

**THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE**

**REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF A MATTER BY THE COMMITTEE**  
**(\*TO BE MADE BY THE TOWN / COMMUNITY COUNCIL VIA THEIR CLERK\*)**

**Date** 27 March 2023.

**Name of Town/Community Council:** Llandough Community Council.

**It is requested that the Community Liaison Committee consider the following matter. (N.B. Items that are site specific should be referred to the appropriate Council department):**

Arrangements for monitoring the incidence of dog fouling in communities.

**Reason(s) for request:**

In Llandough there is a growing incidence of irresponsible dog owners failing to pick up dog mess and dispose of it appropriately. The Council wondered whether civil enforcement officers could patrol areas in the evening and early morning periods when the incidents are more likely to occur. It seems likely that this issue is common to most communities.

**PLEASE RETURN TO:** Room 26  
Democratic and Scrutiny Services  
Directorate of Resources  
The Vale of Glamorgan Council  
Civic Offices  
Barry  
CF63 4RU

**FOR COUNCIL USE ONLY:**

**Date Received:** 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 20:21.

**Subject Matter:** Arrangements for monitoring the incidence of dog fouling in communities.

**Copy of request passed to Executive/Director(s)/Officer(s):**

Director of Environment and Housing	29/03/23 at 14:53
Chief Executive	31/03/23 at 15:15

**Copy to Chair/Vice Chair: YES**

**FOR COMMITTEE AGENDA: YES**  
Approved by Chair 31 March 2023 at 18:11

**If yes: Report / ~~Slide Presentation~~ / ~~Verbal Update~~**  
**If no please state reason:**

Director of Environment and Housing Dog fouling is an issue with a very small proportion of dog owners but incidents are likely to have increased since Covid as many more people now own dogs. The Council will work out of normal working hours but generally only based on intelligence received. A Report will be drafted in partnership by the Operational Manger for Transport Services and the Enforcement Manger in preparation for the next meeting of the Committee in July. 29 March 2023 at 15:12
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**Chief Executive's comments:** In support of Officer's comments/approach.

**Date of written response(s) to Town/Community Council:**

Acknowledgement of receipt: 28 March 2023 at 13:00 to Paul Egan at clerk@llandough-cc.co.uk from Amy Rudman.

Confirmation of scheduling: 03 April 2023 at 10:35 to Paul Egan at clerk@llandough-cc.co.uk from Amy Rudman.

Meeting of:	Community Liaison Committee
Date of Meeting:	<b>Thursday, 06 July 2023</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Arrangements for Monitoring the Incidence of Dog Fouling in Communities
Purpose of Report:	To update the Community Liaison Committee on the measures being taken regarding incidences of dog fouling in the Vale of Glamorgan
Report Owner:	Miles Punter (Director for Environment and Housing)
Responsible Officer:	Kyle Phillips
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	None
Policy Framework:	This matter is within the policy framework and budget
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 Llandough Community Council formally requested that the Community Liaison Committee consider arrangements that the Vale of Glamorgan Council Enforcement Team could make to ensure officers are patrolling areas in the evening and early morning periods when the incidents of dog fouling are more likely to occur, with dog owners failing to pick up dog mess and dispose of it appropriately.</li> <li>This report aims to highlight the powers the Enforcement Team currently has, action taken to date and future planned action.</li> </ul>	

## Recommendations

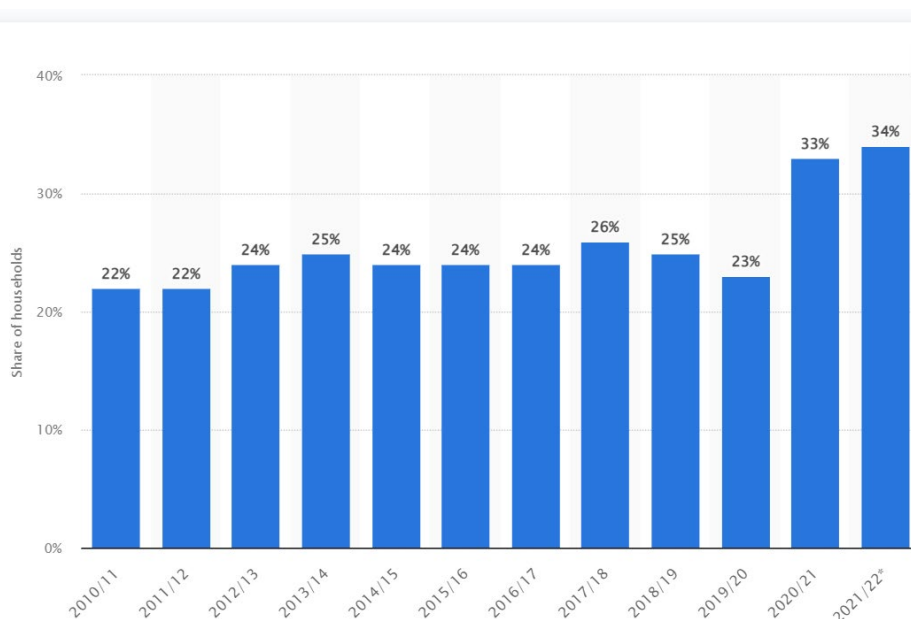
1. To note the contents of this report.

## Reasons for Recommendations

1. To inform the Committee of the steps being taken to deal with dog owners failing to pick up dog mess and dispose of it appropriately.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Irresponsible dog owners failing to pick up dog mess and dispose of it appropriately has always been an issue. However, it should be recognised that this is a small minority of dog owners with most owners picking up and disposing of the mess correctly.
- 1.2 Dog ownership remained constant for a decade between 2010 and 2020 as highlighted by the graph below:



However, ownership rose sharply during COVID-19 with 10% more households owning a dog as a pet.

\*Source – Statista.com

- 1.3 This has increased the number of dogs using our open spaces for exercise across all our communities.
- 1.4 Dog fouling was previously enforced by means of the Dogs (Fouling of the Land Act) 1996 and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) issued to offenders who were

witnessed not picking up after their dogs. This was superseded in 2021 by the Council's Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) with FPN's still issued.

- 1.5** A PSPO is an Order made by the local authority, under S.59 and S.72 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and which prohibits certain activities that are or are likely to be of a persistent or continuing nature. S.59 of the Act also states that the activities must be unreasonable and that they justify the restriction imposed by the making of a PSPO. It further states that it is, in all circumstances expedient to make such an Order for the purposes of reducing crime and/or anti-social behaviour in a public place.

The Act states that a PSPO:

- (a) prohibits specified things being done in a restricted area,
- (b) requires specified things to be done by persons carrying on specified activities in that area, or
- (c) does both of those things.

- 1.6** The current PSPO covers the following areas:

- Dinas Powys (Caerleon Road open space, Dinas Powys Common, Parc Bryn-Y-Don, Cae'r Odyn play area, Drylla play area, Nightingale Place play area, Seel Park play area, George's Row, and the Murch Playing Field)
- Barry (these include Bassett Park, Central Park, Cold Knap – Promenade, Gardens and former Lido, Jenner Park, Pencoedtre Park, Porthkerry Country Park)
- Llandough (Cogan Pill play area, King George V playing field)
- Llantwit Major (Cwm Colhuw)
- Penarth (Alexandra Park, Belle Vue Park, Cosmeston Country Park, Penarth Pier)
- Rhoose (Celtic Way)
- Sully (Burnham Avenue sports ground)
- Cowbridge (Twt Park)

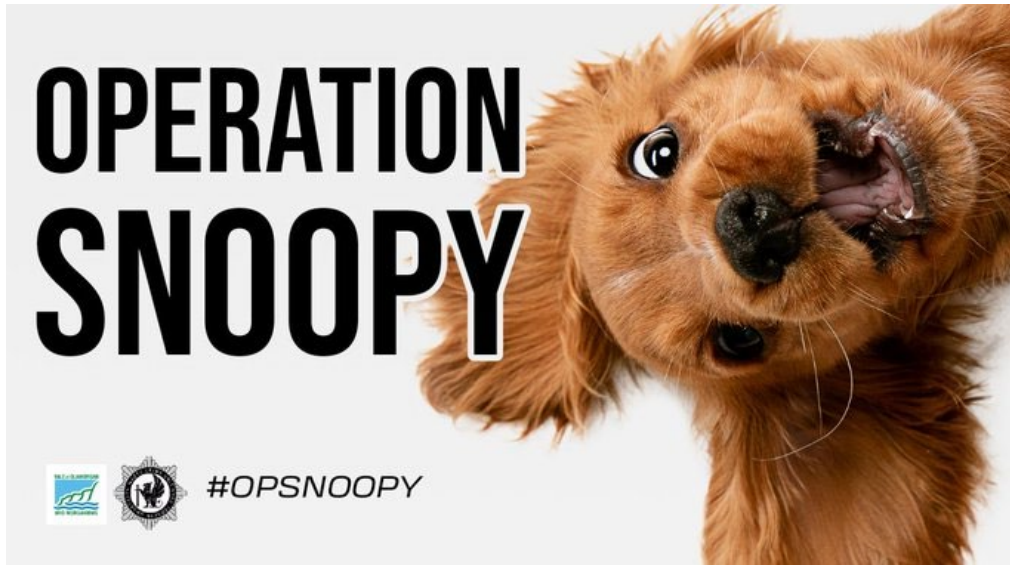
- 1.7** The FPN is a conditional offer by which a suspect may discharge their liability for a criminal offence, by paying a fixed amount. Breaching a PSPO incurs a Fixed Penalty of £100. The Enforcement officer issues the FPN to the suspect, whom then has fourteen days in which to pay the £100. Failure to avail themselves of the conditional offer renders the suspect liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court. Upon conviction, the offender will receive a criminal record and given a substantive fine. Additionally, they may be required to pay prosecution costs and a Victim Surcharge.

- 1.8** If a person fails to pick up their dog's faeces and a PSPO is in place, making such activity unlawful at that location, a criminal offence is committed.

- 1.9** If a person fails to keep their dog(s) out of an area from where they are prohibited under the PSPO (e.g., the seasonal beach ban, most playgrounds, etc.); a criminal offence is committed.
- 1.10** The PSPO is in force for twenty-four hours a day and across seven days a week.
- 1.11** The Enforcement Service, which is relatively small with eight patrol officers that cover a large geographical area, currently operates between 06:00 and 22:00hrs, across those seven days and officers have been deployed throughout that time period. There is scope for officers to work outside of those core hours, but this would need to be intelligence based so resources could be targeted accordingly.
- 1.12** The Enforcement Service is responsible for all of the Vale of Glamorgan's civil parking enforcement, as well as for Waste Crime and PSPO/byelaw enforcement.
- 1.13** Given the finite resources of the Enforcement Service, the team cannot be expected to maintain a constant 24/7 presence in all areas covered by the PSPO.
- 1.14** In December 2022, the Enforcement Team introduced Operation Snoopy. The purpose of this operation was to undertake intelligence-led, highly visible, and covert patrols of known dog fouling hotspots.
- 1.15** Thus far, Officers have reported that all dog walkers observed have acted responsibly and consequently, there have been no breaches of the PSPO during the time that the Officers (both uniformed and in plain clothes) have attended.
- 1.16** Operation Snoopy has been running for over six months and although it is encouraging to see compliance, we know that offending does still take place.
- 1.17** Operation Snoopy has been widely publicised using our official social media channels (i.e., Facebook and Twitter) both in the weeks prior to and during this year's operation.

The same social media posts have been shared, or re-Tweeted, by our partners in Community Safety, Keep Wales Tidy and South Wales Police.

Examples of our posts are as below:



In addition, we have also shared images supplied by Keep Wales Tidy. An example of which is as follows:



## 2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 Whilst dog ownership has increased by 10% there is no actual evidence that incidents of dog fouling has increased commensurately. Although any incidents of dog fouling are abhorrent and clearly represent a problem for our residents wishing to use our public open spaces.
- 2.2 During the six months that Operation Snoopy ran, over two hundred patrols were conducted. These were conducted based on intelligence received both from the public and our officers and as part of enforcement officers' everyday duties. During the patrols, all dog owners behaved in the manner expected, picking up and removing their dogs' faeces in the correct manner.
- 2.3 The current PSPO is due to expire in March 2024 and a revised PSPO is due to go out for consultation later this year. The proposal, if accepted, would cover all publicly accessible land under the control of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and not just specific locations and this will give the Enforcement Service far greater coverage and the ability to issue FPN's for dog fouling on the vast majority of public land.
- 2.4 We plan to make Operation Snoopy a permanent, year-round operation, rather than its current model, which only lasts for a number of months.
- 2.5 The Enforcement Service relies on the public's awareness that dog fouling is unacceptable. We wish to augment that knowledge through widely publicising, through social media channels, local press, and radio, that we will be rigorously enforcing the dog control PSPO. However, in order to ensure that our resources are used most effectively we will continue to rely on information provided from the public as to when and where certain dog owners offend. In addition to dog fouling, the message needs to be broadcast to the public that there are certain



places where dogs are prohibited and also those that require dogs to be on leads at all times.

- 2.6** The Enforcement team will also shortly be piloting adverts on electronic displays that are located in around 70 bus shelters throughout the Vale of Glamorgan with the Operation Snoopy adverts. This will give greater coverage and a visual for all in the community to see. An example of a display can be seen below:



- 2.7** As we do not publicise where we are going to patrol specifically and by deploying plain-clothed officers, we operate under a concept of “We can’t be everywhere, but we could be anywhere.”
- 2.8** When schools break up for the summer holidays, our officers will have less parking issues in the town centres and outside schools and thus will be undertaking Operation Snoopy patrols during the early morning (from 05:30hrs.)
- 2.9** Over the past couple of months, the Enforcement Service has been engaged in Operation Elstree and has regularly deployed officers, from 20:00hrs. to 02:00hrs. in order to conduct foot and mobile patrols of Ogmore Common, Rivermouth car park, Southerndown (Dunraven Bay) and West Farm.
- 2.10** Attendance at these locations is purely intelligence-based and if similar intelligence were to be provided, as to who is responsible and where the dog fouling is happening in our communities, the team would be able to provide the same level of coverage under Operation Snoopy. It should be noted however that at present officers can only enforce dog fouling where the PSPO is in place.
- 2.11** The Enforcement Team Manager is currently assessing the number of enforcement officers in the team and resources required, considering the revised PSPO that we aim to go live with in March 2024.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** Long term – the principles of our Enforcement team are to Engage, Explain, Encourage, and finally Enforce. By working in this way, we can have a long-term positive impact in our communities by working together.
- 3.2** Prevention – Operation Snoopy will be a year-round operation and officers will be deployed both in uniform and in plain clothes. By taking appropriate action against offenders, we will also publicise the same and this should have a positive deterrent on future offending.
- 3.3** Integration – The Enforcement team works across a number of areas and integrates with them to make policy decisions. These policy decisions will reflect how the Enforcement team can operate.
- 3.4** Collaboration – We will co-ordinate days of action, throughout the year, both with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams of South Wales Police but also with our Shared Regulatory Service’s Animal Wardens and our Park Rangers. In so doing, we will be able to increase the size of the areas covered and take action where necessary.
- 3.5** Involvement – We will collaborate with our communities in tackling the issue of dog fouling by meeting with community groups and attending monthly PACT meetings throughout the Vale. We will also be highly visible in those communities and are looking to increase the number of Area Officers we have available.

### **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** Dog fouling is a major concern to many people, not just because of the mess it causes, but because it can be a health risk. Dogs may deposit roundworm eggs (toxocara canis) in their faeces, which become infectious after about 3 weeks, and can remain so for up to 2 years.
- 4.2** Anyone, but particularly children playing near to the ground, can run the risk of picking up and swallowing the eggs. The eggs then hatch in the intestine, burrow through the intestine wall into the blood stream and pass into the body.
- 4.3** Symptoms of toxocaral infection range from aches, dizziness and nausea to asthma and pneumonia, but as these symptoms can all be caused by other things, infections often go undiagnosed. In the UK there are around 100 cases of toxocariasis diagnosed each year.
- 4.4** In rare cases eye disease and loss of vision can be caused when the toxocara larva passes through the eye.
- 4.5** In addition to the above the issue of dog fouling may discourage people from visiting some of the Vale of Glamorgan’s natural local attractions.
- 4.6** Dog fouling has no reported effect on climate change.

## **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 5.1** The Enforcement Team is currently self-funded through the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices.

### **Employment**

- 5.2** The team currently employ eight full time enforcement officers and is assessing the number of enforcement officers in the team and resources required, taking into account the revised PSPO that will go live in March 2024. ....

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 5.3** Despite making important and often time-critical decisions, Enforcement Officers are still accountable through the law for their actions. Respect for an individual's human rights should be the central focus throughout the entire enforcement process.
- 5.4** All officers have an individual responsibility for ensuring that they are aware of relevant legislation and are informed about the extent of their legal powers and the context within which those powers can be properly exercised.
- 5.5** The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic British law. The Human Rights Act came into force in the UK in October 2000.
- 5.6** The Human Rights Act 1998 also requires all public bodies (like courts, police, local authorities, hospitals, and publicly funded schools) and other bodies conducting public functions to respect and protect your human rights.

## **6. Background Papers**

None.