Report to the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District meeting on
Monday 15th May 2017

Re: Control of Dogs in Parks and Greenways

To: Chairman and Members of the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District.

Dear Councillors,

An issue that is raised on an irregular basis is the issue of dogs in parks and greenways. Dog fouling is one complaint but that is covered by other legislation.

The control of Dogs Act 1986 requires that a dog must be kept under 'effective control' but it does not require that it is on a leash. Effective control is not defined in the Act. The recommendation for the Council's Dog Warden is that if the Council wishes to regulate the situation that bye-laws are required.

There are very conflicting views in relation to this issue. Many people use public parks for the purpose of taking their dogs for a walk and the space that this allows them to let the dog loose to maximise the exercise that they get. Many more go to the park but do not own a dog.

The following are, in general, the most common complaints/points that are raised in relation to dogs:

- Sticking their heads into prams, buggies etc and scaring both children and the adults
- Running up to children who are playing and scaring them.
- Running up to adults and scaring them.
- Fighting amongst dogs that are running loose.
- As the owner of the park it is the Council's responsibility to control activity there.

The point that is made to us is that the Council provides facilities for the public to enjoy and dogs should not be allowed to have a negative impact on people's enjoyment of the park or greenway. Enforcement of Bye-Laws would be by the Councils Dog Warden. This could only be on an irregular basis as the Wardens have other duties that they also need to attend to.

If Councillors agree that this Municipal District should make bye-laws to deal with this issue then the process can commence. Draft Bye-Laws are circulated to you under separate cover for your consideration.

Kevin O' Regan
Municipal District Officer