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The Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee has voted to launch a 12-month pilot Commercial Dog Walking Licensing Scheme in Nonsuch Park, starting in April 2025, following a consultation with the public and dog walkers.

The licensing scheme will bring dog walking in line with other commercial activities in the park and help reassure the public that commercial dog walking in Nonsuch Park is responsibly carried out and regulated.

An annual licence will cost £200 and limits the number of dogs that can be walked at one time to a maximum of six. As with other commercial activities in the park, dog walkers will be required to provide proof of public liability insurance, risk assessments and sign an agreement which sets out how commercial dog walking can be undertaken.

The committee also set out plans to develop a Dog Walking Code of Conduct in collaboration with the dog walking community and enforcement where there is evidence of non-compliance.

Councillor Julian Freeman, who was Chair of the Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee at the start of the consultation said:

“We’d like to thank everybody who participated in the public consultation. The aim of the consultation was to make sure Nonsuch Park is a safe environment for all park users, after concerns were raised about the increase in dog walkers with multiple dogs.

“With feedback from almost 1,000 people, including commercial dog walkers using the park already, it is clear that this is an important issue to many people.”

Councillor Louise Phelan, from Sutton Council, current Chair of the Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee, added:

“We know that the professional dog walkers who visit Nonsuch Park take the responsibility of walking multiple dogs in a public area extremely seriously and support the introduction of a licensing scheme that helps protect the reputation and standards of their profession.”

“We hope the subsequent licensing scheme will go some way to create an open space which everyone can enjoy.”

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