

AGENDA 15, Enc xi) NCC Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order

Purpose of Report

To inform Members of Northumberland County Council's consultation on the proposed renewal of the Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and to consider whether the Town Council wishes to make representations, particularly regarding dog fouling on sports pitches, as emailed [17th November 2025].

Background

Northumberland County Council has issued a Notice of Consultation on a proposed new Dog Control PSPO, intended to come into force on 31 January 2026. The proposed Order will replace the current PSPO which expires on 30 January 2026.

The proposed PSPO largely replicates existing provisions:

- Requirement to remove dog fouling
- Exclusion from children's play areas, multi-use games areas and tennis courts
- Seasonal beach restrictions (Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Blyth, 1 May - 30 September)
- Dogs on leads in cemeteries and on A/B classified roads
- Dogs on leads by direction of authorised officers
- Maximum of six dogs per person
- Requirement to provide name and address when suspected of breach

Penalties remain unchanged: fixed penalty of £100 (£80 if paid within 7 days) or fine up to £1,000 on conviction.

Local Consideration - Sports Pitches

As previously circulated to Cllrs, dog fouling on sports pitches is a recurring issue in Ashington and across Northumberland. This poses both a nuisance and a public health risk, particularly to children and young people participating in sport. The parasite *Toxocara canis*, present in dog faeces, can cause serious illness if transmitted via contaminated soil.

Several local authorities have already extended PSPO provisions to include sports pitches:

- Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC prohibits dogs from all marked sports pitches
- Pendle Borough Council has a dedicated Sports Grounds PSPO
- Malvern Hills District Council applies restrictions to parks and sports fields
- Hackney Council recently amended their PSPO to include sports pitches

Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 permits such restrictions where activities have a detrimental effect on quality of life, are persistent, and are unreasonable.

Consultation Details

The consultation closes on **Sunday 21st December 2025**.

Representations may be submitted:

- Via the Council's website: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/notices>

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- By post to: Gemma Tokell, Senior Animal Welfare Officer, Stakeford Depot, East View, Stakeford, Choppington, NE62 5TR
- By email: gemma.tokell@northumberland.gov.uk

Options for Members

Cllrs may wish to consider that they submit:

1. Representations to Northumberland County Council requesting that NCC, as the designated authority with legal powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, undertakes evidence gathering regarding dog fouling on sports pitches and formally consults on the inclusion of sports pitches within future PSPO provisions.
2. Representations supporting the proposed PSPO as drafted without seeking additional provisions.
3. No representations to the consultation.

Recommendation

That Cllrs consider the consultation notice and determine whether to make representations to Northumberland County Council requesting that NCC undertakes evidence gathering and formal consultation on the inclusion of sports pitches within the Dog Control PSPO. This would be required in advance of any future PSPO.

NORTHUMBRLAND COUNTY COUNCIL - Notice of Consultation:

Proposal to make a Public Spaces Protection Order for the control of dogs

Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, Part 4

TAKE NOTICE that **Northumberland County Council** ("*the Council*") proposes to make a **Public Space Protection Order** ("*PSPO*") under section 59 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("*the 2014 Act*") for the control of dogs in its area.

The Proposed PSPO:

- 1 The proposed PSPO will be entitled **The Northumberland County Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order**, and it is intended that it will come into force on **31st January 2026**.
- 2 The proposed PSPO will replace the current Dog Control PSPO which originally came into force on 31st January 2020 for a period of three years and was subsequently extended to remain in force for a further period of three years until 30th January 2026.
- 3 The proposed PSPO will have substantially the same effect as the current PSPO but with a further restriction.
- 4 The effect of the proposed PSPO will therefore be:
(a) **The fouling of land by dogs**

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To require a person in charge of a dog which defecates in a public space to remove the faeces from the land forthwith.

(b) The exclusion of dogs from land

To prohibit a person in charge of a dog from taking or allowing that dog into any area that it is excluded from, namely:

- (i) all enclosed children's play areas within the administrative county of Northumberland at any time;
- (ii) Any multi-use games area or tennis court to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access to;
- (iii) That part of the beach at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea identified in the PSPO at any time from 1st May to 30th September inclusive;
- (iv) That part of the beach at Blyth identified in the PSPO at any time from 1st May to 30th September inclusive.

(c) Dogs on leads

To require a person in charge of a dog to keep it on a lead of not more than 1.5 metres in length at all times on any land which is used as a memorial, burial ground, cemetery or garden of remembrance together with any associated land; or which is a

(d) Dogs on leads by direction

To require a person in charge of a dog to put and keep it on a lead of not more than 1.5 metres in length when directed to do so by an authorised officer of the Council or by a police officer, where that is necessary to prevent a nuisance annoyance or disturbance to any other person or the worrying of any animal or bird.

(e) Maximum number of dogs

To restrict the maximum number of dogs to be under the control of any one person in a public place to no more than six, subject to the exemptions set out in the proposed PSPO.

(f) Requirement to provide name and address

A person in charge of a dog and suspected to be in breach of the PSPO will be required to confirm their full name, address and date of birth when asked to do so by an authorised officer of the Council or by a Police officer; and it shall be a breach of the PSPO to knowingly make any misstatement to the officer requesting such information.

5 The provisions of the PSPO will not apply:

- (a) where a person in control of a dog has a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with the terms of the PSPO; or
- (b) where the owner, occupier or other person or authority having control of the land in question has consented (generally or specifically) to the activities which would otherwise be a breach of the PSPO.

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6 The requirements of the PSPO insofar as they relate to the fouling of land by dogs, or the exclusion of dogs from land (as the case might be), will not apply to a person who has a disability and is in charge of an Assistance Dog that mitigates that person's disability.

7 Any person found guilty of an offence of failing to comply with the terms of the PSPO will be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (currently £1,000).

8 Alternatively, an opportunity to discharge liability to conviction may be offered by an authorised officer by allowing payment of a fixed penalty of £100 (reduced to £80 if paid within 7 days).

Consultation

9 The full text of the proposed PSPO together with the maps showing the extent of the exclusion areas referred to in paragraphs 4(b)(iii) and (iv) designated carriageway (A or B classified roads) together with the adjoining footpaths and verges.

above will be available for public inspection until **Sunday 21st**

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/notices>

10 Any representations or comments on the terms of the proposed PSPO should be made via the website or sent to:

Gemma Tokell
Senior Animal Welfare Officer
Northumberland County Council
Stakeford Depot
East View
Stakeford
Choppington
NE62 5TR
or e-mailed to **gemma.tokell@northumberland.gov.uk**

so that they are received by no later than **Sunday 21st December 2025**.

11 The Council will consider all representations and comments received before deciding whether or not to make the PSPO.