

## **Report of the Divisional Officer (Trading Standards)**

**Corporate Services Cabinet Advisory Committee – 28 September 2016**

### **SMOKE FREE SPACES UPDATE - SMOKE FREE BEACH REPORT AND EVALUATION**

#### **BACKGROUND**

On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016, as part of Swansea's Healthy City Commitment and following work within the city under the Smoke free spaces umbrella, The City and County of Swansea launched the trial of a smoke free beach at Caswell Bay, Swansea.

The launch of the voluntary ban was in collaboration with a number of partner agencies such as ABMU, Public Health, Ash Wales, Stop smoking Wales and Surfers against sewage.

Prior to the launch the businesses at Caswell were consulted and signage was erected.

The launch was very well supported and children from Bishopston primary school were invited to take part in organised activities on the beach arranged by our Play team and The Environment Centre. Fortunately it was a dry sunny day and support was also shown from the local lifeguards and surf school at Caswell.

The Lord Mayor officiated over the event and formally launched the smoke free beach surrounded by a number of local councillors, heads of service and interested parties.

Media and social media involvement ensured the launch had both local and national coverage and prompted a series of chats on social media sites (which was recorded for evaluation purposes).

#### **EVALUATION**

During the period immediately following the launch to date a number of evaluation methods have been used to evaluate the responses to the launch of the voluntary ban.

It was felt that the immediate response and comments should be noted from the conversations and comments posted on social media sites such as facebook and twitter, the subject seemed to generate a number of conversations and reached a large number of people as all parties involved re-tweeted the information on their respective sites. A reporting mechanism was set up on our council website for any comments/observations to be reported see [www.swansea.gov.uk/smokefreespaces](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/smokefreespaces)

Officers visited the beach to speak with users and on patrol lifeguards in early summer as concern had been raised about the fact that the ban was voluntary and

without officers policing it, issues would be reported to the lifeguards. At this time the lifeguards spoken to had not experienced any direct problems from the ban but felt due to the poor wet weather was not a fair picture due to the low number of beach users at this time.

Throughout the school holidays in August and September a number of visits were made to Caswell beach and users were asked to participate in a questionnaire relating the voluntary ban with their views and suggestions being recorded.

136 questionnaires were completed and the responses to questions noted below:-

Q1. Are you aware of the voluntary ban?

|       |                                   |     |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Yes   | 53                                | 39% |
| No    | 82                                | 60% |
| Other | 1 (comments available on request) | 1%  |

Q2. Do you support the ban?

|       |                                   |     |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Yes   | 123                               | 90% |
| No    | 5                                 | 4%  |
| Other | 8 (comments available on request) | 6%  |

Q3. Did the ban influence your decision to use the beach?

|       |     |     |
|-------|-----|-----|
| Yes   | 4   | 3%  |
| No    | 128 | 94% |
| Other | 4   | 3%  |

Q4. Does asking people not to smoke set a good example to young people?

|       |     |     |
|-------|-----|-----|
| Yes   | 127 | 94% |
| No    | 7   | 5%  |
| Other | 2   | 1%  |

Q5. Do you smoke?

|     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Yes | 13  | 10% |
| No  | 123 | 90% |

Q6. Do you think refraining from smoking on the beach keeps it cleaner?

|       |                                   |     |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Yes   | 124                               | 91% |
| No    | 10                                | 8%  |
| Other | 2 (comments available on request) | 1%  |

Q7. Have you seen the sign?

|     |    |     |
|-----|----|-----|
| Yes | 62 | 46% |
| No  | 74 | 54% |

Q8. Do you think the sign is clear?

|       |                                   |     |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Yes   | 53                                | 39% |
| No    | 76                                | 56% |
| Other | 7 (comments available on request) | 5%  |

Q9. Do you have any other comments regarding making this beach non-smoking?

Various comments made which are available upon request.

Q10. Would you like to see a similar smoking restriction on other beaches?

|       |                                   |     |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Yes   | 120                               | 88% |
| No    | 7                                 | 5%  |
| Other | 9 (comments available on request) | 7%  |

The feedback from the social media sites seem well balanced in that where there is support for the ban it is negated by comments indicating the ban is draconian and takes away people's rights. Copies of the threads and conversations are available on request.

## **CONCLUSION**

The trial ban has been well received with 90% of the people questioned being in support of the ban. 88% want to see similar restrictions on other beaches within Swansea however only 3% of people said it influenced their decision to use the beach.

94% of those questioned agreed that asking people not to smoke sets a good example to young people.

Of the 136 people questioned 90% were non-smokers,

The questionnaire generated a lot of comments around litter with 91% of people agreeing that refraining from smoking on the beach keeps it cleaner.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As can be seen from the above evaluations, although there was support for the ban, only 39% of the people were aware of it.

If we planned to make other beaches within Swansea smoke free then maybe we need to give some further consideration to signage as under half the people surveyed (46%) claimed to have seen the sign with 56% feeling the sign was unclear. As we know the signage and publicity around the ban is vital to the success of the voluntary ban.

## SMOKE FREE SCHOOL GATES - UPDATE



Following the soft launch of 'Best Start Swansea' The Jacks family in October half term, it is hoped that we can follow on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 with the launch of our Smoke free school gates.

Work is underway to get the above signage delivered to all primary schools in Swansea in preparation for the launch.

The school used to launch the voluntary ban is not yet confirmed; however partners such as Public Health and Ash Wales have indicated their enthusiasm for the event by offering support such as sessions, workshops and competitions with the school.

Once the date is confirmed it is hoped that the Lord Mayor or deputy Lord Mayor will officiate over the event.

Plans are to invite and include all interested parties which will be underway at this weeks Tobacco control Forum meeting.

It is hoped that we can involve local PCSO staff to assist in reinforcing the messages of smoking in cars with under 18's present to encompass as many 'smoke free' messages as we can.

Work is currently ongoing and invitations will follow shortly.....