

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Littering and dog fouling – penalties and enforcement issues

Statement issued by the Comité des Connétables on 31 May 2016

The Comité des Connétables has issued its report on the consultation on littering and dog fouling.

The consultation was held at the end of 2015 and sought views on the issue of litter, including dog fouling, the current penalties and enforcement options available and alternative options which might be considered.

The online survey was completed by 435 people. The responses show that 80% consider littering and dog fouling in public places is a problem in Jersey is somewhat, quite or extremely problematic. But whilst 20% consider littering an extreme problem, nearly double (37%) put dog fouling in this category.

The options considered most effective to discourage littering and dog fouling are more policing to discourage littering and dog fouling and introduce new Fixed Penalty legislation.

The options considered least effective to discourage littering and dog fouling are use existing legislation, make greater use of “words of advice” and occasional campaigns.

The Chairman of the Comité, Connétable Len Norman, said -

Littering and dog fouling is an issue which quite clearly infuriates the public. The consultation shows the public is looking for a more proactive response.

Eco-active is launching a new campaign to coincide with World Environment Day (Sunday 5 June 2016). The Connétables are working with stakeholder partners and we intend to pool resources and carry out campaigns and policing in various parts of the island.

The consultation responses also showed support for introducing fixed penalty legislation and we will be considering how to take this forward. However, we do not consider it is an appropriate time to pursue the DNA profiling of dogs as the views on this were mixed.

Dropping litter, and not clearing up dog faeces, is an offence under Jersey law. The penalty is a fine of up to £500 but, if the offence is dealt with at a Parish Hall Enquiry, a penalty of up to £200 may be imposed.

In 2011 the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel carried out a review of the policing of beaches and parks. The Panel concluded that the existing legislation is sufficient but did say the States and parish authorities should work together to enforce the existing regulations addressing antisocial behaviour and littering as a priority.

Connétable Steve Pallett of St Brelade, who took the lead in launching the consultation, said:

All agencies must work together to tackle the issue and to increase pride in the island – littering and dog fouling is anti-social behaviour.

As a dog owner myself, I am becoming increasingly frustrated at those who choose to ignore their responsibilities. There is no excuse for not picking up after your dog and the time has come to prosecute rather than warn offenders.

From 5 June 2016, there will be zero tolerance – this will mean charging a person rather than asking them to remove the litter or dog faeces.

The Eco-active campaign will target hot spots identified by the public. But the public should be aware that officers will be policing across the island in the coming weeks.

Let's use the bins provided for litter rather than dropping or throwing it away carelessly. It's really very easy to take a bag with you when walking your dog and to dispose of the 'dog poo' in a bin – and this applies to those who walk several dogs for other people as well. In Australia you are liable to be fined if you don't have a 'poo bag' in your possession when in control of a dog.

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