

# Rangitikei District Council Report pursuant to Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996

for the period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

## PART 1 – Dog Control Policy and Practices

### 1. Dog Control in the District

- Number of dog owners in District – 2313
- Number of registered dogs in District
  - 5091 comprising
  - 2582 working dogs
  - 2132 Good Dog Owners and
  - 377 non working dogs.
- The Council employs five Animal Control Officers and one Senior Animal Control Officer.
- A shared service agreement for animal control has continued with the Manawatu District Council. The contract is renewed tri-annually.
- Two Animal Control Officers are based in the Rangitikei, and two in the Manawatu and one is a permanent floater. Throughout the month a weekly roster provides an Animal Control Officer for afterhour on call cover for both Districts with regards to animal control complaints. The Senior Animal Control Officer supervises activities in both districts.
- Animal Control Officers respond to priority one calls after hours. Priority one calls include dog attacks, secured dogs and stock on roads.

The number of infringements is comparable to this time last year (45 versus 70). This decrease can be attributed to dog owners registering on time and generally being responsible throughout the year.

Court action is permitted once the infringement fine is 56 days overdue.

Wandering dogs relate to nearly 17% percent of all requests for service. While some wandering dogs are identified during patrols, we rely on people reporting them. Unfortunately a large number of people find it easier to post lost, found or roaming dogs on social media platforms rather than contacting Council in the first instance. In some cases days can go by before council is informed. This practice cannot be controlled and some owners are getting their dogs back without consequence.

### 2. Dog Control Enforcement Practices

- Animal Control Officers responded to 750 service requests/complaints during the reporting period in response to the following:
  - 57 attacks (human and animal – includes rushing)

- 129 barking
- 130 wandering/stray
- 41 Animal Welfare/Property Investigation
- 112 Found
- 98 Lost
- 183 Other (e.g. microchipping, Good Dog Owner status/Bylaw/General
- 45 infringement notices were issued.

### **3. Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Exercise Areas**

The problem of dogs in public places or otherwise prohibited areas is not one that is common within this District. When dogs are reported as wandering unaccompanied within such areas, the Animal Control Officers respond promptly.

### **4. Dog Control Registration and Other Fees**

Due to Covid-19, the Fees and Schedules were not raised for this year in an effort to assist the public.

- Non working dogs registration no change \$132
- Non working neutered/spayed no change \$89.
- Good Dog Owner non neutered/spayed no change \$60 to \$62.
- Working Dogs no change \$43.

The dog registration fees reflect the respective levels of service required by each category of dog owner. The good dog owner system aims to provide an incentive within the registration fee structure that promotes responsible dog ownership. The fee structure will reward dog owners who:

- adequately fence their section,
- de-sex their dog,
- have a good record of dog ownership,
- register their dog on time, and
- care for their dogs properly, i.e. provide them with a secure yard and a kennel that is weatherproof, of sufficient size, clean and sanitary.

Council's approach to dogs that remained unregistered after the usual warnings and penalties etc. is for the Animal Control Officers to visit all known properties previously recorded as housing a registered dog. Checks are made to ascertain whether a dog was still housed at that property. If such a visit verifies that a dog is still owned, infringements are sent to owners, and if required dogs have been impounded under Section 42 of the Dog Control Act 1996, for failing to be registered.

### **5. Dog Education and Dog Obedience courses**

The Council contracts an instructor to deliver its quality dog education programme targeted at schools within the Rangitikei District. Positive feedback has been received from schools in response to the education programme to date. The service provider uses her own dogs to enforce the message during her presentations.

This year Rangitikei District Council supported our dog education provider in purchasing a book she had published which taught children aged between 5-8 years of age about dog safety. It has been well received by the schools visited to date and Council sponsored 660 books that are handed to the children after her safety presentation on our behalf. An ACO assists where possible, but due to Covid-19 levels, this programme has been halted until levels are reduced further.

## **6. Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners**

No owners were classified as disqualified or probationary during the year.

## **7. Menacing and Dangerous Dogs**

- The Council has not had any issues with owners of menacing dogs not complying with the requirements relating to their classification.
- There are 4 dogs classified as dangerous in the District.

<b>PART 2 – Statistical Information</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>As at 30 June 2019</b>	<b>As at 30 June 2020</b>
1) Total Registered Dogs	4961	5091
2) Total Probationary Owners	Nil	Nil
3) Total Disqualified Owners	Nil	Nil
4) Total Dangerous Dogs	4	4
Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s31(1)(a)	Nil	Nil
Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	4	4
Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	2	Nil
5) Total Menacing Dogs	35	63
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – i.e. by behavior	14	20
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) by Breed Characteristics	6	7
Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed	15	36
6) Total Infringement Notices	70	45
7) Total Complaints Received	1050	750
8) Total Prosecutions Taken	Nil	Nil
9) Infringements Sent to Court	17	26