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**COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS
SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**



**MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Monday, June 12, 2017**

**QUESTION NO.2**

**QUESTION: Councillor S. Holland**

To ask the manager whether inspections are carried out at areas where urban horse ownership is prevalent to ascertain whether horses are microchipped and have appropriate paperwork in place?

**REPLY:**

The [**Control of Horses Act 1996**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1996/en/act/pub/0037/index.html) allows the Council to introduce bye-laws designating certain areas as control areas for horses. (The term "horse" under the Act covers horses, donkeys and mules.) When the Council makes such bye-laws, it must follow certain procedures, including giving details of the proposed control areas in local newspapers.

South Dublin County Council's Control of Horses Byelaws were last made in 2014

Horse owners living within a designated control area must have a licence in order to have a horse. A licence normally lasts for a year and the Council keeps a register of all licences issued.

When applying for a licence, applicants must satisfy the Council that they are a fit person to keep a horse and that the horse will be properly maintained and stabled. If a person under 16 owns a horse, the head of the household in which they live is considered to be the owner, as horses may not be sold to anyone under 16 years of age.

Anyone permitted to have a horse in a public place must ensure that it is wearing a bridle and is under adequate control.

It is illegal to allow a horse to graze, feed, stray or remain in a public place without the consent of the local authority.

Anyone wishing to ride your horse on a public road may only do so provided that the horse has a licence, is fitted with a bridle and is under the control of someone over 16 years of age.

**Inspection and offences**

Gardaí or staff authorised by the Council (currently authorised Contractor) may decide to inspect premises and access must be provided to them to do this. They can also seek evidence of a horse licence and have powers of search and arrest if they suspect cruelty to horses.

The legislation specifies several offences, including failure to remove a horse from a public place or control area and dangerous use of a horse.

Resource required to adequately administer a more extensive inspection regime are currently being examined.

Similarly, the establishment of a subcommittee of the SPC to consider a review of the current Byelaws is scheduled for discussion at the September 2017 SPC meeting.

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