

Statement of Proposal for the Draft Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy and Draft Control of Dogs Bylaw

This Statement of Proposal provides an overview of the proposed amendments to Council's Control of Dogs Bylaw and Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy. This information aims to help the community understand the proposed amendments, and for those who wish to make a submission on the draft Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy and Draft Control of Dogs Bylaw 2026, it outlines how they can do this.

The draft Control of Dogs Bylaw 2026 is attached as Appendix 1.

The draft Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy is attached as Appendix 2.

Background

Under the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act), all territorial authorities must have a dog control policy and an associated bylaw.

Section 10 of the Act requires every territorial authority to adopt a dog control policy using the special consultative procedure set out in section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Under section 20 of the Act, Council may make a bylaw for any of the reasons outlined in section(1)(a) to (l). The purpose of a bylaw is to give effect to the Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy by:

- Requiring owners to keep dogs under control in all public places
- Prohibiting dogs, whether under control or not, from specified public places
- Providing designated dog exercise areas
- Providing minimum standards for the accommodation and care of dogs
- Requiring dog owners to immediately remove dog faeces from public places or land not occupied by the owner
- Sets the level of enforcement for dogs that are a nuisance and the impounding of a dog in breach of the bylaw
- Sets the number of dogs at a residential address
- Anything else that Council may consider necessary or desirable to further the control of dogs

Assessment of the bylaw

Council determined that under section 155 of the Local Government Act 2002 that a bylaw for the control of dogs is the most appropriate way of addressing the problems of managing dogs in the Rangitikei District and to give effect to the requirements of the Act, noting that section 10(6) of the Act requires the Council to make a bylaw to enforce its Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy.

A copy of Council's findings report including its section 155 determination is attached.

We want to hear your views

Any person, organisation or body is welcome to make a submission on the draft Bylaw and Policy. The consultation period will be open from Monday, 14 September 26 and closes at 5pm on Friday, 16 October 26. If submitters would like to speak, it is anticipated that a hearing will be scheduled for November 2026, but this depends on the number of submissions that Council receives (i.e. if Council receives a high number of submissions, then the hearing may need to occur later).

Making a submission

You can make a submission:

- Online at [Consultations: Rangitikei District Council: www.rangitikei.govt.nz](https://www.rangitikei.govt.nz/consultations)
- By obtaining a hard copy submission form from the Council's High Street Office in Marton or one of our service centres in Bulls and Taihape
- By emailing submissions@rangitikei.govt.nz

Contact Us

If you have any questions about the draft Bylaw or Policy, please get in touch by calling 0800 422 522 or by emailing submissions@rangitikei.govt.nz.

Control of Dogs Bylaw and Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy 2026

The draft Control of Dogs and the Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy largely proposed to carry forward existing provisions, with some improvements to clarify and some minor amendments proposed where issues were identified through pre-consultation and analysis of the implementation of the existing bylaw and policy. For example there are some changes proposed to dog exercise areas.

The key stakeholders affected by the Bylaw and Policy include:

- Dog owners and handlers
- Residents living near dog access areas
- People who regularly use public spaces in the District

There has been increased public concern about dog control nationally. The Government has also indicated that changes to the Dog Control Act 1996 will be introduced in 2027. Minor amendments have therefore been made to strengthen and provide clarity around owners' responsibilities to keep their dogs under control. These changes align as much as possible with the changes that the Government has signaled.

Some provisions have also been proposed to aligned with the Manawatū District Council's Dog Control Bylaw and Policy. These minor amendments are intended to promote consistency and support the shared animal-control service arrangement between the two councils.

Option 1 - Approve Bylaw and Policy with amendments

A summary of the key proposed changes is provided in the table below:

Changes we are proposing	Reasons for our proposed changes
Control of Dogs Bylaw	
General amendments to the structure, text, and layout of the bylaw	The Bylaw has been restructured including 'signposting' into 'parts' (i.e. introduction, keeping of dogs etc.), with subsequent changes proposed to the layout/sequence of provisions, and minor changes to the text to improve readability and provide clarity.
Section 6 INTERPRETATION – Under Control	
The definition of Under Control	The definition has been updated to align with the shared services and to clarify that the person in charge must be capable of controlling or restraining the dog.

Terms defined in the Act have the same meaning in the Bylaw	To reduce duplication and ensure terminology is consistent across the Dog Control Act 1996 and Bylaw.
Section 7 CONTROL OF DOGS IN PUBLIC PLACES	
Owners must have their dog under control and be carrying a leash in dog exercise areas	This supports owners' obligations under the Act.
Section 8 VEHICLE PROVISION	
Vehicle provision moved into a separate section	This was part of section 7 control of dogs in public places but has been separated out because it is not limited to the control of dogs in public places.
Section 9 DOG PROHIBITED AREAS	
Removal of picnic areas as a prohibited area	This is too broad, and there are areas in the district that are defined as picnic areas but could accommodate dogs on leash.
Section 11 DESIGNATED DOG EXERCISE AREAS	
Removal of the north east section of Taihape Domain as a dog exercise area	This has been changed from a 'dog exercise area' to a 'dog on leash at all times area'. As this area is regularly grazed by sheep it is more appropriate for it to be an on leash area.
Section 12 REMOVAL OF FAECES	
Requirement to carry a suitable waste bag	Clause 7.2.6 of the Policy has this requirement. This change will help address the concern raised in the pre-engagement survey.
Section 14 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE ACCOMMODATION AND CARE OF DOG	
Kennels must be at least 1.8 metres from a boundary	The minimum distance is proposed to increase from 1 metre to 1.8 metres to help reduce potential nuisance effects, including barking, and to align with shared services arrangements.
Section 15 CONFINEMENT OF DOGS	
Confinement appropriate to the dog	This aligns with section 14 minimum standards for the accommodation and care of dogs.
Section 17 ABATEMENT OR INTERVENTION IN RELATION TO NUISANCE	
New sub section	This aligns with the shared services and provides transparency and timeframes for dog owners.
Compliance with a nuisance notice	

Section 18 NUMBER OF DOGS AT A RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	
Multi-dog permit expiration	This is to provide clarity to permit holders for the process that they must reapply after three years.
Section 22 Maps	
Taihape Domain - northeastern section of Taihape Domain	This has been changed from a dog exercise area to a dog on leash at all times area to better reflect the activities in the area.
Taihape Papakai Park added	This has been added as a dog on leash at all times area to provide additional spaces for dogs exercise.
Huntermville Queens Park	This has been added as a dog on leash at all times area to provide more spaces for dog exercise.
Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy	
Amendments to the structure and text of the Policy	Some amendments are proposed to the wording in the Policy to improve readability and provide clarity.
Section 2 – DEFINITIONS	
Responsible Owner updated to Good Owner	This has been updated throughout the Policy to reflect Council's Fees and Charges.
Removal of picnic areas as a prohibited area	This is too broad, and there are areas in the district that are defined as picnic areas but could accommodate dogs on leash.
Section 6.3.7 Number of Dogs at a Residential Address	
Number of Dogs at a Residential Address has been added to the Policy.	This has been included in the Bylaw but not the Policy.
Section 6.8 Dog Exercise Areas	
Taihape Domain has been removed as a large off leash area	This has been changed from a dog exercise area to a dog on leash at all times to better reflect the activities in the area.
Turakina Reserve has been added to the Dog and Exercise Areas	This has been included in the Bylaw not the Policy.

Option 2 - Approve Bylaw without any changes

Consistency with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990

The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 affirms a range of rights and freedoms, including freedom of movement, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, and freedom from discrimination.

Council has considered the proposed Dog Control Bylaw and Policy for consistency with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and is satisfied that any limits imposed on individual behaviour are prescribed by law and are reasonable and justified. These limits are necessary to protect public safety, promote animal welfare, and support the shared use of public spaces.

Following consultation under the special consultative procedure, Council will consider any submissions received and confirm whether the final form of the bylaw raises any additional New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 implications.

Section 155 Determination for Council's Control of Dogs Bylaw and Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy

The Policy/Planning Committee on the 12 March 26 determined that under section 155 of the Local Government Act 2002 that a bylaw for the control of dogs is the most appropriate way of addressing the problems of managing dogs in the Rangitikei District and to give effect to the requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996, noting that section 10(6) of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to make a bylaw to enforce its Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy.

Resolved minute number 26/PPL/001

That the Policy/Planning Committee makes a determination under section 155 of the Local Government Act 2002 that a bylaw for the control of dogs is the most appropriate way of addressing the problems of managing dogs in the Rangitikei District and to give effect to the requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996, noting that section 10(6) of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to make a bylaw to enforce its Dog Control and Owner Responsibility Policy.

Cr D Wilson/Cr P Hiroa. Carried