

Report to: Council

Meeting Date: 6 October 2021

Subject: Dog Control Policy and Practice Report 2020/2021



Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to elected members the annual report on Council's Dog Control Policy and Practices for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 as required by Section 10A Dog Control Act 1996.

Background

- 2.1 The Dog Control Act 1996 requires all territorial authorities to report annually to Central Government on their Dog Control Policy and Practices in respect of each financial year.
- 2.2 The requirement for Council to adopt an annual report on Dog Control Policies and Practices is a statutory one. When compiling such a report, Council is required to have regard to its Dog Control Policy 2018.
- 2.3 Once Council has adopted the annual report, public notice must be given that the report is published in one or more newspapers circulating the District and made available to the public and a copy sent to the Secretary for Local Government. This is a new provision under the Dog Control Amendment Act 2003.
- 2.4 The information outlined in the annual report will assist Central Government to build a database of national information and to assess national trends and developments with regard to dog control.
- 2.5 Educational initiatives are being developed by Central Government. Collecting information from territorial authorities on a national level will enable Central Government to develop further guidelines or initiatives.

Discussion

- 3.1 An overview of the past year's activities is contained in this report.
- 3.2 Serious issues that warrant more than an infringement prompt Council staff to prepare a file showing any history of offences being committed and clear evidence of guilt before a decision to proceed with prosecution is made.

Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that the attached annual report be adopted, that the Territorial Authority give public notice of the report on the Ruapehu District Council website and a link to this report be sent to dogs@dia.govt.nz

Suggested Resolution(s)

1. That the Report on Dog Control Policy and Practice Report be received.
2. Pursuant to Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996, the Ruapehu District Council Annual Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices for 2020/2021 be adopted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BRALPH', written in a cursive style.

Brenda Ralph
TEAM LEADER COMPLIANCE

06 October 2021

Attachments

ANNUAL REPORT ON DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES FOR THE RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2021

The following report represents the information required under to Section 10A(2) of the Dog Control Amendment Act 2003 for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Number of dogs	4,998
Number of registered dogs	3,266
Number of probationary owners	0
Number of disqualified owners	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of dogs classified as Dangerous under Section 31(1)(b) – this period Total Number of Dogs in district classified as Dangerous under Section 31 	7 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Dogs Classified as Menacing under Section 33(1)(a) (i) – this period Total Number of Dogs in district classified as Menacing under Section 33 	30 65
Number of Infringement notices issued –	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For failure to register a dog For Failure to control For Bylaw offences For Failure to comply with effects of menacing dog For Failure to comply with effects of dangerous dog For Willful obstruction of an officer 	22 41 0 1 0 0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Dogs Impounded Number of dogs Returned to owner after being impounded Number of Dogs Re Homed after being Impounded Number of Dogs Euthanised after being Impounded 	187 85 84 18
Total Number of dog related complaints	
Attacks on a Person	11
Attacks on other animals	29
Dog Rushing, Challenging or Chasing Traffic	38
Bylaw breach (e.g. dog fouling in public)	4
Wandering dogs	323
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barking Unregistered Dogs Welfare 	158 11 22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of prosecutions Defended hearing on non-registration – found guilty Defended hearing on False statement – found guilty 	NIL NIL NIL

Council adopted a Dog Control Policy in 2006; a copy of this policy is attached.

General Comments relating to the implementation of the Policy are as follows:

Bylaws and Wandering Dogs

All dogs, which are found wandering, are uplifted and either returned to the owner, if registered, or impounded. In some cases if no history of valid complaints is identified, the dog may be returned to the owner. If the dog was impounded the owner is required to pay impounding fees, and an infringement for failure to control is generally issued. The dog owner then has an opportunity make a submission and request a waiver of the infringement notice.

Impounded Dogs

In all cases where a dog is impounded the full amount of fees as per Council's adopted fees and charges are payable before the dog is released.

Compliance works with various external organisations (e.g. ARAN; Animal Rescue Action Network, Ellies Canine Rescue and Retired Working Dogs) to ensure a good home is located for those dogs that are identified as being suitable for rehoming.

In all cases where dogs are euthanised, either because of surrender or not being claimed, euthanasia is undertaken by a licensed veterinarian.

Exercise Areas

Council established dog exercise areas and dog-prohibited areas within the district, The Policy also requires dogs to be on a leash at all times in a public place not deemed exercise areas. The exercise areas and dog prohibited areas are regularly monitored as part of normal patrols. During this period new signs were erected in some areas there were no signs.

Special Permits 2+ Dogs

Owners with more than two dogs in any Residential area not zoned Rural must obtain a permit. The policy uses zones defined in Council's operative District Plan. The property is inspected to assess whether or not the criteria is met prior to a permit being issued.

Fees and Charges

Fees and charges are reviewed annually and set by Council resolution. For the 2020/2021 these fees were:

Registration

Entire Pet	\$97.00
De Sexed Dogs	\$67.00
Responsible Owner	\$38.00
Working Dogs	\$22.00
Dangerous Dogs	150% of applicable fee
Late Payment Penalty	50% of applicable fee

Impounding

First Impounding – all dogs	\$80.00
Second Impounding- all dogs	\$170.00
Third Impounding- all dogs	\$285.00
Daily Sustenance	\$15.00
Registration Investigation	\$30.00
Surrender fee	\$45.00

Education and Communication

Council's communicates with the public by way of direct written communication, press releases in the local papers, and radio advertisements and public media such as Facebook.

Council supports the public by providing a school education bite prevention program and will extend any assistance to any adult agencies if requested.