



Consultation Response

FROM THE RSPCA IN WALES

Consultation response: Wrexham County Borough Council, Renewal of the Dog Control and Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)

February 2020

RSPCA Cymru welcomes the opportunity to comment on Wrexham County Borough Council's proposals for the new Dog Control and Dog Fouling PSPO 2020.

Public Space Protection Orders can be an effective tool for local authorities across Wales to bring about positive attitude changes to dog ownership and can go a long way to improving the relationship between dog and non-dog owners in local areas. However, we also have concerns that powers can be used in a way which unwittingly compromises dog welfare; or cause rifts between dog-owning and non dog-owning communities within a locality.

RSPCA Cymru engaged thoroughly with the consultation in 2016 regarding the Council's previous PSPO in which we raised some of our concerns associated with Schedule 1 of the PSPO which bans dogs from areas such as marked sports pitches within the County Borough. Such exclusions could create a negative view of dog ownership and have the potential to negatively impact on the welfare of the animals - as they need the ability to express their normal behaviour which involves being able to run off of the lead. Indeed, dog owners need to walk their dogs all year round, and need access to appropriate, accessible spaces to do so - so we are concerned at any continued restriction of adequate space for dogs to walk in Wrexham, which could unintentionally compromise welfare. While the RSPCA recognise that dog faeces can be a problem and led to such exclusions, we believe that the addition to the order which states the need for dog owners to carry an appropriate receptacle to collect faeces will go some way to mitigating this issue.

Our response to the 2016 consultation can be found here: <http://politicalanimal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RSPCA-Cymru-Consultation-Response-Wrexham-Council-Dog-Control-and-Dog-Fouling-Proposed-PSPO.pdf>

The new Dog Control and Dog Fouling PSPO 2020 is welcomed on the grounds that it improves and enhances the onus on responsible dog ownership - with the introduction of the need for dog owners to carry an appropriate receptacle or bag to pick up dog faeces if their dog has have defecated at any time on land listed under Schedule six of the order.

Several other local authorities in Wales have already introduced similar conditions within their PSPO's. RSPCA Cymru believes that such a condition will be beneficial in helping to improve responsible dog ownership within the Wrexham County Borough Council - and go some way to fostering more positive

relationships between dog and non-dog owners in the area. As such, we welcome these additions to the Council's Dog Control and Dog Fouling PSPO - but would also urge the Council to reconsider some of the concerns raised by the RSPCA in 2016, namely the restriction of dogs from marked sports playing fields in the area; and the impacts this can have on dog welfare.