

# SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

26 AUGUST 2015

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## AGENDA ITEM C2

### REPORT ON DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES – 2014/2015 REPORT NO 11

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To report on the Dog Control Policies and practices for 2014/2015 for adoption by Council in accord with the requirements of the Dog Control Act.

#### **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 2014/15 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 of adopting the report.

#### **2. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – South Wairarapa District Council Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices for 2014/15 Report No 11

Contact Officer: Bronwyn Johnson, Environmental Health Team Leader

Reviewed by: Murray Buchanan, Group Manager Planning and Environment

**Appendix 1 - South  
Wairarapa District Council  
Report on Dog Control Fees  
and Policy 2014/15**

# **THIS REPORT CONTAINS INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON THE COUNCIL'S DOG CONTROL ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2014 TO 30 JUNE 2015.**

## **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 rural area, which is reflected by the 1849 rural dog registrations.

Council employs one full time Bylaws Officer who acts as Council's dog control ranger. A permanent part time Bylaws officer was appointed in November 2014 to provide support in dog control.

Council has since recognised the high workloads and the part time Bylaws Officer is to become a full time position from 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2015.

Officers provide 24 hour 5 days per-week coverage to Martinborough, Greytown and Featherston, (the three towns of the South Wairarapa District) as required. During the weekends and public holidays Council employed an external contractor for cover. Council intends to change to in house Bylaws Officers from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

Staff work closely with local veterinarians, the SPCA branch in Masterton and the Police. It is of concern that the Wairarapa branch of the SPCA closed during this period and SPCA emergency welfare coverage only is available from Wellington and Manawatu SPCA offices.

Council continues to make significant effort to follow up unregistered dogs and dogs required to be microchipped.

## **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>	
	<b>14/15</b>	<b>13/14</b>
Total number of dog owners in the district	1653	1612
Number of probationary owners	0	0
Number of disqualified owners	0	0
Number of registered dogs in the South Wairarapa District	2894	2784
Number of rural dogs	1849	1925
Number of urban dogs	998	945
Number of dogs classified as dangerous under Section 31	1	2
Section 31 1(a) due to owner conviction	0	0

<b>Dog Registration, Enforcement and Service Request Statistics</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	
	<b>14/15</b>	<b>13/14</b>
Section 31 1(b) due to sworn evidence	1	2
Section 31 1(c) due to owner admittance	0	0
Total number of dogs classified as menacing	24	28
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>	14	13
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>	10	15
Number of infringement notices issued	94	119
Failing to register a dog	66	82
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	8	2
Failure to keep dog under control	5	7
Failure to implant microchip transponder	14	25
Failure to comply with the effect of Dangerous classification	0	1
Failure to comply with the effect of Menacing classification	0	1
Failure to carry a leash	0	1
Failure to undertake dog owner education programme or dog obedience course (or both)	1	0

### 3. Complaints Commentary

Number of complaint requests received.

<b>Complaints</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	
	<b>14/15</b>	<b>13/14</b>
Barking / Whining	27	34
Aggressive behaviour / Rushing	17	14
Wandering/fouling	74	73
Attack on Persons	8	5
Stock complaints	11	39
Attack on Pets	8	15
Welfare concerns	5	2
Found dogs	25	31
Lost dogs	36	24

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

The Dog Control Bylaw 2013 sets out the areas in the district which are "Dog Prohibited", "Leash Only" and "Dog Exercise Areas".

All three townships in South Wairarapa now 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.

All off leash areas have free dog "poo" bags 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 and publicly notified at the beginning of June.

2015/2016 registration fees are \$95.00 for Urban Dogs and \$64.00 for Rural Dogs which included the fees to cover the National Dog Database costs. Owners on rural properties pay a flat fee for the first 10 dogs of \$210 and \$20 per dog thereafter on the property.

Discounts are given to neutered dogs.

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

Council has reviewed its Control of Dogs Policy and Bylaw. The Policy and Bylaw were adopted by Council on 19 September 2013.

#### **7. Annual Property Visits**

Because of staffing issues annual property inspections have not been routinely undertaken for all properties. Property inspections are completed as a part of a complaint investigations and tracking down unregistered dogs and owners who fail to meet their obligations. It is anticipated that this will be partially addressed in the coming year with increased resourcing.

#### **8. Owner Education**

Officers use every opportunity to inform and educate the public about responsible dog ownership when situations arise.

School education programs have been implemented for the first time this year modelled on the Christchurch dog smart programme.

Radio advertising campaigns are used over dog registration time in June and July to reminding owner's registration is due. Radio dog safety campaigns are also undertaken during this time.

## **9. 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.