

# **Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services - Greyhound regulations do nothing to protect dog welfare**

Wed, 25 November 2009 | Campaign Organisation Press Release

## **Summary**

Council leaders have warned that new proposals to regulate greyhound racing and protect the welfare of dogs mean nothing. The new legislation to be issued by DEFRA requires councils to issue licenses for greyhound tracks to operate. It does not, however, contain any offences, inviting track owners to break the law and leaving councils with no powers to prosecute them.

Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) Chair, Cllr Paul Bettison, said:

'The proposals need an urgent rethink. Right now, they are not worth the paper they are written on if councils remain powerless to prosecute those putting greyhounds at risk. Councils will find it almost impossible to stop rogue tracks from operating and won't be able to take track owners to court if they ignore the law.

More thought must also be given to those dogs that are no longer able to race. We are a nation of dog lovers and I think the public would be outraged if these hard working dogs were not protected. They have, after all, probably earned a lot of people a lot of money.'

## **Contents**

New proposals to regulate greyhound racing and protect the dogs' welfare mean nothing, council leaders warned today.

The new legislation to be issued by DEFRA requires councils to issue licenses for greyhound tracks to operate. It does not, however, contain any offences, inviting track owners to break the law and leaving councils with no powers to prosecute them.

Cllr Paul Bettison, chairman of LACORS, which represents council licensing and animal welfare teams, said:

“The proposals need an urgent rethink. Right now, they are not worth the paper they are written on if councils remain powerless to prosecute those putting greyhounds at risk. Councils will find it almost impossible to stop rogue tracks from operating and won't be able to take track owners to court if they ignore the law.

“More thought must also be given to those dogs that are no longer able to race. We are a nation of dog lovers and I think the public would be outraged if these hard working dogs were not protected. They have, after all, probably earned a lot of people a lot of money”.

There are currently 34 greyhound racing tracks across England. The new licensing regime means that councils will regulate six of them. The remaining 28 are already members of the industry body, the Greyhound Board of Great Britain.

Cllr Bettison continued:

“Racing dogs spend an enormous amount of their time in training kennels, but the regulation of these is not even included. Councils along with everyone else are facing tough financial times, and wasting public money on introducing a meaningless licensing

regime is scandalous. Money could be far better spent on modernising legislation covering dog breeding and pet sales, where out-of-date rules are a nightmare for councils and causes puppies and other pets to suffer."

Claire Robinson, the RSPCA's government relations manager, agrees:

"Councils play a key role in enforcing animal welfare laws and we're disappointed that Government has not listened to them when they say they will not be able to enforce the proposed regulations.

"The RSPCA is concerned that the proposed regulations could be a missed opportunity for greyhounds in ensuring better protection overall. While the improvements for tracks are welcomed the fact that there are no specific provisions for kennels where they spend most of their time is a real disappointment".

ENDS