

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

20 SEPTEMBER 2012

AGENDA ITEM C1

REPORT ON DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES – 2011/2012 REPORT NO 8

Purpose of Report

To provide a report on the Dog Control Policies and Practices for 2011/2012 for adoption by Council.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

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

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 publicly notified at least once.

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 2011/12 Report No 8

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Reviewed By: Glenn Bunny, Group Manager Planning and Environment

**Appendix 1 – South
Wairarapa District Council
Report on Dog Control Fees
and Policy 2011/12**

THIS REPORT CONTAINS INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON THE COUNCIL'S DOG CONTROL ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2011 TO 30 JUNE 2012.

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). A vastly rural area reflected in the 1896 rural and working dogs currently registered.

Two part-time Dog Control Officer's were employed by South Wairarapa District Council to implement Council's policy and practices throughout the district. This has changed to a full time Dog Control Officer and part time administration support.

Officers provided a 24 hour, 7 days a week coverage to Martinborough, Greytown and Featherston, (the three towns that make up the South Wairarapa District) as required.

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 that are required to be microchipped. This has resulted in an increase in enforcement action to achieve compliance, but was ultimately very successful.

2. Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics for South Wairarapa District Council (Numbers in brackets are for the previous year 2010/11)

Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics	Numbers
Total number of dog owners in the district	2103 (2119)
Number of probationary owners	0
Number of disqualified owners	0
Number of registered dogs in the South Wairarapa District	2785 (2834)
Number of rural dogs	1896 (1942)
Number of urban dogs	890 (892)

Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics	Numbers
Number of dogs classified as dangerous under Section 31	
Section 31 1(a) due to owner conviction	0
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	17
Dogs classified as menacing under Section 33A (Section 33A 1(b) - the territorial authority considers the dog may pose a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal, or protected wildlife).	9
Dogs classified as menacing under Section 33C (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).	8
Number of infringement notices issued	114 (3)
Failing to register a dog	88 (1)
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	5 (1)
Failure to keep dog under control	1 (1)
Failure to implant microchip transponder	20 (0)

3. Complaints Commentary

Number of complaint requests received.

Complaints	Numbers
Barking / Whining	36(65)
Aggressive behaviour / Rushing	16(18)
Wandering/fouling	54(128)
Attack on Persons	6(8)
Attack on Stock	5(10)
Attack on Pets	6(7)
Welfare concerns	12(9)
Found dogs	28(33)
Lost dogs	42(50)

4. Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise 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 was completed in Martinborough during the year and Council has received many favourable comments from dog owners. Both the Martinborough and Featherston off leash areas are fully fenced and supplied with a water trough, doggy bins and free dog pooh bags with dispenser. Further plans for an off leash dog area in Greytown is in the preliminary planning stage.

South Wairarapa is one of the few places that provides fully fenced secure off leash areas for dog owners.

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.

2011 / 2012 registration fees were \$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 or spayed 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 desexed dogs, with obvious advantages aiding the dogs' behaviour in regards to roaming, aggression, and increased concentration.

5.1 Further Comments on Dog Bylaw

In July 2008, to better reflect the needs of the community, Council amended its 2004 bylaw regarding the flat fee for working dogs. The changes made now allow owners on rural properties to pay a flat fee for multiple dogs on the property.

A review of the dog bylaw is planned for the 2012/2013 year.

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 Pooh 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.

The Rates newsletter ahs been used as a forum for providing information to the dog owners and the public. These tips serve to remind dog owners of their responsibilities as well as providing educational items on the care and control of dogs.

5.2 Annual Property Visits

Property visits to dog owners were carried out in both residential and rural areas during 2010/2013 year. A targeted approach was used to track down unregistered dogs and owners who fail to meet their obligations. This was particularly valuable and reflected in the increased enforcement action.