

## **P-04-333 Stop neglect and abandonment of horses**

### **Correspondence from Angela Burns**

Dear Sarita,

I am sorry to take so long to get back to you. I think there was a bit of confusion on my part because the petitioners are members of the CPG and is therefore aware of the work that we have done on this subject. If I give you a brief update then I hope that will clarify the situation for the Petitions Committee so that you may act on this accordingly.

The CPG on The Horse has been considering the issue of micro chipping as part of a bundle of measures we believe are necessary to support the responsible management of Equines in order to try and eradicate or minimise the appalling effects of Fly Grazed and abandoned horses.

We took evidence from Members of the CPG many of whom are primary movers in Equine welfare in Wales and include Equine Charities, representatives from Trading standards and various councils, representatives from the Police, the British Horse Society, Landowners and Assembly Members amongst others.

Following the evidence gathering I wrote a substantial letter to the Minister for the Environment which covered all aspects of the issues abandoned equines raise and which put forward a number of Recommendations.

I have copied below Recommendation 1 which mentions micro chipping specifically.

#### *Recommendations*

*Given the commentary above the Cross Party Group for The Horse wishes to strongly recommend to the Welsh Government the following courses of action*

#### *Recommendation 1*

*That the Welsh Government ensures there is a clear Ministerial lead to drive a solution to the issue of Fly Grazing forward. Only a Minister will be able to exert the authority to get the many interests working together and we recommend the setting up of a Task & Finish Group. This group should consider all aspects of equine welfare in wales including the issue of passports & verification, DNA testing, micro chipping, licensing, breeding, education and market drivers.*

Since then the Deputy Minister for Rural Affairs has been given the lead on this issue and we have had correspondence with him. On the 20<sup>th</sup> November the Minister met with members of the CPG to discuss our letters to both him and John Griffiths and to understand how he believes this issue should be tackled.

With regard to Micro chipping he believes that we need to reinforce the use of passports, ensure that the trading standards and Police officers are rigorous in their implementation of the current regulations and ensure that we educate owners. The Minister does not wish to set up a Task & Finish Group as he is keen to use other measures discussed to try and curtail the abandonment of Equines.

The rest of the measures the CPG suggested are being evaluated and there will be movement forward. Following our meeting with the Minister, the CPG was pleased with the update given and the commitments made. We will continue to scrutinise and support the Government to ensure that we do move forward on this.

If there is any further information I can give please do not hesitate to contact me

Kind regards

Angela

**Angela Burns AM / AC**

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