

**P-05-779 Compulsory scanning of domestic pets for microchips by councils
- Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 04.10.17**

Dear Assembly

I have just picked up your email, and am responding straight away so as not to miss the deadline. I would greatly appreciate if you could let me know this submission is of sound standard to yourself and has been accepted.

We understand the issue surrounding the scanning of dogs and many dog wardens will now scan dogs found, however not all. Our focus argument is surrounding cats as there currently is not requirement councils scan them either. Although many councils adopt the approach, we have found many of which will selectively scan, for many reasons which is why we feel the system should be looked at and, if a council's waste contract does require employees to scan, they should be doing. As the body who speaks to people on a daily basis we have had numerous reports where cats have essentially slipped through the net where councils have said this was an accident, but it is happening time and time again. A council who claims to scan should not be leading residents to believe they are scanning all cats found when as little as 1 in 10 may be being checked. This is a UK wide issue but we are hoping Wales can set the example and understand this is an issue for people.

We have an official campaign and under this we contacted all the councils data direct ourselves. As a result of this we concluded the data we did. We do try and stay in contact with all councils on this issue and I can confirm that, since this petition went live there has been a change. Neath Port Talbot have now began trialling microchip readers during the day and, if successful, they hope to introduce it to their nightly service also. Powys council technically currently do not scan, however we have been working with them and did not include them in the list due to them agreeing they would introduce scanners if we were able to help with the donation of them. We work closely with charities such as Cats Protection and PDSA and our friends at Cats Protection were very happy donate the scanners to Powys so that is successfully in progress now and should be being rolled out any day now.

Although there are now just 5 councils who do not scan domestic pets found in a lot of cases, all around the UK, we have found that there are flaws in the system where many cats are falling through the net due to various reasons and there is no real order to this procedure. Not all councils of course, but many. Many of these have been documented in the media, one of which included a lady who was so distraught a council who did claim to scan, sent her cat direct to the landfill site without scanning him, she went to the landfill site to search herself which is just

heart breaking. It is such a cheap policy to impose. Scanners can come as cheap as just £5 and refrigerators can be purchased very cheap. An example is Carmarthenshire who, since we contacted them, they voluntarily opted to introduce microchip readers. They actually purchased a second hand refrigerator at minimal cost, and this is perfectly acceptable to pet owners. The rest of the process is simply what councils do with the bodies currently so we do strongly feel it is such a cost effective and simple law to introduce, plus we are in a position to try and help in any way we can should the Assembly require us to which will help get this implemented without any extra burden to councils, and of course see it be successful. We would also like to add that we feel, should Wales make it a mandatory requirement, it could place even less stress on local councils if the requirement is for new waste contracts only. So it would not be over night but with all new contracts so councils could quite easily phase it. We do ask that if the restraints to you considering this is financial, please do opt to work with us on that and we can help where possible. Our larger partners such as Cats Protection and PDSA would also be willing to help where possible and, should we need to, we will include them in talks to find a solution which works best for yourselves and of course us, the charities, striving to achieve this result. If you agreed this apply to new waste contracts only, we will have good time to work with those councils to help make it as less a burden on them as possible and of course help make a success of it.

Both cats and dogs are regarded as family members in contemporary time and owners do need that closure should the worst ever happen. We have had reports of people walking the streets calling their pet for weeks/months when a simple phone call from the council could give them that closure. It is very distressing for us to speak to people greatly affected by this when they find out the council simply disposed of their beloved pet like a bag of general waste, and did not have the decency to at least notify them. We have also had reports of people going to their local landfill site searching for the body themselves which is gravely unnecessary and heart breaking. This is already part of the work local authorities do, and we require no new overhaul of the current system. The councils currently store and dispose of them after a period of time. We just ask they scan those brought in before they freeze the bodies, and simply notify the owner either themselves or via an external source, which we can also arrange to be set up if need be. We just want a little fairness and compassion installing and, unfortunately, this will only come as a result of legislation being in place.

We are extremely happy to speak further in regards to this and welcome you to meet us on the 10th when we will be appearing at the Assembly.

Kind regards

Mandy