk dogs for their business is ok but think one dog off the lead at any one time would be acceptable. Most of these questions are common sense to all responsible dog owners, no-one should let their dog foul on children's play areas and parks.

902: I feel that the council is penalising residents of the area as people who visit are only affected for the time they are here not all the time. I feel the areas for off lead exercise are too limited cramming a large number of dogs into a smaller area will cause problems, as it does if you cram humans together in a small area.

The consultation results are included below, expressed as a total percentage of responses received in support of the individual PSPO proposed:

- Borough wide for fouling - 88%
- Dogs on lead in cemetery - 78%
- Dogs on lead on the highway - 73%
- Dogs excluded from children's play areas - 69%
- Dogs on lead in Council car parks - 62%
- Dogs excluded from Amenity Beach (seasonal) - 61%

- Dogs excluded from water features - 56%
- Dogs excluded from Cenotaph Gardens, Freckleton – 54%
- Dogs excluded from Rose Garden, Memorial Gardens, Freckleton - 52%
- Dogs on lead in Lytham St Annes Nature Reserve - 49%
- Dogs on lead in Ashton Gardens - 48%
- Dogs on lead in Memorial Gardens, Freckleton - 48%
- Dogs on lead Meadow Park, Staining - 47%
- Dogs on lead in Lowther Gardens - 47%
- Dogs on lead Larbreck Play Area, Elswick - 46%
- Dogs on lead on Promenade and in Promenade Gardens - 45%
- Dogs excluded from Staining Rise - 44%
- Dogs on lead on Fairhaven Lake - 42%
- Dogs on leads by direction for all year and a section on lead during peak season on Lytham Green - 42%
- Dogs on leads on Hope Street Park - 42%
- Dogs on leads on Derby Road, Wesham - 42%*
- Dogs on leads on Fleetwood Road Playing Fields, Wesham - 42%
- Dogs excluded from the Orchard and Nature Reserve, Elswick - 40%
- Dogs on leads on Bush Lane Playing Fields, Freckleton - 40%
- Dogs on Lead on Granny's Bay - 34%
- Dogs on lead on beach in the coastal defence work area - 34%
- Dogs on leads on Blackpool Road Playing Fields - 33%
- Number of dogs: No limit - 36%; 4 dogs - 36%; 5 dogs - 5%; 6 dogs - 10%; 7 dogs - 5%; 4 or more by direction - 8%

This information has been published on the Fylde Council website, with a link to the supporting commentary and a paragraph to explain the next steps in the process: <http://www.fylde.gov.uk/pspo>.

From 1 November 2016 to 18 January 2017, the service received and responded to 23 Freedom of Information requests specifically relating to the consultation, historical complaints and enforcement actions. A number of FOI requests have subsequently been received requesting information on the consultation results and the raw data and commentary has been released in response to these requests.

The Elected Member PSPO Working Group held an initial meeting on the 24th January to consider the consultation results and all supporting feedback. Their recommendations have not been finalised as yet as there is a need for further consultation with the Kennel Club, Natural England, Town and Parish Councils and representatives from the local professional dog walker community. The final recommendations will then be presented to a future meeting of the Operational Management Committee for debate and decision on the implementation of any potential PSPOs for dog control.

The Operational Management Committee originally approved a recommended implementation date of 1st June 2017 for any potential PSPOs that may be agreed. Given the level of interest shown in the consultation and the length of time required to consider all feedback and suggestions received, it will be recommended that the implementation of any agreed PSPOs be delayed until a later date, to be decided by the committee, in order to give officers sufficient time to effectively communicate proposed changes to all dog walkers, residents, visitors, businesses and organisations that may be affected by the changes.

Appendix:

Consultation Feedback from the Kennel Club

Consultation Feedback from the Dogs Trust

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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