

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 JANUARY 2019</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>DOGS ON PUBLIC SPACES</b>		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR JASON ZADROZNY</b>		
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>YES</b>		
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>YES</b>		

### **Purpose of Report**

To report to Cabinet the results of the investigations following the motion on dogs on public spaces.

### **Recommendations**

1. That following investigations into the potential for a ban on all dogs from Council owned football and sports pitches Cabinet discontinues the proposal due to the limitations and costs of implementing such a restriction.
2. That Cabinet endorses the continuation of existing methods to help prevent and enforce against dog fouling within the District including the work seeking to establish free dog waste bags in conjunction with a private sector provider.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

A motion was raised by the Conservative Group in Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018 and re-presented on 11<sup>th</sup> October Full Council under Procedure Rule 23. This motion was “for the Council to consider banning all dogs from Council owned football and sports pitches and to explore options for the introduction of a PSPO.”

A further question was raised at the 29 November Full Council by the Butlers Hill Project Community Group in Hucknall: “The proposed banning of dogs from Ashfield sports pitches and parks is a move which will punish responsible dog owners who clean up after their pets. Will the portfolio holder responsible confirm that these proposals will not go any further?”

This Cabinet report therefore reports on the outcome of officers’ investigations, clarifies the current regulations and powers and recommends that no further additional action is taken.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

Accept the motion as proposed at the July Full Council and move forward with a new PSPO to potentially restrict dogs from all sports pitches, as requested. **Not recommended** because it is not feasible to do so. All pitches would need to be enclosed to prevent animal access and it is not financially viable to do so. See below under detailed information.

## **Detailed Information**

As stated above, this issue was the subject of a Motion at the July Full Council, re-presented at the October Full Council; and also a public question at the November Council. The issue has arisen because of public complaints about dog fouling on football pitches, which teams have to clean up before they can play. It was proposed, that this be dealt with by means of a new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

The Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 is a piece of legislation to enable the Council to introduce measures to curb anti-social behaviour specific to locations to help deal with the problems faced in local communities. Before a PSPO can be introduced, evidence must be gathered to substantiate the need and public consultation must be undertaken.

Cabinet will be aware that PSPOs have been in place for some time already. Most recently at Full Council on 26 July 2018, a PSPO was extended for a 3-year period from 1 October 2018, to include (amongst other things) a number of measures regarding dogs, for example:

- Actions against owners who permit dog fouling;
- Actions against owners who do not carry a receptacle for cleaning up their dogs' faeces;
- Dogs on leads by direction;
- Specified maximum number of dogs: 6;
- Dogs excluded from specific areas, for example enclosed play areas, enclosed sports facilities on parks (eg courts and bowling greens);
- Dogs on leads in specific areas, eg public highway and verges, churchyards and cemeteries.

These measures have been subject to detailed evidence gathering and have been subject to wide consultation with the community and stakeholders.

They provide sufficient means to deal with dog fouling on both open spaces and pitches.

As well as a robust application of existing measures; from January 2019, the Council's CPOs will be undertaking targeted patrols in known hot spot areas for littering and dog fouling and will enforce by means of Fixed Penalty Notices where necessary. The CPO Unit is now fully staffed and providing a visible presence in the District.

The Council, in partnership with a private sector provider, will aim to provide free dog bag units in each park for residents to make use of. These bags will be sited in convenient locations for dog walkers. Locations for these are currently being established for implementation by the end of the financial year.

These approaches will be monitored over the coming months and officers will report back to Portfolio Holders.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan:**

Place agenda: making Ashfield a clean and safe environment for visitors, residents and businesses. It is a key corporate priority to keep our streets and parks clean and safe for residents to enjoy.

Reducing ASB: dog fouling is of major concern to residents.

Perception that Ashfield is a good place to live: as above.

### **Legal:**

There are no legal implications as a result of the proposed recommendations. Existing PSPO provisions are set out in the body of the report.

### **Finance:**

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Implication</b>
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None
General Fund – Capital Programme	None
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

### **Risk:**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Public perception that this remains a problem	High visibility patrols by CPOs and ongoing publicity

### **Human Resources:**

No implications.

### **Equalities:**

*No implications.*

### **Other Implications:**

### **Reason(s) for Urgency**

*Not applicable*

### **Reason(s) for Exemption**

*Not applicable*

### **Background Papers**

*None*

### **Report Author and Contact Officer**

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