

REPORT

Date : 3 July 2018

To : Ordinary Council Meeting, 24 July 2018

From : Planning & Regulatory Manager, Gerard McCormack

Subject : **DOG CONTROL POLICIES AND PRACTICES REPORT 2017-2018**

File ID : A140091

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is required to publicly report on its dog control policies and practices each financial year under section 10A of the Dog Control Act. A copy of the annual report is to be submitted to the Secretary for Local Government. The annual report for the 2017-18 financial year is attached.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the annual report setting out Council's dog control practices for the year 2017-18. The report is included in appendix 01 attached.

BACKGROUND

The Dog Control Act requires territorial authorities to publicly report on dog control policy and practices under section 10A of the Dog Control Act.

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 states that the report "*.....must, in respect of each financial year, report on the administration of -*

- (a) its dog control policy adopted under section 10; and*
- (b) its dog control practices."*

Section 10A(3) specifies that "*the territorial authority must give public notice of the report in one (1) or more daily newspapers circulating in the territorial authority district.*"

- (c) Section 10A(4) requires the Council, "within one month after adopting the report, to send a copy of it to the Secretary for Local Government".*

DISCUSSION

Animal Control staff continue to be proactive within the community. They continue to undertake daily patrols, respond to service requests and look after the pound. They also spend time with customers on a one on one basis talking about individual dog owner's responsibility.

The statistics show a trend similar to last year apart from the large reduction in the number of dogs impounded:

- Dog registered has increased slightly by 2.
- The number of Infringements issued increased by 4 (4%)
- Dog related service requests have reduced by 4 (1%)
- 283 dogs were impounded less than half the number of dogs impounded four years ago
 - 14 of these were rehomed from the Council pound
 - 181 were euthanised

The decision this year to close the drop box at the pound is a significant contributing factor in the reduction in the number of dogs impounded and subsequently euthanized.

Council undertakes an annual satisfactory survey which includes a question around whether the responder was very/fairly satisfied with Animal Control. Results for the last five years are presented below:

2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14
55%	51%	55%	56%	52%

There has been a slight increase this year compared to last in residents' perceptions and satisfaction level for the Animal Control service. Public feedback confirms that the level of roaming dogs and dangerous dogs in the District is still of concern.

Following last year's successful trial de-sexing programme of dangerous and menacing dogs further funding has been allocated in the long term plan to enable the programme to be continued.

Dogs registered before the 1 August 2018 are eligible to be micro-chipped free of charge.

SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

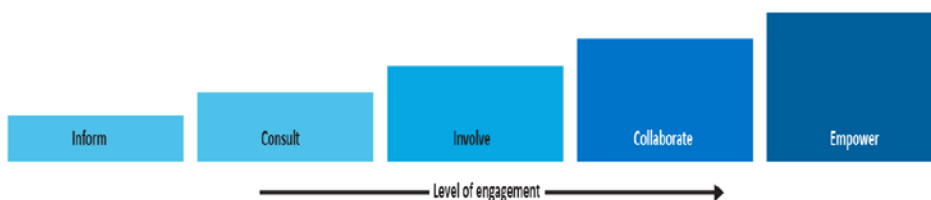
Assessment of significance

Under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, on every issue requiring a decision, Council considers the degree of significance and the corresponding level of engagement required. The level of Significance for the Annual Dog Control Report is considered to be low as determined by the criteria set out in section 12 of the Significance and Engagement Policy.

Assessment of engagement requirements

The Dog Control Act 1996 requires Council to report on dog control policy and practices each year. Public notification of the report is required in one or more daily newspapers circulating within the district. Council must also within 1 month after adopting the report, send a copy of it to the Secretary of Local Government.

As the level of significance for the dog control policy and practices report is considered to be of low significance the level of engagement required is determined to be at the level of inform according to Schedule 2 of the Significance and Engagement Policy.



CONCLUSION

Dog Control is an activity of Council that will always require a proactive approach to ensure that Dog owners fulfil their responsibilities under the Dog Control Act, in particular:

- To ensure that their dogs are registered, and
- To ensure dogs do not wander and therefore reducing the likelihood of attacks.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the report titled "Dog Control Policies and Practices Report 2017-2018" be received.**
- 2. That the Dog Control Policies and Practices Report 2017-18 attached in appendix 01 be adopted by Council and its availability publicly notified in the Opotiki News in accordance with Section 10A(3) of the Dog Control Act.**

3. **That the Dog Control Policies and Practices Report 2017-18 attached in appendix 01 be filed with the Secretary for Local Government (Department of Internal Affairs) in accordance with section 10A(4) of the Dog Control Act.**

Gerard McCormack

PLANNING AND REGULATORY GROUP MANAGER



**Opotiki District Council
Dog Control Policies and Practices Report 2017-18**

Section 10A report in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996

1 Introduction

Opotiki District Council, as a Territorial Authority, is required to manage and enforce the provisions of the Dog Control Act 1996.

This report is to meet the requirements set under Section 10A of that Act which requires Council to report on its dog control policy and practices.

This report contains information and statistics on the Council's dog control activity for financial year 2017 from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

2 Dog Policy, Objectives and Practices – Section 10A (1) (a)

Opotiki District Council has a Dog Policy, dated 9 November 2004 with the objectives being:

- Minimising the danger, distress and nuisance of dogs to the community generally
- Separating children and dogs in public places
- Enabling, to the extent that is practicable, the public to use streets and public amenities without fear of attack or intimidation by dogs
- The exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners

High priority objectives are identified as:

- The need to reduce the number of dogs roaming the streets
- The need to decrease the amount of uncontrolled breeding that occurs

Dog registration and fees are charged annually and used to fund Council's dog control functions along with rates funding given the wider public benefit that is derived by keeping the community safe.

APPENDIX 01

3 Summary of Practices – Section 10A (1) (b)

The Animal control function forms part of the Planning and Regulatory Group of Council.

During the reporting period Council has had between 1 and 2.5FTE officers dedicated to Dog Control, with officers' also managing horse and stock control. In addition, support is provided by another staff member within the Regulatory team, although this is not their core function.

Limited afterhours support is provided by Independent Security Consultants Ltd (ISCL).

The team are supported by the Customer Service Team of Council who undertake the administration of the Dog Database and manage the customer enquiries.

The Opotiki Town Centre is patrolled at least three times a day. The purpose of these patrols is to identify non-compliance with the Dog Control Act, the Dog Control Bylaw and Policy. In this reporting period there have also been some after-hour patrols undertaken.

The patrols are also an opportunity to get out into the community and talk to dog owners about their responsibilities on an individual basis.

Patrols are also carried out to include the wider Opotiki Township, Woodlands and East Coast settlements such as Te Kaha, Waihau Bay, Ohiwa, Bryan's Beach and Paerata Ridge. East of Te Kaha patrols are undertaken on an as needed basis often through a Service Request or via N.Z. Police.

Following the success of the trial de-sexing campaign last year and positive responses from the public as part of the recent long term plan consultation. Funding has been approved by Council for the de-sexing dogs classified as dangerous or menacing within the district.

APPENDIX 01

4 Dog Control Statistics

Section 10A (2) information

The following information is required under section 10A (2) clauses a –g.

	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
a. Registered Dogs	1463	1461	1580	1442
b. Probationary owners	0	0	0	0
c. Dogs classified as dangerous	5	8	6	3
d. Dogs classified as menacing	33	85	54	42
e. Number of Infringements issued	100	96	139	161
f. Number of Dog service requested	328	332	393	577
g. Number of Prosecutions	0	0	0	0

The number of registered dogs increased slightly from the previous year, with the number of menacing dogs decreasing to 33 the lowest number in the past four years. This may be attributed to success of last year's trial de-sexing programme.

Pound Statistics

The table below shows the activity at the pound over the last four years:

Activity	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Dogs euthanized	181	280	294	426
Dogs stolen from pound	1	5	1	8
Dogs returned to owner	87	98	95	134
Dogs rehomed	14	39	54	34
Dogs impounded	283	422	444	602

The decision this year to close the drop box at the pound is a key contributing factor in the reduction in the number of dogs impounded and subsequently euthanized.

APPENDIX 01

Infringement notices

There were 100 infringement notices issued by the Animal Control Officers over the 2017-18 year. Details are as follows:

Type of Infringement	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Failure to register Dog	85	72	91	86
Failure to keep dog under control	11	23	43	60
Wilful Obstruction of dog control officer or ranger	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Failure to comply with effects of classification of dog as dangerous dog	1	1	3	3
Failure to comply with a Bylaw	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
Falsely notifying death of a dog	Nil	Nil	1	Nil
Wilfully providing false information about a dog	1	Nil	1	161
Failure to implant microchip	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
TOTAL	100	96	139	241

Customer Service Requests

Animal Control related service requests continue to decline as shown in the following table:

Service request type	2017-18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Dog Control	328	332	393	577