

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

23 APRIL 2014

AGENDA ITEM C4

DOG CONTROL FEES FOR 2014/15

Purpose of Report

To set the dog control fees for 2014/15.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Adopt the Dog Control fees for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 1, column 2 which will result in a 2% increase.*
3. *Considers full cost recovery, including overheads, as part of the 2015/25 LTP.*

1. Executive Summary

The Dog Control Act 1996 gives territorial authorities the power to set fees for the registration and control of dogs. Section 37 of the Act sets out that the fees shall be made by resolution of that authority and that the fees shall be advertised once set. The Dog Control Act does not prescribe that the resolution to set fees must be part of the Annual Plan process.

There are three options in relation to setting fees for dog control for 2014/15.

2. Background

Council resolved in April 2011 to set dog control fees separately from the Annual Plan process.

The Dog Control Policy was also reviewed in 2013 and a new Policy adopted in September 2013. Section 5.8 of the 2013 Dog Control Policy:

- Aims to have dog control activities self-funded.
- Promotes neutering of dogs by imposing a lower registration fee for spayed or castrated dogs.

- Penalises late registration by applying a late registration penalty fee for all dogs not registered by the end of the first week of August. The penalty fee will be 50% of relevant registration fee, or as set by the Council.
- Recognises that rural dogs cause fewer dog control problems and therefore a differential between rural and urban fees should apply.
- States that Disability Assist dogs will not be charged a fee upon registration under the Dog Control Act.
- Recognises that Council may still decide to fund a portion of the dog control activity through rates.

3. Discussion

In 2011 Council uncoupled the setting of the dog registration and control fees from the Annual Plan process. This enables Officers to have sufficient time to deal with administrative processes (including advertising the fees and printing of registration forms) before the registration year begins. It also gives dog owners the ability to register dogs before the due date each year.

Additionally, the fee structure was simplified in consequence of the Dog Control Policy review in 2013. The 2013 Policy amended the dog control fees by removing the approved and general owner categories.

The current fees and option of moving toward "self-funding" fees for 2014/15 are included in Appendix 1 in column 3. The fees shown in the self-fund column have been designed to meet the intent to avoid rates inputs, set in the 2013 Control of Dogs Policy adopted by Council, but in a stepped way. Column 2 shows a fee adjustment based on 2% inflation. Column 1 shows current fees.

4. Legal Implications

Section 37 of the Dog Control Act states that:

"The dog control fees payable to a territorial authority shall be those reasonable fees prescribed by resolution of that authority for the registration and control of dogs under this Act".

The recommendations made to adopt the fees set out in Appendix 1 satisfy this requirement.

4.1 Financial Considerations

Council's Dog Control Policy (Section 5.8) states that the dog control activity should be self-funding. Current (2013-14 year) fees and other income generated from Council's dog control activity equate to 66.81 % of costs shown in the dog control accounts. A rating input of \$70,300+/- is therefore required to make up the difference.

From this amount (\$70,300) the cost of stock control must be deducted as by Council resolution, this is to be funded entirely through rural rates. This represents a deduction of approximately \$9000 per year from the above figures. The net rating requirement after this deduction is therefore \$61300.

In addition, the bylaw officer undertakes other seasonal work which is currently charged through the animal control accounts. This relates to other animal nuisances (e.g. cats/birds –domestic fowl), fire risk reduction (long grass) and general controls such as on street signage/advertising.

This work, equates to an annualised amount of approximately \$17,000 (this includes additional support staff costs incurred in the summer). This should also be deducted from the balance of the rating requirement. The net rating requirement is thus around \$44,300 for dog control.

It is recommended that council move to full cost recovery, including overheads, as part of the 2015/25 LTP process.

5. Conclusion

The current regime results in a cost recovery excluding overhead allocation. It is recommended this be reviewed as part of the 2015/25 LTP process.

The recommendation is to increase fees 2% broadly in line with inflation.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 –Dog Control Fees 2014/15 Year

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Appendix 1 – Dog Control Fees 2014/15 Year

Registration Fees	Column 1. Current Fees 2013/14	Column 2. Fees 2014/15 (based on 2% inflation adjustment)
<i>Desexed</i>		
Urban	\$55	\$56
Rural	\$32	\$33
<i>Entire</i>		
Urban	\$78	\$80
Rural	\$43	\$44
<i>Late Fees Desexed</i>		
Urban	\$82	\$84
Rural	\$47	\$49.50
<i>Late Fees Entire</i>		
Urban	\$117	\$120
Rural	\$66	\$66
<i>Other Fees</i>		
Flat fee for 5 plus Rural Dogs	\$206	210
Late fee for 5 plus Rural Dogs	\$309	\$315
Surrender a dog for euthanasia	\$40	\$41
Micro-chipping a dog	Actual costs	Actual
Permit application to keep more than two dogs in an urban area including breeder	\$37	\$38
Breeder permit holder urban registration per dog	\$69	\$70
Re-homing fee for impounded dogs	\$69	\$70
Costs and expenses relating to impounding and securing impounded dogs	Actual costs plus 10%	Actual costs plus 10%
Replacement registration tag(if tag lost or damaged)	\$5	\$5
Transfer of registered dog in another Council to SWDC	0	0
Bark Control Collars	Actual cost plus 10%	Actual cost plus 10%

<i>Impounding Fees</i>			
First Impounding	\$66	\$67	\$70
Second Impounding	\$17	\$109	\$120
Third Impounding	\$127	\$130	\$170
Feeding (per day)	\$10.50	\$11	\$12