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



**MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Monday, February 12, 2018**

**QUESTION NO.24**

**QUESTION: Councillor F. Timmons**

That a report be given on Horse control for 2017, how many horses were seized? How many where euthanized? And what was the total cost to SDCC for Horse Control?

**REPLY:**

South Dublin County Council has responsibility for the administration of the [**Control of Horses Act 1996**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1996/act/37/enacted/en/html), which makes provision for the licensing of horses in urban areas (and other areas) where horses cause a danger to persons or property or nuisance.

Problems associated with keeping such horses in an urban area may include neglect and cruelty to the animals, damage to public property including parks, sports pitches and grass verges, danger posed to public safety and general nuisance posed by presence of horses in public places.

South Dublin County Council has a proven track record in the effective management of this service, and also works closely with the DSPCA in monitoring horses within South Dublin County.

All reports of loose/stray horses which are received from elected representatives, members of the public and Council staff are considered in a timely manner and, as appropriate, are referred to the contractor engaged by the Council for the provision and operation of the horse seizure service and horse pound facility.

All seized horses are taken to the horse pound facility where they are microchipped on arrival, (if not already microchipped) and examined by a veterinary practitioner. Horses which are unsuitable for re-homing or not reclaimed by their owners within a period of five days from the date of seizure and detention the Council (or Garda Superintendent) may dispose of by way of sale, animal euthanasia or re-homing.

The Ballyowen Equine Centre, opened in February 2017 and operated under an Annual Management Licence, was developed by South Dublin County Council in collaboration with Department of Agriculture Fisheries and the Marine (DAFM) and Clondalkin Equine Club in order to address the keeping of horses in an unregulated and uncontrolled manner which resulted in serious animal welfare and public safety issues and which were a cause of concern for the Council, Gardai, central government and the communities of these areas.

This Council has recently spearheaded the establishment of the Dublin Region Horse Welfare Task Force comprising representatives from the 4 Dublin Local Authorities, the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM), the DSPCA; An Garda Síochána; Clondalkin Equine Club; Fettercairn Youth Horse Project and various other charity / voluntary groups and NGOs to prevent cruelty to animals, and to promote responsible urban horse ownership.  Four specific working groups have been established covering specifically:

* Indiscriminate breeding,
* Animal welfare,
* Education and awareness,
* Legislation and regulation (acts and Byelaws) pertaining to animal welfare and control of horses

Recommendations from these working groups will be examined and implemented as appropriate.

During 2017 227 horses were impounded, 5 horses were reclaimed by their owners, 9 horses were rehomed and 213 horses were euthanised.

South Dublin County Council receives subvention from DAFM for the delivery of the service and the following is an outline of expenditure and income for 2017.

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| --- | --- |
| Total Expenditure       | €179,372.73  |
| Total Income | € 71,108.04 |
| Nett Cost | €108,264.69 |

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