

Ref: RDB/PM/BD/09.12.14

23rd January 2015

Councillor Bob Derbyshire,
Cabinet Member for the Environment,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Derbyshire,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 9th December 2014

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 9th December 2014. As you are aware the meeting considered an item titled 'Cabinet Response to a Joint Report of the Environmental and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committees Entitled: "Control of Dangerous Dogs in Cardiff"'. The comments and observations made by Members following this item are set out in this letter.

- Members welcomed the positive response to the report, particularly as 18 of the 20 recommendations were accepted and two were partially accepted.
- The Committee expressed an interest in finding out more about how Public Space Protection Orders will be applied under the new anti social behaviour legislation, for example, can they be equally applied to open public spaces and flat stair wells. The Director for the Environment agreed to ask Legal Services for advice on the matter; she felt that opinion should be readily available as DEFRA had probably provided guidance on the subject.
- The Committee felt that it would be very useful to have a report to summarise the changes created by the new anti social behaviour legislation and how these apply to the management of dangerous dogs. As the legislation and its application in Wales can vary when compared to

England, the Members felt that the report should provide practical guidance for people living in Wales.

- The Director for the Environment volunteered to raise the matter of how the new legislative changes for managing dangerous dogs will be applied in Wales at the next South Wales Environment Directors' meeting. This could raise the profile of the problem across the region and help identify the best practice being applied in the different parts of South Wales. The Committee welcomes this offer and looks forward to the feedback from the meeting.
- The Committee would be grateful if the Director for the Environment would ask the other authorities represented at the South Wales Environment Directors' meeting if they would be willing to support the idea of developing a universal dog chipping database in Wales. Members felt that lobbying for a universal Welsh dog chipping database would be far more effective if a large number of authorities were supportive of the idea.
- The Committee are in support of the proposed 10 minute rule and reintroduction of a dog licensing policy in the United Kingdom. They feel that this would improve the control of dog ownership, encourage responsible dog ownership and create a new income stream which could be used to fund educational initiatives to support responsible dog ownership.
- Members felt the memorandum of understanding between the Council and South Wales Police on the management of dangerous dogs should be reviewed and updated following the changes to anti social behaviour legislation. I would be grateful if you could inform the Committee of any proposals to review this working agreement and any proposed changes.
- An officer explained that a working group has been set up to review the impact of the changes to the anti social behaviour legislation. I would be grateful if you could inform the Committee of the group findings

(particularly those which impact on the management of dangerous dogs in Cardiff) once they are complete.

- During the meeting the Committee was told that there were no additional resources for dealing with the new anti social behaviour proposals for managing dangerous dogs in Cardiff. Much of this new work will be addressed within the Regulatory Services Collaboration which is in the process of being developed between Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend. Once working arrangements are finalised I would be grateful if you could inform the Committee as to how the Regulatory Services Collaboration proposes to manage the additional workload and if new efficiencies / economies of scale are sufficient to address the current income shortfall.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the requests made in this letter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. D. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Councillor Paul Mitchell
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc to:

Jane Forshaw, Director for the Environment
Tara King, Assistant Director for the Environment
Will Lane, Operational Manager – Regulatory Domestic Services
Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Office Manager
Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee