

Equality Analysis (EqA) - Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for dog fouling and dogs on leads

Impact	Low Impact	Lead Officer	Vicki Dawson
Date of EqA	05/01/17	EqA Review Date	01/07/17
Why are you completing the equality analysis?			
Change to policy or service			
What are the main purposes of the policy, strategy or service area?			
<p>In May 2011, the Council introduced a Dog Control Order to allow it to deal with dog fouling. The order made it an offence to not pick up dog foul on designated land across the district. A second Order excluded dogs from designated land around the play area at Yeovil Country Park.</p> <p>Without these orders in place Council officers would not be able to take action against persons not clearing up after their dogs.</p> <p>In March 2014, a new piece of legislation came into force called the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. Under this Act Councils are required to replace any Dog Control Orders with a new order called a Public Space Protection Order if they still want the control to continue.</p> <p>As it is still believed there is a need for the controls to remain in place, this report is seeking the authority to make the change.</p>			
Evidence			
<p>The existence of dog foul in an area is commonly regarded as being detrimental, both in terms of the unpleasantness of its visual appearance, its odour and the disgust if one is unfortunate to step in it; but more importantly its health impacts and the transmission of disease.</p> <p>Despite the current controls, the Council continues to receive regular complaints regarding dog fouling. Last year there were over 300 complaints received across the district, and there have been over 150 so far this year. Whilst the vast majority of dog owners are responsible and clear up after their dogs, there remain a minority who disregard the law.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that enforcement of the provisions is increasingly difficult. However, if the Control Orders did not exist at all, we believe it would send out the wrong message that the council does not take this kind of irresponsible and anti-social behaviour seriously, and the situation potentially, would gradually deteriorate.</p> <p>We also receive 50 to 100 complaints a year regarding dog behaviour that has caused alarm or distress. It is for this reason that the ability to require dogs to be put on a lead is necessary.</p>			

'Keep Britain Tidy', say on their website that dog mess is 'the most unacceptable and offensive type of litter on our streets'. Their research tells us that dog fouling is the issue that the public are most concerned about. In fact in 2010, 37% of people told them it was the item that most bothered them.

A consultation was carried out on this proposal for an eight week period between November 2016 and January 2017. All comments received were in support of the proposal.

The Kennel club responded to the consultation. The Kennel Club strongly promotes responsible dog ownership, and believes that dog owners should always pick up after their dogs wherever they are. They welcomed the exemptions for users of certain Assistance Dogs and registered Blind people from the dog fouling order, but did raise concerns about the lack of similar exemptions for the Exclusion Order. This was an oversight and has now been amended.

Supporting Documentation/Links

Enacted, Dog fouling order May 2011.pdf, Dogs on leads order May 2011.pdf, Dog exclusion order May 2011.pdf, PSPO - dog fouling and on lead by direct in whole area DRAFT 13.6.16docx.docx, PSPO - dog exclusions (land fenced at lower lake Ninesprings) DRAFT 13.6.16docx.docx

Conclusion	Date	Comments
Continue with the policy/ service with no change	5/1/17	Exclusions regarding assistance dogs and disability groups already in existence. No further impacts identified. Signage following order will be accessible to all

Please comment/explain how you will meet the General Equality Duty (GED)?

Consultation carried out in accordance with requirements of PSPO

Lead Officer Sign Off	Vicki Dawson	Date	05/01/17		
Equalities Officer Approval Comments	Jo Morgan	Status	Approved	Date	05/01/17

	Protected Characteristic	Impacts/ Issues	Action Required	By When?	Lead	Resource	Outcome	Performance Measure	Status
1	Various Characteristics	Communication of requirements	Ensure any signs are accessible to all, in plain English with visual image. Requirements of PSPO will be on website (translation available via ROK Talk, text to speech)	Sat-1-Jul-17	Vicki Dawson	Officer time	All groups will understand requirements	Monitoring of complaints. Information published on website	In progress - on target