

**From:** Ministers Office <[minister-drcd@corr.cloud.gov.ie](mailto:minister-drcd@corr.cloud.gov.ie)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:27 PM  
**To:** Contact User <[contact@waterfordcouncil.ie](mailto:contact@waterfordcouncil.ie)>  
**Subject:** DRCD-MO-00856-2023

Ms. Honor Dunphy

Meetings Administrator

Waterford City & County Council

City Hall

The Mall

Waterford

Our Ref: DRCD-MO-00856-2023

Your reference HD/MNR/MN/2023/69

Dear Ms. Dunphy,

I refer to your correspondence to the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys, T.D. in relation to dog control legislation.

In late 2022, Minister Mc Conalogue was tasked by the then Taoiseach, now Tánaiste Micheál Martin to lead a cross-government review of legislation regarding dogs. Minister Humphreys met with Minister Mc Conalogue on Monday 9th January and they requested officials to convene a working group on the control of dogs' issue. This group, which was chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and included representation from local authorities, produced a report in March.

Minister Humphreys was pleased to recently announce significant progress in the implementation of recommendations assigned to my Department.

Under the Control of Dogs Acts, all dogs must be under effectual control at all times in a public place. On 9th November, the Minister signed Statutory Instrument 540 of 2023 to increase on-the-spot fines for offences under the Control of Dogs Acts 1986 to 2014, including introducing a graduated fine system, and trebling fines for serious offences from €100 to €300. Dogs which

are worrying sheep are not under effectual control, and therefore subject to on-the-spot fines of €300.

Minister Humphreys also announced the establishment of a high-level stakeholder group to provide a forum for stakeholder organisations to express their views on issues and possible solutions related to dog control issues. The issue of restricted dog breeds and possible amendments or changes to the current arrangements will be discussed by this group, in order to inform policy development in this area.

Also on 9th November the Minister announced €2m in funding for local authority dog control services to improve their facilities to meet the demand. This includes an allocation of €64,433 to Waterford City & County Council. This funding has now issued to all local authorities.

The Minister was pleased to secure additional funding in Budget 2024 to support an awareness campaign in relation to Responsible Dog Ownership, which is hoped will include awareness raising in relation to matters such as local authority bye-laws in relation to where dogs are and are not permitted.

Officials in this Department are reviewing the existing legislative provisions under the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 and the Control of Dogs Acts 1986 to 2014. Updates to the existing legislation are required and it is proposed that amendments will be made through a Control of Dogs and Dog Breeding Establishment Miscellaneous Bill. The Department looks forward to working with stakeholders throughout the legislative process.

Yours sincerely,

*Éamonn Mc Cormack*

**Éamonn Mc Cormack**

*Programme Manager to Heather Humphreys T.D.*

*Minister for Rural and Community Development*

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**An Roinn Forbartha, Tuaithe agus Pobail**

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