

**REPORT TITLE:** DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES - 2006/07

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Graeme McCarrison, Director Regulatory Services

**ATTACHMENTS:** Papakura Dog Bylaw & Policy  
2006/07 Fees & Charges  
2006/07 Animal Control Services Dog Report

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## **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide the annual dog control report for the 2006/07 financial year to Council.

## **BACKGROUND**

Under Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996, local authorities are required to annually, publicly report on the administration of their dog control practices. This report includes the relevant policy, fees and charges and dog control statistics for the financial year.

In addition to the statutory requirement to prepare a dog control report, the Council must also give the public notice of the report by means of a notice in papers available locally. A copy of the report will also be placed on the Council website.

Within one month of adopting the report, Council must forward a copy to the Secretary for Local Government.

In respect of each financial year, the annual report must include information:

- (a) the number of registered dogs in Papakura District;
- (b) the number of probationary owners and disqualified owners in Papakura District;
- (c) the number of dogs in Papakura District classified as dangerous under Section 31 and the relevant provisions under which the classification is made;
- (d) the number of dogs in Papakura District classified as menacing under Section 33 and the relevant provisions under which the classification is made;
- (e) the number of infringement notices issued by Papakura District;
- (f) the number of dog related complaints received by Papakura District Council and the nature of those complaints; and
- (g) the number of prosecutions taken by Papakura District Council under this Act.

## **NARRATIVE**

The context for this report is the Papakura District Council Dog Control Policy and Bylaw which became effective from 1 September 2004. A copy of this information is attached.

### **Papakura District Council's Dog Control Practices**

Papakura District Council uses a computer database to store information on each registered dog. Each dog has an individual reference number. Incidents involving the dog are recorded and linked to the dog and its owner. The dog's age, sex, breed, colour and neutering status are all recorded as well as whether the dog has been classified as "menacing" or "dangerous". In the 2006/2007 year there were 3,111 dogs registered in the Papakura District.

Papakura District Council contracts dog control to Animal Control Services Ltd. Animal Control Services Ltd (ACSL) provides a 24 hour service. Their role includes registration compliance, enforcing the Dog Control Act 1996 and Impounding Act 1955 (in relation to stock wandering) and providing an education service.

Papakura District Council has applied the relevant dog control policies when administering its practices for the control of dogs.

### **Dog Control Enforcement**

In the 2006/2007 year, there were 2,018 requests for service received and actioned by ACSL. That was a 14% increase over the previous year.

Of those 2,018 requests for service, 137 were for aggression related offences such as dogs biting or challenging people and dogs attacking other animals. That was a decrease of 23% over the previous year.

Infringement notices have been issued to dog owners who fail to comply with the Dog Control Act 1996 and the Papakura District Council bylaws. In 2006/2007 there were 877 infringement notices issued, of which 49% of infringement notices were for "failing to register" dogs and 35% were for "failing to confine" dogs.

There were 2 prosecutions in the District Court in the 2006/2007 year for breaches of the Dog Control Act 1996. These were the most serious cases that occurred in the District.

### **Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise Areas**

Papakura District Council provides three schedules of areas in the bylaws for dogs. The first is prohibited areas, the second is leashed areas and there are 11 designated "off-lead" areas in Papakura District. All of these areas are patrolled regularly by the Animal Control Officers.

### **Dog Registration and Other Fees**

Fees and charges are reviewed annually and are set by Council resolution. The public are provided the opportunity to submit on and be heard annually in regard to the fees as part of the either Long Term Council Community Plan or the Annual Plan.

The funding sources set out in the funding policy for providing this service is via the fees and charges with the remainder funded from general rates. The following table show the funding split between funding from fees, fines and rates.

	ACTUAL 2004/05	ACTUAL 2005/06	ACTUAL 2006/07	PROPOSED 2007/08
FEES	55%	43%	40%	36%
FINES	19%	22%	13%	12%
RATES	26%	35%	47%	52%

Discounts are given to owners who demonstrate responsible ownership, i.e. those that obtain a dog owner licence. The registration and impounding fees are shown in the attachment.

Dog owners that fail to register their dog on the due date are visited by Animal Control Officers. Registration is requested and if they fail to register their dog, they will receive an infringement notice and their dog may be impounded.

### **Dog Owner Education**

Dog owners pay a reduced registration fee if they obtain a dog owner licence. In the 2006/2007 year, ACSL provided 35 dog owner licence sessions and issued 293 dog owner licences.

Papakura District Council provides dog owners with information through the Papakura District Council website, pamphlets, brochures, posters and in daily dealings with dog owners and the public.

ACSL presented 19 sessions in schools, kindergartens, kohanga reo and other educational facilities. In February and March 2007, ACSL provided a good dog owner campaign, "Bark – Be Aware, Responsible and Kind." The campaign included a colouring competition for school children and information packs, including posters, for libraries, community centres and vets.

ACSL had a display stand with promotional and educational material and an officer at community events such as Field days, Kids Fair, Pet Expo and SPCA open day.

ACSL provided specialised training for people who enter private properties, such as Power meter readers, Child, Youth and Family staff, Sky installers and census takers.

### **Dog Permits**

Under Papakura District Council bylaws, owners with more than two dogs must obtain a permit. During the year 23 dog owners applied for a multi-dog permit.

### **Dog Impounding**

The Dog Control Amendment Act 2003 gives dog control officers the right to enter private property to seize dogs for specific offences. Impounded dogs are held at the shared Manukau City-Papakura District shelter for seven days during which time shelter staff make every effort to locate and contact the owner to claim their animal.

Impounded dogs are not released until the registration and all other outstanding fees have been paid. The owner is liable for all fees payable including registration, an impounding fee of between \$44.00 and \$218.00 depending on whether it is the first time the animal has been impounded, and a daily sustenance fee of \$15.00 for each day the dog is held at the shelter. Dogs not claimed after seven days, that are unsuitable for adoption, are euthanised. If a dog is suitable for adoption, various agencies are contacted about placing the dog in a new home.

In the 2006/2007 year, 849 dogs were impounded; of these, 684 (or 80%) were unregistered when impounded. There were 37 dogs voluntarily relinquished to ACSL by their owners of which 18 came during the widely promoted amnesty, 392 impounded dogs (or 46%) were euthanised and 45 dogs were adopted by new owners.

Category	As at 30 June 2007	For Period 01 July 2006 - 30 June 2007
1) Total # Registered Dogs	3,111	~ Not Required ~
2) Total # Probationary Owners	0	0
3) Total # Disqualified Owners	0	0
4) Total # Dangerous Dogs	0	1
➤ Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s31(1)(a)	0	0
➤ Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	0	1
➤ Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	0	0
5) Total # Menacing Dogs	2	2
➤ Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - i.e. by Behaviour	2	2
➤ Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii)- by Breed Characteristics	0	0
➤ Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed.	0	0
6) Total # Infringement Notices.	~ Not Required ~	877
7) Total # Complaints Received	~ Not Required ~	2,018
➤ TA Complaint Category 1	~ Not Required ~	Not Applicable
➤ TA Complaint Category 2...	~ Not Required ~	
8) Total # Prosecutions Taken	~ Not Required ~	2

In addition, a report has been received from ACSL Group for the 2006/2007 financial year (attached to this report).

### **CONCLUSION**

Council is required under section 10A Dog Control Act 1996 to prepare and adopt an annual report on the dog control services. This report sets out what Council has achieved in regard to dog control during the financial year 2006/2007 and is presented for adoption by Council.

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the information be received.
2. That Council adopt the 2006/2007 Annual Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices.