

Report to: Council

Meeting Date: 26 August 2026

Subject: Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report:
Financial Year 2025/2026

Report for: Information

Author(s): Phoebe Harrison

Endorsed By: Sharon Robinson

**LICENSING & COMPLIANCE MANAGER
EXECUTIVE MANAGER REGULATORY &
CUSTOMER SERVICES**



Purpose of Report | Te take mō te pūrongo

1. The Ruapehu District Council, as a territorial authority, is required to manage and enforce provisions pursuant to the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) and subsequent amendments in 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2010.
2. Section 10A of the Act requires the Council to report annually to the Secretary of Local Government on its Dog Control Policy and practices. This report fulfils this statutory requirement for the dog registration year: 1st July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Recommendation(s) | Ngā tūtohunga

That the Council:

1. Receives the Report **Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report: Financial Year 2025/2026**;
2. Approves Ruapehu District Council Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report: Financial Year 2025/2026 in accordance with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996;
3. Notes that approval will require the Council to give public notice of the report in accordance with section 5(1) of the Local Government Act 2002 and publish the report in one or more local newspapers, and the Council's website; and
4. Notes that a copy must be provided to the Secretary for Local Government within one month after the report has been adopted by the Council.

Strategic Alignment

The decisions in this report contribute to the following strategic outcomes:

- ☐ Our infrastructure assets and services are resilient and fit for purpose
- ☐ Our communities are thriving and enabled to pursue their aspirations
- ☐ Our businesses are prosperous and connected to their community
- ☒ Our natural and built environment is healthy, strong and safe
- ☐ Organisational capability (diverse, positive, engaged workforce)

Responsible dog control contributes directly to a safe and healthy environment by protecting people and animals across the district. Transparent annual reporting on policy implementation demonstrates Council's commitment to accountable governance and builds community confidence that public safety obligations are being met.

Significance and Engagement | Takenga mai

Significance

This report does not trigger the [Significance and Engagement Policy](#).

Background | Tuhinga

1. THE COUNCIL'S DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES

2. The Council adopted its [Dog Control Policy](#) in September 2022. The objectives of the policy are to:
- promote responsible dog ownership for the enhancement and protection of the Ruapehu community
 - identify the obligations of dog owners in both public and private places,
 - identify the dog leashed areas, prohibited areas and off-leash areas within the Ruapehu District, and
 - comply with the requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996 (The Act).

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

4. Bylaws And Wandering Dogs

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

6. Impounded Dogs

7. In most 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. However, staff have reduced or waived fees in a case by case basis where payment in full has been identified will cause a financial burden on the dog owner and/or their whanau and improved control is in place.
8. The Animal Control officers ensure a good home is located for those dogs that are identified as being suitable for rehoming. This year new owners have been found via word of mouth, through social media posts on the Council's Facebook page or customers have contacted Council expressing an interest to rehome a dog.
9. Dogs are only euthanised because of surrender or not being claimed and have been identified to be unsuitable for rehoming due to illness, temperament issues or breed. Euthanasia is undertaken by a licensed veterinarian.

10. Exercise Areas

11. 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 with the exception of Ohura township. The exercise areas and dog prohibited areas are regularly monitored as part of normal patrols. There have been regular complaints relating to dogs off leash in leashed exercise areas.

12. Special Permits For More Than Two Dogs

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

14. Education and Communication

15. The Council communicates with the public by way of direct written communication, Council website, Antenno, press releases in the local papers, radio advertisements and social media (Facebook).

16. Dog Control Officers

17. Ruapehu District Council employs two Compliance Officers who are responsible for dog and other animal management issues. They are also responsible for noise control, litter, vehicle and parking enforcement, and other Council bylaws.
18. Ruapehu District Council also employs a part time Pound Officer responsible for the day-to-day management of the District Pound in Taumarunui.

Discussion | He Kōrerorero

1. FEES FOR THE 2025/2026 REGISTRATION YEAR

2. Fees and charges are reviewed annually and set by the Council. The fees adopted in May 2024 are set out below.
3. Ruapehu District Council offers a Responsible Dog Owner status for owners who meet the following criteria:
- Compliance with Dog Control Act 1996 and Ruapehu Bylaw 2022 and Dog Control Policy 2022;
 - Dog currently registered by due date (30 June of each registration year); and
 - Clear record for previous 12 months (including no history of complaints or impounding).
4. This status qualifies the owner for a discounted registration rate as noted below.

5. Registration Fees

Entire Dogs	\$194.25 (\$129.50 if paid by 30 June 2026)
Desexed Dogs	\$149.25 (\$99.50 if paid by 30 June 2026)
Responsible Dog Owner	\$64.50
Working Dogs	\$52.50 (\$35 if paid by 30 June 2026)
Hunting Dogs	\$67.50 (\$45 if paid by 30 June 2026)
Dangerous Dogs	Registration at 150% of the level that would apply if the dog were not classified as a Dangerous Dog
Late Payment Penalty	50% of the base fee

6. Impounding Fees

First Impounding: all dogs	\$90
Second Impounding: all dogs	\$180
Third Impounding: all dogs	\$285
Daily Sustenance	\$17
Registration Investigation	\$33

Surrender Fee	\$75
---------------	------

7. In the Ruapehu District, dog registration fees help to pay for most of our animal service activities, including:
- Dog shelter facilities for the care, welfare and return of lost and stray dogs.
 - Investigation, monitoring and resolution of dog issues including nuisance, aggressive and dangerous dogs.
 - Patrols of public places to protect public, ensure safety and apply enforcement.
 - Friendly and professional advice on being a responsible owner.

8. DOG CONTROL STATISTICS

9. The dog control statistics for the Ruapehu District as required by Section 10A (2) (a) to (g) are detailed below.

10. Registered Dogs

Number of registered dogs	2,388
---------------------------	-------

11. Probationary and Disqualified Owners

Number of probationary owners	Nil
Number of disqualified owners	Nil

12. Dangerous and Menacing Dogs

13. The number of dogs classified as dangerous (under section 31 Dog Control Act 1996)

Classification	2025/26
Dangerous by owner conviction S31(1)(a)	5
Dangerous by sworn evidence S31(1)(b)	3
Dangerous by owner admitting in writing S31(1)(C)	1
Total number of dogs classified as dangerous in the Ruapehu District	9
Total number of dogs classified as dangerous in 2025/26 year	1

14. The number of dogs classified as menacing (under section 33A or section 33C Dog Control Act 1996)

Classification	2025/26
Menacing by behaviour S33A(1)(b)(i)	17
Menacing by breed characteristics S33A(1)(b)(ii)	1
Menacing by Schedule 4 breed S33C(1)	4
Total number of dogs classified as menacing in the Ruapehu District	63
Total number of dogs classified as menacing in 2025/26 year	22

15. INFRINGEMENT NOTICES

16. The number of Infringement Notices issued

Category	2025/26
Failure to register a dog	170
Failure to control	6
Failure to control and confine	14
Bylaw offences	38
Failure to comply with effects of menacing dog	9
Failure to comply with effects of dangerous dog	2
Willful obstruction of an officer	Nil

17. Impounding

Number of dogs Impounded	155
Number of dogs Returned to owner after being impounded	67
Number of dogs rehomed after being Impounded	29
Number of dogs euthanised after being Impounded	59

18. Complaints and Prosecutions

Category	2025/26
Attacks on people	48
Attacks on other animals	42
Uncontrolled dogs i.e., rushing, challenging or chasing traffic	39
Wandering	289
Barking dogs	164
Unregistered dogs	Nil
Welfare	48
Number of Prosecutions	Nil

Financial Implications

1. This report has no financial implications. Dog registration fees fund animal control activities as described in this report, and no new or amended expenditure is proposed.

Risk Assessment

1. The following risks have been identified in relation to this matter, assessed in line with the Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework.

Risk Type	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Compliance	Failure to adopt and submit the report within the statutory timeframe,	Unlikely	Moderate	Report scheduled for the Council meeting prior to the submission

	resulting in non-compliance with section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996			deadline; next actions include immediate notification and submission to the Secretary for Local Government following adoption
Reputational	Statistical data is inaccurate or incomplete, undermining public confidence in Council's dog control administration	Unlikely	Minor	Data compiled by Licensing and Compliance officers and reviewed by the Executive Manager Regulatory and Customer Services prior to presentation to Council

2. The overall risk associated with this report is low. The primary compliance risk — late submission to the Secretary for Local Government — is mitigated by the report's timely placement on the Council agenda. There is no material risk in proceeding; adoption and publication are statutory obligations.

Next Actions | Ngā mahinga e whai ake nei

1. Once Council has approved the Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report for the Financial Year 2025/2026, Officers will notify the public of the report and publish the report in one or more local newspapers, published to Council's website, and a copy sent to the Secretary for Local Government within one month after the report has been adopted by the Council.

Attachment(s) | Ngā āpitihanga

None