



**To/
Councillor Mark Thomas
Cabinet Member for Environment
Services**

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Overview & Scrutiny

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BY EMAIL

13th February 2018

Summary: This is a letter from the Tethered Horses Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Environment Services following the meeting of the Panel on 31st January 2018.

Dear Councillor Thomas,

On 31st January 2018, the Tethered Horses Working Group met to consider the progress which had been made since April 2016 when the initial Working Group took place. We wanted to meet so we could be updated with any new and relevant information.

The purpose of the meeting was to have feedback on the current situation regarding the tethering of horses in Swansea and what has happened since the last time the Working Group convened. The original Working Group was very popular and received interest from public and various agencies. We wanted to hear what progress had been made since the initial recommendations.

To accompany your update, invited to speak were members of staff from Trading Standards and Pollution Control – Peter Richards and Simon Clark, Dave Grimsell from Friends of Swansea Horses and Romain DeKerckhove and Neill Manley from the RSPCA. All invitees were involved in the initial Working Group or had current working knowledge of the situation. We were most grateful to receive the updates.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

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We heard that the situation has improved dramatically. Only around 16 horses are now tethered in Swansea and there are no welfare issues in relation to them.

We heard that within the last year, no horses have had to be euthanised and the procedure for dealing with horses is to establish ownership and ask to the owner to care appropriately for them, or to move the horse to the Hillside Animal Sanctuary in Norwich.

We heard that the progress in this area has very much been a group effort and the organisations have worked together to achieve this impressive outcome.

Following on from this discussion with you, we have a number of observations and recommendations we would like to share with you.

1. It was suggested within the meeting that there needs to be more education available relating to horses and their welfare. Schools and colleges could offer Equine Studies as an option or community venues could look at delivering it. It was also suggested that information could be made available via relevant organisations such as the Community Farm in Fforestfach. Perhaps they could be in a position to offer training.

2. The Swansea Equine Forum which is a working group consisting of relevant organisations e.g. Swansea Council, RSPCA, FOSH, Pettifor Trust should continue to have our attendance and support so we can contribute and keep track of any changes in the current tethered horses situation.

3. We must not be complacent. It was mentioned in the meeting that the sale prices of horses is currently very low, this may be why fewer horses are being kept. When this market picks up and the selling of horses becomes more financially beneficial, we may see an increase in horses being tethered. As a result, we would like to see the current level of resources and contribution both in staff and effort maintained.

4. We would like to express our gratitude to the Hillside Animal Sanctuary for the substantial work they have done. They have taken numerous horses from Swansea and being an end of life charity means the horses will stay there indefinitely. This support has been invaluable.

5. We would also like to thank Friends of Swansea Horses for their continued contribution to this cause and the information they have provided over the last two years which has helped inform the work. We wish the members the very best in their endeavours.

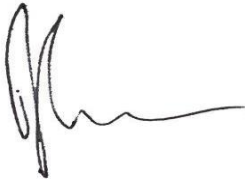
6. We are aware that there is an individual member of the public who continues to tether horses in spite of the efforts of those involved. Swansea Council and the RSPCA are aware of the situation but could not discuss it further due to data protection issues; however they assured the Panel that the situation was in hand. We would like to be assured that this will be dealt with.

7. Due to the vast improvement in the tethered horse situation in Swansea and the success of the partnership working, we hope positive media coverage highlights what has been achieved and also gives a spotlight to the organisations involved and their efforts to help tackle the problem.

This working group now concludes our scrutiny of tethered horses.

I would be grateful if you could reply to this letter by 6th March 2018.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Jones', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor Jeff Jones
Convener, Tethered Horses Working Group
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