

PUBLIC MEETING

The MINUTES of a PUBLIC MEETING of Peel Town Commissioners held in the Corrin Hall, Derby Road, Peel on Wednesday 24th April 2013 at 7.00p.m.

Present Mr. E C Beale (Chairman)
 Mr. I G Davison
 Mr. R K Harmer
 Mr. A G Jones
 Miss K Felton
 Mrs. C A Moughtin
 Mrs. J O'Halloran
 Mr N Cushing

Absent Mr. D J Lace

In attendance Mr. P G Leadley (Town Clerk)
 Mr. P Wozniak (Town Warden)

Action

DOG FOULING IN PEEL 12/674

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting to discuss residents concerns over dog fouling in the Town.

It was noted that 31 dog bins were placed at various locations around Peel and these were emptied twice per week. The estimated total of dog faeces removed from Peel was in the region of twenty four tonnes per annum. This showed that the majority of dog owners were responsible and used the dog litter bins. However there were a number of irresponsible owners that still allowed their dogs to foul. It was also reported that the Town Warden had issued twenty one fixed penalty notices over the past two years in respect of the Dog Control Byelaws.

Mr Jones referred to the Manx legislation, namely the Dogs Act 1990, and suggested that it was not as robust as the equivalent legislation in the United Kingdom. The assistance of the general public would be of great benefit to the Commissioners in reporting irresponsible dog owners

that allowed their dogs to foul and being prepared to make statements so that prosecutions would follow. Of significant benefit would be a lead from central government to strengthen the legislation and co-ordinate an Island wide approach to educate dog owners. Mr Jones would refer the matter to the Municipal Association to take it further.

Various members of the public expressed their views on this issue which included the following:-

Concerns at the low number of fixed penalty notices issued, more effort to educate the public perhaps via increased visits to the schools and a poster campaign. Police Constable Stringer indicated that a poster campaign using “eyes on the poster” watching you could prove effective as shown in a similar campaign in Newcastle to address the issue of stolen bicycles. This resulted in a 62% reduction in this particular crime. Police Constable Stringer suggested that a similar poster campaign targeting irresponsible dog owners may prove equally effective. Other points raised were the re-introduction of dog bags from dispensers. This service had been withdrawn due to abuse whereby large handfuls of bags were being taken by individuals at one time. Dog bags were still available from the Town Hall.

It was felt that a community effort with a volunteer group handing out dog bags and advice to dog owners could prove effective. Mrs. Moughtin also indicated that discussion of dog fouling on social networking sites such as Facebook had proved successful and she hoped that this would continue. The difficulties of bringing prosecutions were discussed at length and it was felt that the current Manx legislation could be strengthened. Reference was also made to additional

CCTV coverage and more staff being employed. These were expensive options that would increase the Town Rate.

It was stated that the rear lane at Marine Parade was a particular hotspot and it was suggested that a poster campaign targeting key areas around Peel could prove effective. Mrs. O'Halloran advised that one of the dog signs on the headlands had been vandalised and this was also an issue. She made a request to the community to be vigilant. Mrs O'Halloran suggested that the vets in Peel could also help by offering advice to dog owners who attended their surgeries with regard to the dangers of toxocara.

A further suggestion was made that other local authorities liaised together by allowing their Town Wardens to work as a team in one target area at a time and then move onto another town on a different date.

It was *AGREED* that dog fouling was an island wide problem and not just specific to Peel. It was suggested that whatever measures were considered they should be cost effective. It was felt that better education of the dog owning public and a poster campaign with publicity on the social networking sites could prove effective.

The meeting ended at 8.30p.m.

