

National Assembly for Wales
Finance Committee

Control of Horses (Wales) Bill

October 2013



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales and holds the Welsh Government to account.

An electronic copy of this report can be found on the National Assembly's website:
www.assemblywales.org

Copies of this report can also be obtained in accessible formats including Braille, large print; audio or hard copy from:

Finance Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Tel: 029 2089 8960

Fax: 029 2089 8021

Email: FinanceCommittee@wales.gov.uk

Information on the Committee, its membership, its remit and previous publications can be found at: **www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=229**

A list of witnesses and oral and written evidence of relevance to this report is available at: **<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=5722>**

© National Assembly for Wales Commission Copyright 2013

The text of this document may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading or derogatory context. The material must be acknowledged as copyright of the National Assembly for Wales Commission and the title of the document specified.

Background

The Control of Horses (Wales) Bill was introduced by Alun Davies, Minister for Natural Resources and Food on 14 October 2013. The Business Committee has remitted the Bill to Environment and Sustainability Committee and agreed that Stage 1 proceedings could be by-passed.

The Minister for Natural Resources and Food attended Finance Committee on 17 October 2013 to enable Members of the Committee to question him on the financial aspects of the Bill.

Our View

The Committee welcomes the intention contained in the Bill to enable all local authorities in Wales to deliver a consistent approach to removing the impacts that fly-grazing and the abandonment of horses and ponies have on landowners and communities across Wales. As a Committee, we also hope the Bill brings about a behavioural change from unscrupulous horse owners in Wales and ultimately improves the welfare of abandoned horses. To that effect, we were pleased to hear that veterinary costs are included in Part 4 (1) of the Bill – Costs of seizures etc.

The Committee retains its reservations that if the Bill had undertaken a Stage 1 process, that it could have been strengthened by taking into account evidence from the police, animal charities, vets and the general public.

As a Committee, we could have looked at wider costings and benefits the Bill may bring and stand by our comments in Committee that hasty legislation is not good practice.

Recommendation

We recommend that the Welsh Government clarifies the number of horses expected to be destroyed in the first year and subsequent years.

Witnesses

The following witnesses provided oral evidence to the Committee on the date noted below. Transcripts of all oral evidence sessions can be viewed in full at www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=1243

17 October 2013

Alun Davies AM	Minister for Natural Resources and Food
Julia Hill	Welsh Government
Fiona Leadbitter	Welsh Government