Fife Council Dog Control Officers have made full use of the powers contained within the Control of Dogs (S) Act 2010 and have issued over 311 Dog Control Notices (DCN) since the Acts implementation with 55 being issued in 2017 along with 90 warning letters.

DCN or Warning Letters are issued (after investigation) if a Dog Control Officer believes a dog owner has allowed their dog to be out of control. Fife Council may also issue a DCN when a dog owner is being investigated by Police Scotland under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. Monitoring closely issued DCN’s has proven that there are relevantly few breaches or in the cases of warning letters, the need for a DCN to be served.

One problem that has been highlighted recently by Police Scotland (PS) is that they have started scanning stray dogs that are brought into Police Stations. The stray dog(s) are then returned to their owners if they have been contacted. Problem with this is that there is no way of PS knowing if that returned dog had a DCN on it which does not help our (Fife Council) monitoring process. Various solutions to this are being discussed however the simplest solution may be having a central data base (all of Scotland) which was suggested previously.

Dog Control Officers within Fife Council are of the opinion that overall the Control of Dogs (S) Act 2010 has been a success and that irresponsible dog ownership is improving. The Act has filled a gap where dog related out of control incidents can be dealt with in cases where the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 cannot be used. It therefore gives the public reassurance that something can be done and is a deterrent to irresponsible dog owners.