

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

12 DECEMBER 2018

AGENDA ITEM C6

DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES - REPORT FOR 2017/2018

Purpose of Report

To enable Council to adopt the report on dog control policy and practices so as to meet the requirements of Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the Dog Control Policy and Practices Report for 2017/2018.*
2. *That pursuant to Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996, the attached report (Appendix 1) on Dog Control Policy and Practices for 2017/18 be adopted.*
3. *That Officer's be authorised to publicly notify the report and forward it to the Secretary for Local Government.*

1. Background

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires Council to publicly report, at the end of each financial year, on the implementation of our Dog Control Policy, our dog control practices and relevant statistics on dog control related matters for the district.

The report must be available to the public and notified by public notice.

Council is also required to service a copy of the report to the Secretary for Local Government, Department of Internal Affairs, within one month of adopting the report.

2. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dog Control Policy and Practices Report for 2017/18

Contact Officer: Shane Sykes, Environmental Services Manager

Approved by: Russell O'Leary, Group Manager Planning and Environment

**Appendix 1 - Dog Control
Policy and Practices - Report
for 2017/2018**

INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON COUNCILS DOG CONTROL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2017 TO 30 JUNE 2018

1. Dog Control in the South Wairarapa

The district is situated in the southern part of Wairarapa and the south eastern most part of the North Island. It covers an area of 2,484 square kilometers. It is mainly a rural area, although it contains three small towns, Featherston, Martinborough and Greytown.

Council employs two full time Bylaws Officers who are responsible for carrying out day-to-day dog and animal control activities as well as bylaws compliance monitoring and enforcement. These officers provide 24 hour 7 days per week coverage as required.

During the period covered in this report, one of the experienced Bylaws Officer took extended leave of approximately 5 months and returned to work on 20 November. The remaining Bylaws Officer was filling a maternity leave position from before the start of the period until 6 November when the position was awarded permanently. Thus, from November, Council has had stable personnel filling the Bylaws Officers roles. This has greatly assisted compliance activities.

Council works with local veterinarians, the SPCA and the Police, when carrying out its functions.

Council continues to make significant effort to follow up unregistered dogs and dogs required to be microchipped. Council is engaging in stronger enforcement action when reasonable to further deter undesirable behavior from dogs and their owners. This is reflected across the three previous years' statistics which show that infringement numbers in general are decreasing. In particular, there has been a decrease in the number of infringements issued for failing to register and failing to implant a microchip. Interestingly, over the same period the number of registered dogs in our district has risen by 135, which is predominantly driven by the new 149 dog owners in the South Wairarapa.

Council is also actively working on resolving long standing dog control matters within our district.

2. Dog Registration and Other Fees

The registration fees for dogs were approved in April 2017 and publicly notified at the beginning of June 2017 for this financial year.

The registration fees for urban dogs were adjusted for this financial year to get closer toward dog registration and control being 100% self-funded. This caused the fees for 2017/18 to rise from \$66 for a desexed urban dog to \$75. The cost for urban dogs without desexing rose from \$95 to \$105.

Council has maintained different registration categories and fees for urban and rural dogs as well as desexed or entire dogs. These categories generally reflect that rural dogs require less work for Council officers and desexed dogs are less likely to roam and display aggressive behaviours.

2.1 Control of Dogs Policy and Bylaw

The Policy and Bylaw were adopted by Council on 19 September 2013. These are due for review in the 2018 calendar year and are due to take place in conjunction with a wider bylaw review.

2.2 General

Dog collars are available for purchase for all dog owners at Council's Martinborough office.

Bylaws Officers and management are now placing greater emphasis on impounding dogs. The fees associated with impoundment include a tiered impounding fee which escalates for subsequent impoundment. There are also charges for sustenance and there is a check to ensure that registration/microchipping requirements are met prior to the release of impounded dogs. This is also likely having an effect on the decreased numbers of infringements being issued and the number of unregistered dogs. This approach is also reflected in the increased number of impoundments in the current year relative to the previous years.

Comparing figures from Parts 5 and 6, it can be seen that in previous years approximately 25% of all complaints resulted in an impoundment while in the current year the figure rises to 35%. Officers and management are of the belief that impounding the dog (where legally able to) results in greater success in having the problem resolved or more effectively bringing the issue to the attention of the dog owner.

3. General comments on animal management

3.1 New Pound

Council's Long Term Plan which was approved in June consisted of a budget to build a new dog pound facility. The aim for the new pound is that it be a higher quality facility that will cater to the current growth in the district as well as the expected future growth. This will progressed in over the 2018/19 year.

3.2 Community education

Council has a key performance indicator in our dog control area that requires three community education sessions to be undertaken each year.

This education was previously conducted by a bylaws officer that subsequently took maternity leave. The officer filling this vacancy (and who subsequently become a permanent staff member) conducted the education sessions at various local schools. This program was well received at each school with positive feedback given to Council. This work is to continue and has the possibility to spread to wider community education into how to interact with dogs safely.

4. Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercises Areas

Council's Bylaw sets out the areas which are "Dog Prohibited", "Leash Only" and "Dog Exercise Areas".

Officers have discovered there are discrepancies between Council's Control of Dogs Bylaw 2013 and the Control of Dogs Policy 2013. These are required for review in 2018 and this misalignments will be corrected. One such example relates to where a dog is required to be leashed, with one document requiring leashing in all public places while the other document only requires leashing in urban public places.

5. Complaints Commentary

Number of complaints received.

Complaints	Numbers		
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Barking / Whining	41	43	36
Aggressive behaviour / Rushing	16	17	9
Wandering/fouling	189	138	161
Attack on Person	6	6	6
Attack on stock	5	0	6
Attack on Pet	10	16	12
Welfare concerns	11	6	7
Found dogs	1	0	28
Lost dogs	57	42	29
Total	336	268	294

Note - Found dogs includes where Council has been notified by an owner, that they have found their lost dog. For the current year 2017/18 Bylaws Officer- now checks/records with owners that the lost dog has been found.

6. Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics for South Wairarapa District Council

Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics	Numbers		
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number of dog owners	1672	1753	1821
Number of probationary owners	0	0	1
Number of disqualified owners	0	0	0
Number of registered dogs	2905	2974	3040
Number of rural dogs	1898	1866	1885
Number of urban dogs	1007	1108	1155
Number of dogs classified as dangerous under Section 31	1	1	1
Clause 1(a) due to owner conviction	1	1	1
Clause 1(b) due to sworn evidence	0	0	0
Clause 1(c) due to owner admittance	0	0	0
Number of dogs classified as menacing	24	23	20
Dogs classified as menacing under Section 33A <i>(Section 33A 1(b) - the territorial authority considers the dog may pose a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal, or protected wildlife).</i>	13	12	8
Dogs classified as menacing under Section 33C <i>(Section 33C (1) - the territorial authority has reasonable grounds to believe that the dog belongs wholly or predominantly to one or more breeds or types listed in Schedule 4 of the amendment Act 2004).</i>	11	11	12
Infringement notices issued	154	149	125
Failing to register	118	102	95
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	2	7	7
Failure to keep dog under control	6	1	10
Failure to implant microchip transponder	27	36	10
Failure to comply with the effect of dangerous classification	0	0	0
Failure to comply with the effect of menacing classification	0	2	0
Failure to carry a leash	0	0	0
Failure to comply with Bylaw	1	1	3
Failure to undertake owner education programme or dog obedience course (or both)	0	0	0
Impounded dogs	87	65	103