

**REPORT FROM:** Head of Policy and Commissioning

**TO:** Colne and District Committee

**DATE:** 5 December 2024

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## Public Spaces Protection Orders – Parks and Sports Grounds

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on proposals and options for the extension of the Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) in relation to Parks and to Sports Grounds.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To, having invited comments from the public, approve the extension of the Parks and Sports Grounds Public Spaces Protection Orders generally and to include Parks and Sports Grounds in Colne and District specifically
- (2) To amend Schedule 1 of the Parks PSPO to include the land around Colne Youth Action Group Youth Centre at the request of Colne Town Council.

### REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To enable the Council and its partners to respond to concerns regarding behaviour that is detrimental to the quality of life in public spaces in Pendle, including enforcement action.

### ISSUE

1. A Public Spaces Protection Order each for Parks and for Sports Grounds were signed and sealed on 29 January 2019 for a period of three years and extended with amendments for a further three years in January 2022. During September members of the public and town and parish councils were encouraged to comment on the extension of the PSPOs for a further three years.
2. The general comments from the public are attached as Appendix 1. Some of the general comments assume the restrictions are new rather than a time extension of what is already in

place. Several responses relate to either the way the PSPOs have been enforced in the past or a perceived lack of enforcement currently.

3. As a result of the consultation with town and parish councils, Colne Town Council proposes the land at the CYAG Youth Centre (dogs on lead) is included in the Parks PSPO including all the prohibitions in Schedule 2.
4. Colne Town Council also suggested the Nelson and Colne College playing fields in Barrowford Road be included. However, the College has declined the offer.
5. The intention of the PSPOs and their extension is to continue to strike a balance between the needs of groups; families and individuals using the sports grounds for recreation and leisure and those using them as public open space; in particular dog walkers. Only where there is alternative provision or where there is a clear safety need do the PSPOs ban dogs altogether.
6. The current PSPOs and the draft extension orders are attached.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Policy:** The legislation reinforces the continuing role of the Council in responding to anti-social behaviour

**Financial:** The opportunity the legislation provides and public expectation imply that these powers will be used by the Council and cost will be incurred. It is anticipated that the implementation and the enforcement of the powers described above can be dealt with within existing staffing resources.

The cost of publicising the Orders (i.e. signage at all entrances of an area covered by an order per entrance) will be managed within approved budgets.

**Legal:** The Council has the lead role on the use of PSPOs. Members of the public have a right of appeal on the basis the Council did not have the power to make the order or to include particular prohibitions or requirements or that one or more of the preliminaries has not been complied with (eg consultation). Appeals are heard in the High Court.

**Risk Management:** The legislation supports those elements of the Risk Management Plan relating to community safety; environmental crime and environmental protection.

**Health and Safety:** Direct intervention in the enforcement of breaches poses a risk for the staff involved which is mitigated through the Council's risk assessments, lone working policy, use of the high risk database and working in partnership with other agencies.

**Sustainability:** The legislation supports those elements of the Sustainable Communities Strategy relating to community safety; environmental crime and environmental protection.

**Community Safety:** The legislation re-enforces the continuing role of the Community Safety Partnership; the Partnership Plan and local delivery on community safety within an area and county based strategic landscape.

**Equality and Diversity:** The legislation was subject to a detailed government impact assessment.

## Appendix 1

General	I am a wheelchair person that picks my dogs poo up, the issue I have is I constantly have to roll over other peoples poo to pick mine up with a long handle poop scoop. we need people out there with the authority to sort out the people that don't pick up...we need wardens on the prowl so to speak to catch these people please.
	As a Pendle resident, I would like to see continuation of dogs not being allowed in children's playgrounds etc. I would also prefer dogs to be on leads in parks as the large dogs are intimidating and some can be unpleasant as I found out in Marsden Park last year. Some owners have long leads which are a hazard as well whereas some are sensible and remove the poo etc,
	<p>In response to the vastly increased number of people owning dogs, I feel that there needs to be more focus on enforcing the current PSPO.</p> <p>Earby Rec for example is frequently used as a dog free-for-all, covered in dog mess and urine stains. It's disgustingly selfish when this area is used for playing sport. There is a designated fenced-off dog area but nobody seems to use it!</p> <p>I also feel that ALL parks should enforce the use of a lead. We like to sit on the grass and have a picnic, we haven't been able to for years due to unruly dogs. Running up and jumping on you, trying to steal food, scaring my daughter. If we want to have a picnic we go to Thompson Park in Burnley as there are no dogs allowed there at all. It is a bit of a trek from Earby but worth it for the peace.</p> <p>Dog owners get away with all sorts purely due to the current PSPO not being enforced.</p> <p>Parks are there for everyone to enjoy (which I understand includes a dog sometimes) but those dog-free families are getting ignored or just not thought about at all.</p> <p>Some people are allergic or scared of dogs, again these people are a second or non-thought.</p> <p>1) Leads mandatory in ALL parks, apart from in designated dog areas. 2) Actually enforce fines for the failure to clean up dog mess.</p>
	The Introduction of free use of Dog runs in West Craven has been good, more of them would be even better, unfortunately the design for safety was not consulted with users, the fencing was not high enough, there are gaps in the fencing ,and poorly maintained in poor weather, this was reported to the council with not much action taken. The signs erected in the park areas were not clear enough to the public to understand, the rules of use has caused problems but all these concerns could easily be addressed by proper consultation with all relevant
	The above order is fine as it is as long as it's enforced equally. The types of behaviour not allowed seems to be ignored yet dog walkers are singled out as the ones to obey the order
	<p>Hi further to the recent proposal via Penelope Counsell on Facebook is there a proposal or is this a consultation and who will be involved in the final decisions because due to the topic this is divisive subject on both sides. My following email touches on this and the general public spaces issue not just about dogs.</p> <p>.....</p>

	<p>To start with this proposal/consultation is a good thing.</p> <p>I am a dog owner and feel to satisfy those who do not like dogs an idea is to either create substantial areas for dog owners and dogs to mingle in a secure area.</p> <p>Will there be a chance for a public meeting at some point so whether people like dogs or not to express their own opinions on this matter by trying to take emotions out of the whole thing.</p> <p>Playgrounds are rightly secured so dogs not allowed. So why not consider practicality of having secure areas in each park for dogs.</p> <p>This is particular about the section of public spaces adjacent to Steven Burke cycling track and where cricket and football tend to be played as well as people with dogs. Dogs are social animals and need time to mingle with as many dogs as feasible as this helps them learn in dog world what is acceptable.</p> <p>The public space areas in force currently are not working on number of fronts. Using the section where both football and cricket is played adjacent to the cycling track which is a lovely space.</p> <p>Recently and this was reported that in the area where cricket is played the other weekend there were about 20 cars on the grass causing damage to the area. and</p> <p>Myself and another person had our dogs on the leads walking on the path heading toward entrance on canal side to the cycle track entrance a car came flying on at speed and the person with me had to jump onto the grass to avoid being hit. The driver just stared then carried on.</p> <p>If that was a child on the path on a back it could have been disastrous. I did some checking and as there is no restriction on folk playing cricket or anything else sport wise nor should there be this is pure and simple cars should not have access.</p> <p>The cars should not have access via the route into that area. There is a barrier that gets locked and for majority of time should not be opened.</p> <p>Cyclists can still access the track.</p> <p>There is a car park that can be accessed via cravendale avenue and that could be open more so then no cars in the public spaces.</p> <p>For instance the cricket playing/footy teams people can walk over bridge and down to cricket area or any other area.</p> <p>It will drastically reduce the near miss we had.</p> <p>Whilst getting views on dogs in public spaces and parks the above must be addressed</p> <p>The uk is well known as a dog loving nation and rightly so and should be encouraged not discouraged in public spaces.</p>
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	<p>We all know dogs should be on leads in areas however the risk of hitting all dog owners with possible restrictions because of a small minority of dog owners and their dogs is a mistake to do in my view.</p> <p>Also on this there is a perception amongst some communities and sheer panic if they see a dog whether on lead or not, I believe some of this in part is an education issue. And trying to help anyone in fear in this situation I tell as many people as I can when out by telling them if a dog approaches to stand still and usually a dog will have a sniff and carry on doing own thing. Never run as dogs see this a game of chase as its nature.</p> <p>I was waiting at bus stop on Leeds road the other day and as its a small area I always keep my dog to inside so folk can come past and a few people with pushchairs came past no drama then two ladies more or less at my side as passing saw my dog one jumped in the bloody road and almost got hit by a car and not first time I have seen this in my life sadly.</p> <p>I expressed my view she was lucky to not be run over and driver would have no chance to stop it was so close incident that could and should have been avoided in this instance.</p> <p>I am unsure what apart from trying to get message across the danger of reacting this way because it was pure luck the lady was not hit by the car.</p> <p>Do not penalise the majority of dog owners and dogs.</p>
	<p>Whilst I understand and fully support the need to reduce dog fouling I would like to ask that further restrictions not be imposed for the following reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The vast majority of dog walkers do pick up after their dog and by and large adhere to the rules. To restrict everyone from using areas is punishing everyone for the misbehaviour of the few.</li> <li>2. Barrowford park is popular with all kinds of people and especially in summer the lawns are dotted with people enjoying picnics and games. To reduce the space dog walkers can properly exercise their dogs (running, fetching, jumping) will create conflict and resentment.</li> <li>3. The restrictions are only useful if enforced. I have written to the council before regarding the, quite frankly, frightening behaviour of the people employed to hand out the fixed penalty notices to those breaking the rules. What reassurance will the council give that people, and women in particular, would not be subject to that level of intimidation again?</li> <li>4. I help to pay for the upkeep of these spaces via my council tax. I don't have children, I don't cycle, I don't play football or tennis or cricket. I support (both financially and ideologically) the range of activities available to people in the park and only ask that I am also allowed to also enjoy the spaces I help pay for by being allowed to roam across vast swathes of grass that is used for sports only periodically.</li> <li>5. Culturally speaking Britain has always been a nation of dog lovers. Let's not lose that. I am aware that more people now own dogs than ever before and</li> </ol>

	<p>obviously that can cause tensions with those who are less enamoured with our furry friends but to point the blame at all dog owners does not help to build bridges between communities.</p> <p>6. I feel that other groups and individuals also blight these spaces and yet there is nothing in the proposals about them and they were not subjected to intimidation during your recent crackdown on the PSPO leading me to question the real ethos of PSPO. If safety truly is a concern that how about tackling the people who ride e bikes and scooters through the park? I am aware of a number of people who have had to snatch children and pets out of their path. Or the amount of litter left after every sports meeting which unsightly and also potentially a safety concern? The parking of vehicles on sports pitches is damaging the grass and I feel some of the drivers do not take care driving where people are not necessarily expecting them to be.</p> <p>In short let's not paint all dog owners are irresponsible. Let's not subject them to harassment dressed up as protecting the law and let's encourage everyone to respect and enjoy the public spaces we all contribute to.</p>
	<p>As a responsible dog owner who cleans up after my dogs I feel that I should be able to walk them in parks and cemeteries. I understand that keeping them out of children's playgrounds and off sports areas for safety reasons is reasonable, but saying that a person can only walk in the cemeteries with one dog is ridiculous as long as your dogs are on a lead and you clean up any mess made what would be the issue especially with the state Nelson cemetery is in. I find this very unreasonable. Maybe the council should concentrate more on catching the people who vandalise and throw litter and cans in the parks and cemeteries instead of pursuing responsible dog owners constantly.</p>
	<p>I totally support the public spaces protection order as I feel dogs should be banned from children's playgrounds and be on leads in parks. The reason I believe this is that firstly I don't believe there is a place for dogs within the playground area due to the safety issues around children playing and dogs being in the same area but also the risk of dog mess. Even if dog owners are responsible and pick up there is a toxic remain not cleared away left on the floor or grass which is dangerous for children.</p> <p>I saw evidence of this at the Barrowford playing field both dog poo that had been left completely or mess left behind. This was most unpleasant for the small children trying to play football. I am seeing an increasing amount of dog poo all around our park at Ball grove which is so sad that such a beautiful park is being spoilt by irresponsible owners. This is why I believe keeping dogs on leads forces more owners to pick up mess as from my experience many of the piles of mess I see are as a result of dogs being let off leads and owners conveniently forgetting to pick them up !</p>
	<p>I would like to put forward my views on the Public Spaces Protection Order. I regularly use Bullholme and Barrowford Park. I use them to walk my dog, I strongly disagree with the current restrictions imposed on dog owners in these two areas, especially on Bullholme.</p> <p>Firstly, the large grassed area which, yes is used a couple of days a week for football, should be for all, not just sports. It's ridiculous that dogs are restricted to 2 meters, I cannot understand the reasoning behind this. Dogs should be allowed to run free across this grass. Just because it's on a lead less than 2</p>

	<p>meters does not mean that irresponsible dog owners will pick up after their dogs! If they have no intention of picking up after their dogs then whether the dog is on a lead or not is irrelevant!</p> <p>Secondly, I wish to point out that fining people for having their dogs off a lead or on a lead longer than 2 meters just in case they don't pick up after their dog's dirt is wholly ridiculous. As this is the case (I have it in an email from a member of your staff confirming that's why you're fining) then on that premise you should be fining people who are carrying food packaging and drinks bottles/cans etc with the presumption that they will not put it into the bin!</p> <p>I have to say that Bullholme is often covered in litter after a sporting event, far more rubbish there than dog dirt, including food which attracts vermin. Instead of fining innocent people start getting your staff out to catch the people who are not picking up after their dogs. Fine the minority culprits not the majority of responsible dog owners. This also applies to pavements in Barrowford, some are a real mess with dog dirt, it would be of benefit to catch these people.</p>
	<p>Ban paid dog walkers from using any green spaces to exercise more than 2 dogs at any time.</p>
	<p>I believe that dogs should not be allowed in parks.</p> <p>That is why I have stopped going. Dog owners are not responsible and letting dogs run around and fouling.</p>
	<p>I wish the current scheme to continue and more fines to be issued for dog fouling, we love our parks but dogs not on leads and not picking up their poo is shocking, that's why our favourite park is Thompson Park Burnley where there is a total dog ban, Pendle parks are terrible for people with dogs flouting all rules, we think dog's should be banned from all parks and playing fields</p>
	<p>The order is a great idea, your challenge is policing it.</p> <p>Bullholme park is a prime example. Dogs are frequently off leads and are often used by people providing dog walking services for multiple dogs.</p> <p>Both sets of football and cricket pitches are used by dog owners. The fouling has to be a risk to the children and adults playing on the pitches.</p>
	<p>I use Victory Park in Barnoldswick most days to walk my 2 dogs and have done for over 14 years.</p> <p>I am aware of the PPO and try to ensure that I keep to the rules whilst in the park. I keep my dogs on their leads and off the areas highlighted on the park plan however I am in a very small minority of people.</p> <p>the PPO has changed nothing.</p> <p>Most dog owners do not adhere to the rules and there are dogs running about everywhere with no apparent enforcement.</p> <p>Any signs put up in the park re the PPO are vandalised or removed.</p> <p>If you challenge people to put their dogs on a lead you get abuse.</p> <p>Members of staff from the council working in the park never challenge anyone.</p> <p>The PPO is currently serving no purpose apart from annoying those of us adhering to them.</p> <p>I don't see any case for renewal of the PPO without enforcement.</p>

I would like to comment on the above mentioned consultation.

As someone who is a relatively recent resident to Earby, and as a lifelong dog owner, I very much use and enjoy the various parks and greens spaces around me. Indeed, it is one of the things that attracted us to Earby in the first place. I would strongly object to being refused entry to these places, although I do agree that dogs should not be allowed in children's playground areas.

I have always been a responsible dog owner. I pick up after my dog and keep him on the lead around other people and other dogs, especially when I don't know them. I appreciate that not everybody likes dogs or may be scared or vulnerable. Even though I know my dog is very friendly and wouldn't hurt anyone, I also appreciate that he is clumsy and ignorant with no sense of personal space, and has the potential to accidentally hurt someone because of this.

I feel that dogs should always be kept out of children's playgrounds, and on places such as football fields, they should be kept on leads when there are games on. Ideally, they should be prevented from using the pitch area as a toilet, and designated dog toilet areas such as the one at Earby recreation ground are a great idea. I don't see why they should be prevented from having a run free on the area when it is not being used for sports. Dogs need spaces where they can be safely exercised off lead. Improving local footpaths, especially stiles (which should preferably be converted to gates), gates and markers, would encourage dog owners to use the fantastic amount of dog walking space away from the parks and recreation grounds.

Unfortunately, I very much agree that dog fouling is a big issue. So many dog owners are irresponsible and inconsiderate and do not pick up after their dogs. It shames us all and gives us all a bad name! Personally, I would like to see more enforcement of the current dog fouling laws, and increased designated dog toilet areas and dog poo bins. I personally, do call out dog owners who I see not cleaning up after their dogs and would support more of this. If the council would supply proper 'poop scoopers', I would happily pick up any extra dog poo I see when out with my own dog and would support 'dog poop picking up' campaigns similar to the litter picking ones you see sometimes. Which brings me to my other main pet peeve, which is litter!

I see the litter dropped everywhere! Even near litter bins! I cannot understand why people drop litter and it shows such disregard and disrespect for the local area and its residents, as well as making the place look filthy! I find littering as disgusting as dog fouling! I fully support more enforcement of littering laws, and would support community litter picking days. If the council would supply litter pickers, I would quite happily pick litter on my regular dog walks too. I do sometimes take a bin bag on my walks, specifically to do this, but sometimes it's better not to have to touch it by hand!

Finally, I would like to commend Pendle council on their parks and playgrounds, and their refuse department. I feel that overall, they do a very good job at maintaining the services and areas, although there is always room for improvement! I'm aware that in these tough financial times, they could be doing much worse and I'm grateful that they do such a good job! I would like a bit more street cleaning in areas, but also feel that residents should be playing a much bigger part in keeping their areas clean and smart by not littering and



	<p>cleaning up after their pets! Perhaps some campaigns and support for residents to enable them to do this would go a long way to help?</p> <p>Thank you for all you do, and for taking the time to read my thoughts. I hope they are somewhat useful.</p>
	<p>We are writing to share our views in regards to the forthcoming review of the PSPO for Victory Park, Barnoldswick.</p> <p>As regular users of the park, we would like to see the new PSPO relax the rules on having to have dogs kept on the lead, on the sports pitches, car parks, paths and roads. The majority of dog walkers have well trained dogs that enjoy the freedom of being off a lead and always pick up after them. The small minority of owners who allow their dogs to foul, would do so whether it was on or off the lead, so we don't see that the restrictive nature of the current PSPO helps with this matter. The responsible owners use common sense and never exercise their dogs on pitches etc whilst sports are being played.</p> <p>We are in agreement that dogs should be banned in the specific areas such as playgrounds and MUGAs, which we would never use anyway.</p> <p>It would be extremely disappointing if the PSPO doesn't get amended to allow dog walkers the freedom of exercising their dogs off the lead; which could again allow unethical enforcement agencies to bully and intimidate responsible residents of Barnoldswick.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to share our views,</p>
	<p>To whom it may concern , I would like to comment about the PSPO. As a responsible dog owner I totally abhor owners who don't pick up . But sadly the one's this is geared up for don't seem to get caught . I would not be bothered being asked by a police officer/ police community support officer but an officer of Town / parish / district council I would hope had the correct identification before approaching anyone. But who monitors the people who go up to Letcliffe park late at night and set fires in the little wood ? And leave broken glass all over ? Everyone who goes up there sees the debris but it continues .. so is anything done?</p> <p>Yet it's deemed acceptable to ask someone if they've a ' poo bag' whilst more serious anti social actions are happening</p>
	<p>I notice with interest the information about the potential for the council to renew the current PSPOs. I do not in any way, shape or form support the renewal of these orders. Dogs should rightly be required to be "under control" and their poo picked up at all times, but a lead is not the only way to achieve control if you are responsible.</p> <p>To research just some of the negative effects this has had yourself, search PSPO or any terms relating to dog walking and fines on the relevant Facebook groups. This will back up statements I make below and this comment was made by David Whipp on 21 February 2022 regarding the thugs at District Enforcement - "The company generate income from issuing fines and appear to go for the "easy pickings" of dogs off lead, rather than dog fouling offences. There have been a lot of problems with the approach used by the company, which has led to the call for changes to be made."</p>

By all means fine anyone littering or leaving dog poo behind, but please allow us as responsible dog owners to be able to enjoy our time outdoors with our animals without the threat of harassment. We cannot even let our dogs off lead in the fields around Barnoldswick. Where can we safely allow them to run and play? No, that enclosure in Victory Park is certainly NOT the answer.

I have the following comments based on points made in the document posted outside the park -

#### 1. Initial public consultation

You mention in the document posted outside Victory Park that there was an initial "public consultation". Nobody that uses the local parks in Barnoldswick were aware of this initial "public consultation" three years ago at all, so where this was advertised to maximise feedback remains a mystery, making the arrival of these orders rather unjust in the first place. Thankfully the renewal is at least mentioned on entry to Victory Park, but as it is not easy to see (it does not face visitors to the park) many dog walkers may still miss this. How widely are you advertising this and to what lengths are you going to get real feedback from dog owners?

#### 2. Importance of green spaces

You correctly state that parks and green spaces are important to dog walkers, but claiming that restrictions have been kept to a minimum certainly is FALSE in the case of people that live in Barnoldswick. The PSPOs you brought in singled all dog walkers out for persecution and totally inhibited their enjoyment of the green spaces they contribute to.

The harassment of ladies, older people and dog walkers out on their own drew many comments on the Facebook group for Barnoldswick. You should be ashamed of what this did to the mental health of many people. The stress this brought into all our lives was quite contrary to what owning a dog is supposed to be about. Having a walk and spending time playing in a safe space with your dog used to be quite medicinal prior to these restrictions. At the peak of your persecution it was simply better to avoid the park or ensure you are never alone in the event that one of your appointed thugs were ready to harass to ensure a suitable pay check came their way.

During all this time, it is noted by most park users, that -

- \* Littering by youths in and around the MUGA in Victory Park remained a major eyesore and there was never mention of these youths being harassed

- \* Huge amounts of litter left behind after football matches were being cleaned up by the council without complaint

While I do not condone dog fouling and ALWAYS pick up after my own dog, and at times after other dogs when I notice someone has left something behind, I certainly disagree with your use of a blanket ban on all dog owners from being able to enjoy the parks to freely exercise dogs. Walking with a dog on a short lead under threat of harassment is NOT the same as being able to freely enjoy the green spaces we as dog owners contribute to. **You need to deal with the guilty dog owners, which make up a TINY percentage of the**

**whole.** You may be surprised to learn that as responsible owners who pick up after our dogs, dog poo left behind is really offensive to us.

Dogs are not fluffy toys, they are sentient beings with a need to express natural behaviours and indeed to run and play freely. They need to destress just as much as humans do. The tiny quagmire of an enclosure you built in Victory Park might suit dog owners who are training a youngster or someone disinterested in training a dog properly at all, but is entirely unacceptable to those of us who take pride in the behaviour of our dogs. I would NEVER take my dog anywhere near that enclosure.

Suffice it to say that when dogs get more and more frustrated for lack of thorough exercise, their behaviour deteriorates in line with that. This should be more concerning as frustration can lead to far worse side effects like biting and barking.

Please note: It is NOT possible to thoroughly exercise a dog at the end of a lead unless you happen to be pretty athletic. It also does not allow a dog to just express their own natural behaviours.

In Barnoldswick, Victory Park is by far the most accessible park for a very large number of dog owners. You do not need to get in a car to reach it. Yet almost every square inch of the place is classified as "playing fields" - obviously to allow those playing football there to freely litter as they see fit. The areas in Victory Park that are not used as playing fields are also out of bounds to dogs to freely exercise. Why do we need so many playing fields? Colne has a magnificent park at Alkincoats for dog owners to enjoy but in Barnoldswick we just have space for litter louts to exercise by kicking balls around. Very fair indeed.

While Letcliffe Park has fewer restrictions, it is unreasonable and frankly irresponsible from an environmental point of view to expect every dog owner to get in a car and drive up there once, twice or more per day. I believe even dog owners in Letcliffe Park were harassed by your hired thugs while dogs were getting out of cars and dared set a foot on the car park. Claiming that this was for safety is just laughable. It is a quiet area, nobody should be zooming about anyway because it is frankly not possible, and the car park is not securely fenced off to prevent dogs from reaching it once at the park. This was absolute proof that the council was acting with outright malice towards all dog owners.

This is the Facebook post of one such a victim of this. Her name is Laurie Peake and she posted it on 7 Nov 2022 -

"I was given a £100 fine for anti-social behaviour on Letcliffe Park earlier today for letting my Cockapoo off the lead to walk a couple of feet from the car on the lower car park to the grass.

I was the only car and person on the park (see photo). My dog was on the lead in the car but as I was the only person and car on the park, I let her off the lead to jump down from the car and go a couple of steps to the field.

As I walked down the field, a car appeared and a man ran across to me to issue me with this ticket, saying it was an offence to let the dog off the lead on the car park.

I have two objections to this: 1) there is no signage whatsoever on the lower car park to say where you can and cannot walk your dog on or off the lead.

	<p>There should be clear signage that dogs aren't allowed to get out of the car onto the car park without a lead even though they are allowed on the field without one.</p> <p>2) that my taxes pay for two people to drive around waiting to fine a 65 year old law abiding woman for anti-social behaviour on a cold and windy Monday afternoon.</p> <p>I intend to appeal but wonder if anyone else has had such an experience and can advise?"</p> <p>3. Dogs are banned outright from play areas for young children.</p> <p>This is not a problem if the area is fenced. In Victory Park there is a junior cycle track that is not fenced, so it is not possible to avoid the place entirely. While a fence would be unsightly, I would suggest that once you have done away with these unreasonable PSPOs, you use a less offensive approach to reminding dog owners to do their best to avoid this area. However, fining someone should be out of the question unless it is fenced.</p> <p>4. The PSPOs are in force to protect people from the problem of dog fouling.</p> <p>FALSE - It is ineffective for this purpose. Those who leave dog poo will leave it whether the dog is on or off lead. Banning everyone will NEVER change the behaviour of the irresponsible few. If it did, you would never see dog poo on a pavement because pretty much 99% of dogs are on leads near roadways and yet there you find poo as well. It is also notable that at the entry to Victory Park on the left side as you walk down, there has until recently been a persistent offender leaving dog mess daily. The problem seems to have gone away for the moment but clearly your PSPOs targeting everyone meant nothing to this person who likely allowed their dog to foul there at unsociable hours.</p> <p>If someone did have multiple dogs with them and they took no notice of what their dog/s were up to - there is someone that needs an eye keeping on them. If they are inattentive and allow a dog to foul, fine them! Surely fining someone actually leaving dog poo behind is the way to tackle the problem. Fining the innocent will never change the behaviour of the guilty, will it?</p> <p>5. Dog owners can be asked to prove they have a means to pick up.</p> <p>GREAT IDEA and I totally support this. However, keep in mind the thought that there is just a chance that someone has just used their last bag. Now from the dog owners perspective, if this was to be harshly policed and you are caught with one bag left - do you pick up or keep the bag to avoid the fine? I tend to have lots of bags in 99% of cases and I tie a spare to my dogs lead just in case I somehow get caught short. However, even a responsible dog owner could be caught short. In this case I would say that the person "policing" needs to use a bit of discretion and judgement and evaluate the person they are talking to. In the main though, I would rather face a fine for not having a poo bag with me, which is a totally valid concern, than for my dog being off the lead. Kindly do not entrust thugs like District Enforcement with the task of having a civilised conversation.</p>
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