

**Full Council: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017**

**Administration Motion: Councillor Alison Cornelius**

**Keep our dog walkers under control**

Council notes a marked increase in the number of complaints from residents regarding large groups of up to 20 dogs being walked in public spaces by individual professional dog walkers. Residents have complained of personal distress when confronted with seemingly out of control dogs and of dog excrement which is not picked up.

Council recognises professional dog walkers provide a welcome service to those in the borough without the time or ability to walk their own dogs, but that this needs to be balanced with the safety of other residents and the cleanliness of our parks and open spaces.

Council further notes that, while it is an offence punishable by imprisonment under Section 3 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 for an individual in charge of a dog to allow it to be so out of control that it causes reasonable apprehension to a person that they will be injured, enforcement and prosecution of offences can be difficult. However the Council has powers under the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to introduce Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) to prevent their happening in the first place.

Guidelines by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) quote expert advice suggesting the maximum number of dogs which a person can control is six. Many authorities have responded by introducing PSPOs limiting the number of dogs which can be walked by a person at once. Haringey and Waltham Forest have set this at six; Brent, the City of London, Greenwich, Royal Parks, and Wandsworth have set the limit at four. It is a criminal offence to breach a PSPO, though the Council can offer a £100 Fixed Penalty Notice as an alternative to conviction. Wandsworth also issues up to 50 licences to walk a maximum of eight dogs under a bye-law applicable to certain parks and open spaces.

Council therefore requests the Environment Committee investigate introducing of a PSPO limiting the number of dogs an individual can walk at once, as well as issuing licences, and makes early contact with interest groups prior to a statutory consultation.

**Under Full Council Procedure Rule 23.5: if my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.**