

# SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

31 JULY 2013

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## AGENDA ITEM C2

### REPORT ON DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES – 2012/2013 REPORT NO 9

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide a report on the Dog Control Policies and practices for 2012/2013 for adoption by Council.

#### **Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the report.*
2. *That pursuant to Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996, the South Wairarapa District Council report on Dog Control Policy and Practices for 2012/13 be adopted, publicly notified, and forwarded to the Secretary for Local Government.*

#### **1. Background and Discussion**

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires Council to publicly report each financial year on the administration of our Dog Control Policy and Practices along with a statistical component of dog related matters.

The report on South Wairarapa District Council's Dog Control Policy and Practices must be available to the public and notified by public notice.

Council is required to provide a copy of the report to the Secretary for Local Government within one month after adopting the report.

#### **2. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – South Wairarapa District Council Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices for 2012/13 Report No 9

Contact Officer: Bronwyn Johnson – Environmental Health Team Leader

**Appendix 1 - South  
Wairarapa District Council  
Report on Dog Control Fees  
and Policy 2012/13**

# **THIS REPORT CONTAINS INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON THE COUNCIL'S DOG CONTROL ACTIVITY OR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2012 TO 30 JUNE 2013.**

## **1. Dog Control in the South Wairarapa**

The South Wairarapa District Council is situated at the southern most corner of the North Island and has an area of approximately 248,455 hectares (2484 square kilometres). It is a vastly rural area, which is reflected in the 1,942 rural and working dogs currently registered.

Two part-time Dog Control Officer were previously employed by South Wairarapa District Council to implement Council's policy and practices throughout the district. This has now changed from the end of 2012 to one full time Dog Control Officer and some part time administration support.

Officers provide 24 hour 7 days a week coverage to Martinborough, Greytown and Featherston, (the three towns that make up the South Wairarapa District) as required. During the weekends and public holidays Council employs and external contractor to cover.

Staff work closely with local veterinarians, the SPCA branch in Masterton and the Police.

A significant effort was made during this period to follow up unregistered dogs and dogs required to be microchipped. This has resulted in an increase in enforcement action to achieve compliance. This was very successful with only 4 unregistered dogs on our register as at the end of the licensing year.

## **2. Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics for South Wairarapa District Council**

<b>Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
Total number of dog owners in the district	1598
Number of probationary owners	0
Number of disqualified owners	0
Number of registered dogs in the South Wairarapa District	2842
Number of rural dogs	1,914
Number of urban dogs	932
Number of dogs classified as dangerous under Section 31	
Section 31 1(a) due to owner conviction	0

<b>Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
Section 31 1(b) due to sworn evidence	0
Section 31 1(c) due to owner admittance	0
Total number of dogs classified as menacing	23
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>	0
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>	23
Number of infringement notices issued	117
Failing to register a dog	95
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	1
Failure to keep dog under control	3
Failure to implant microchip transponder	18

### **3. Complaints Commentary**

Number of complaint requests received.

<b>Complaints</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
Barking / Whining	37
Aggressive behaviour / Rushing	15
Wandering/fouling	80
Attack on Persons	11
Stock complaints	4
Attack on Pets	10
Welfare concerns	2
Found dogs	43
Lost dogs	63

### **4. Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercises Areas**

The Dog Control Bylaw 2004 sets out the areas in the district which are "Dog Prohibited", "Leash Only" and "Dog Exercise Areas".

A new off leash dog exercise area has been approved for Greytown and is intended to be completed in the 2013/14 year. The Greytown dog off leash exercise area has been planned for some time in response to community requests, especially given the success of similar parks in Martinborough and

Featherston. This will mean that each of the three townships will have suitable areas to meet the exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners. This is in response to community interest and demand to have accessible and safe dog-friendly areas.

The dog exercise area in Martinborough was fully completed in the past year with the provision of seats and water trough. All off leash areas now have free dog poo bags provided and suitable disposal receptacles. Council has received many favourable comments from the community.

## **5. Dog Registration and Other Fees**

The registration fees for dogs are set each year in April and publicly notified at the beginning of June.

2013/2014 registration fees are \$78.00 for Urban Dogs and \$43.00 for Rural Dogs which included the fees to cover the National Dog Database costs.

All dog owners are deemed responsible dog owners, i.e. they have a well controlled dog, a secure property and/or a neutered dog. These dog owners have not come to the attention of Council, therefore it would suggest they have an obvious knowledge of Council Bylaws and are charged the respective dog fee.

Discounts are given to neutered dogs, with obvious advantages aiding the dogs' behaviour in regards to roaming, aggression, and increased concentration.

### **Control of Dogs Policy and Bylaw Review:**

Council is in the process of reviewing its Control of Dogs Policy and Bylaw. The amended Policy and Bylaw have been publicly notified in accordance with the special consultative procedures set out in the Local Government Act 2022. Notice of the proposed amendments to the Policy and Bylaw has been sent to all registered dog owners in the district notices with the dog registration notices.

### **General:**

Dog barking collars are available to dog owners who have a dog with a barking habit. Officers have also encouraged use of the collars to dog owners who have had complaints against them regarding persistent barking. Neighbours have been pleased with the results.

Dog Poo bags and sanitizer are now available at a nominal cost to the public to encourage dog owners to "do the right thing" and reduce fouling in public places.

### **5.1 Annual Property Visits**

Property visits to dog owners were carried out in both residential and rural areas during 2012/2013 year. Not all properties have been visited. While this continues to provide valuable contact with dog owners, it has been noted that a more targeted approach may be of more value in tracking down unregistered dogs and owners who fail to meet their obligations.

## **6. Recommendations**

1. That this report required pursuant to Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996, be received and adopted by Council.
2. That the adopted report be publicly notified and be made available on the Council's website with a copy being sent to the Secretary.