

#### 4. BILL FOR THIRD READING

##### 4.1. Dogs (Amendment) Bill 2016 – Third Reading approved

Mr Boot to move:

*That the Dogs (Amendment) Bill 2016 be read a third time.*

**The Speaker:** We turn to Item 4 on our Order Paper, Bill for Third Reading, Dogs (Amendment) Bill 2016, I call on Mr Boot to move.

**Mr Boot:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Members will recall that the main objective of this Bill is to amend the Dogs Act 1990 to require the keeper of every dog on the Island to ensure that their pet is microchipped and to abolish the licensing and duty regime for dogs on the Island.

It was identified that current legal requirements did not provide a failsafe way to identify and trace the owner of a dog. The fitting of an electronic transponder to a pet, commonly referred to as a microchip, is now recognised by animal welfare agencies, including the MSPCA, as the most effective and secure way of permanently identifying a pet and the amendments contained in this Bill will accommodate that.

Dispensing with the licensing regime means that dog owners will no longer have to pay an annual fee but will be subject to a one-off payment for the microchipping of their pet or pets. The changes are intended to address problems associated with irresponsible dog ownership and negate the requirement to replace the old and antiquated licensing database, which could cost many thousands of pounds.

Compulsory microchipping was introduced in the United Kingdom last year and was subsequent to the requirement to have pets microchipped that moved between the United Kingdom, the EU and other countries. As already advised to Members, it is expected that compulsory microchipping will improve animal welfare by making it easier to reunite a stray dog with its owner.

The period of confinement for microchipped stray dogs may be reduced, which will subsequently reduce the level of stress for a dog that is separated from its owner.

I am sure that Members will agree with me in recognising that this new regime will develop further responsible ownership through improved traceability of owners as well as assisting in establishing liability and proving ownership and a deterrent against dog theft.

I would like to thank Members for their support for this initiative, which also received a majority of public support at the consultation stage.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill is read for the third time.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Member for Garff, Mr Perkins.

**Mr Perkins:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I beg to second and reserve my remarks.

**The Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Douglas North, Mr Ashford.

**Mr Ashford:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, a very quick comment.

I would just like to thank the Minister and the Hon. Member for the Department, Mr Baker, for taking on board the queries I raised earlier in the process and amending this Bill to make sure it is a much better piece of legislation in section 4(1), that did not turn dog walking into an extreme sport to be done after midnight. *(Laughter)*

**The Speaker:** If no other Member wishes to speak, I call on the mover to reply.

**Mr Boot:** I can only agree and thank the Member for his contributions. *(Laughter)*

**The Speaker:** The question is that the Dogs (Amendment) Bill 2016 be read for a third time. All those in favour, please say aye; those against, no. The ayes have it. The ayes have it.

Now, Hon. Members, the Customs and Excise Bill 2017 is not to be moved today, in the absence of Mr Peake, and that then brings us to the conclusion of our Order Paper.

We then stand adjourned until Tynwald Day, 5th July at St John's.

*The House adjourned at 12.05 p.m.*