

Committee: **Special Council**

Date of Meeting: **26th October, 2022**

Report Subject: **Renewal of Public Space Protection Orders for Dog Control Offences**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor H. Cunningham – Executive Member - Place & Environment**

Report Submitted by: **David Thompson – Service Manager, Public Protection**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
30.8.22	1.9.22				20.9.22		26.10.22	

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform Council of the findings of the public consultation on the proposed new Public Space Protection Order for dog control offences. The report seeks approval for the introduction of the new Public Space Protection Order for Dog Controls, from 1st November 2022.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 On the 1st November 2019, Blaenau Gwent CBC introduced a public space protection order (PSPO) for dog control offences. This PSPO replaced the previous dog control orders that were originally introduced in 2012.
- 2.2 The PSPO for dog control offences re-introduced dog exclusion areas, dogs on lead areas and created the offence of failing to remove dog faeces from public areas. PSPO's can remain in force for up to 3 years upon when they must be renewed or removed.
- 2.3 The sites covered by the dog exclusion areas and dog on lead areas include schools, sports pitches and playgrounds with the aim of protecting public health. A full list of all of the sites covered by the PSPO for dog controls can be found on the council website via the web link at the end of this report.
- 2.4 As part of the PSPO renewal process we are required to carry out a public consultation. The public consultation started on the 19th July 2022 and ended on the 17th August 2022 and utilised existing website and social media platforms an addition to written communication to all elected members and relevant partner

organisations and interest groups (Police, Registered Social Landlords, Town Councils and relevant interest groups).

2.5 We received 28 written responses in total from members of the public, the Dogs Trust and the RSPCA. The general themes of the responses were supportive of the dog fouling aspect of the PSPO whilst also requesting for additional dog fouling bins to be put up at specific locations within the borough and also queries on how the PSPO would be enforced and requests for additional signage at sites. Other general themes included requests for areas for dogs to be able to run off lead and a list of such places are made available to members of the public.

2.6 We received specific responses or requests relating to the below sites-

- PSPO-DC-004- a review of the dog exclusion area at the Llanhilleth recreational ground to allow dogs to be walked around sports pitch. This request was reviewed and an amendment is proposed below.
- PSPO-DC-058- a review of the dog exclusion area at Brynmawr Welfare Ground. This request was reviewed and an amendment is proposed below.
- PSPO-DC-061- A review of the dog exclusion area at Brynmawr Foundation School, Intermediate Road, Brynmawr. This request was reviewed and an amendment is proposed below.
- PSPO-DC-119- A review of the dog exclusion area at the Milefield Playing field, Georgetown, Tredegar. This request came from an elected member specifically about dog walkers being able to use the slopes around the sports pitch to walk their dogs. This playing field is used and maintained by Georgetown Primary School and as such this request was not recommended.
- A request from a member of the public to designate Beaufort Ponds & Woodland as a dog on lead area. This request was considered however other sites with a similar land use within the borough do not have dog on lead restrictions and so for consistency purposes this request was not recommended.
- PSPO-DC-012- A review of the dog exclusion area at Six Bells Park, Windsor Road, Six Bells. This request came in from a member of the public to amend the dog exclusion area at the park to allow for a dog to be taken into the bowls club pavilion. A site visit was undertaken to determine the practicality of this request however there was no clear way of

practically demarcating the extent of the dog exclusion area so this request was not recommended.

- PSPO-DC-106 Bryn Bach Park, Tredegar an additional dog exclusion area at the park is proposed that relates to the mini golf play area. We received no objections to this proposal.

2.7 Following the public consultation responses, we are proposing to make the following amendments to the previous Order-

- PSPO-DC-004 & 129- Llanhilleth recreation ground, Llanhilleth. A request was received from an elected member on behalf of Llanhilleth RFC to allow dogs to be walked around the sports pitch on the walkway. As a result, we are proposing to amend the existing dog exclusion area and introduce a dogs on lead area on the walkway surrounding the sports pitch. The school, playground, sports pitch and bowling green will remain as dog exclusion areas.
- PSPO-DC-058- Brynmawr Welfare Ground, Warwick Road, Brynmawr. Requests were received from multiple members of the public to allow dogs to walk through the park area. As a result, we are proposing to amend the existing dog exclusion area and introduce a dogs on lead area throughout the general walkway areas of the welfare ground. The playgrounds and sports pitches will remain as dog exclusion areas.
- PSPO-DC-061- Brynmawr Foundation School, Intermediate Road, Brynmawr. A request was received from the school Headteacher to update the dog exclusion area as a result of the changes to the access road in recent years as part of the heads of valley road improvement scheme. As a result, we are proposing to make an amendment to the dog exclusion area to reflect the recent changes at the main school access point.
- PSPO-DC-106 Bryn Bach Park, Tredegar an additional dog exclusion area at the park is proposed that relates to the mini golf play area.

2.8 The consultation outcomes were presented to Places Scrutiny Committee on 20th September 2022 and the proposed changes outlined in paragraph 2.7, above, were supported.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 Option 1 (Preferred Option) - That the new Public Spaces Protection Order outlined in Appendix 1 is approved – to commence on 1st November 2022.

In approving the above, the current Public Space Protection Order for dog controls will be repealed at midnight on 31st October 2022.

- 3.2 Option 2 – That Council does not approve the draft Public Space Protection Order for dog control.

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

- 4.1 This topic supports the achievement of the Blaenau Gwent Well-being plan to encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places they live, learn, work and play by ensuring dogs are controlled and that dog faeces are removed it will encourage people to use clean public open spaces.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 *Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)*

Consultation costs were met by utilising existing revenue budget levels. Costs were minimised by utilising Council websites and social media.

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

Failure to renew the PSPO means the Order will no longer be operative/enforceable for dog fouling/control offences which puts the public at increased health risks associated with exposure to dog faeces that have not been removed by the owner of the dog.

5.3 *Legal*

It is important that the correct procedure is followed to ensure the PSPO for dog controls meets the legal criteria for review and re-introduction.

5.4 *Human Resources*

All work relating to the renewal of the PSPO for dog control offences was undertaken by Officers within Environmental Health. Going forward this work will be undertaken by Front Line Enforcement Officers, Neighbourhood Services. Enforcement of the Order continues to be undertaken by a contracted local authority support service under the management of the Front Line Enforcement Service.

6 **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

This information has recently been reported on.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The renewal of the PSPO for dog control order offences will allow Blaenau Gwent CBC to continue to protect members of the public from the health risks posed by people not picking up their dog faeces. It will also give members of the public confidence that they can play at and use clean public open spaces.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

As part of the PSPO renewal process we have gone out to public consultation on the proposals.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The PSPO for dog control offences will last for 3 years, so it will need to be renewed or revoked again in November 2025.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The renewal of the PSPO for dog control offences aims to prevent occurrences of dog fouling at specific sensitive locations such as schools, playgrounds and sports pitches. It also prevents exposure to sensitive receptors such as young children who are more likely to be at these types of locations.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

This piece of work is carried out by a number of council departments working together such as Environmental Health, Estates, Education, Grounds Maintenance, Technical services and also the Aneurin Bevan Leisure Trust to deliver a PSPO for dog controls at a number of sites within Blaenau Gwent. The Order is enforced on the Council's behalf by a local authority support service under the management of the Front Line Enforcement Service (Neighbourhood Services).

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

This report does not impact on other service areas.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

By providing local clean public spaces which the community can use it will reduce the need for them to travel to other areas and therefore contribute to reducing carbon emissions within Blaenau Gwent.

6.9 ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment*** (complete an impact assessment to consider how the decision might help to reduce the inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage).

6.10 ***Equality Impact Assessment*** (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)

No negative effects for protected characteristics.

Monitoring Arrangements

7. *State how the work will be monitored e.g. through scrutiny or directorate performance management arrangements*

Enforcement of this Order will be managed and monitored by the Front Line Enforcement Service, Neighbourhood Services and routinely reported to Scrutiny and Executive committees.

8 **Background Documents / Electronic Links**

All of the current locations that are either dog exclusion areas or dog on lead areas are listed (including plans) on the council website and are available using the web link below. Proposed amendments, as a result of the public consultation, are outlined in the Appendix to this report. The website will be updates accordingly should the revised Order be approved as a result of this report.

<https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/environmental-health/public-spaces-protection-orders/>

List of Appendices

1 – New Public Spaces Protection Order and Plans.

end