

Whanganui District Council Annual Dog Control Report 2019/2020

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

1. Introduction

The Whanganui District Council, as a Territorial Authority (TA), 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 a TA to report on its dog control policy and practices.

This report is for the 2019/2020 financial year, 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020.

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

The Whanganui District Council has a Dog Control Policy, adopted 27 May 2015, commencing on 8 June 2015. The principle objective is to maintain a high level of responsible dog ownership in the Whanganui District.

The Dog Control Policy is supported by the Dog Control Bylaw 2015. The bylaw specifies standards of control required of dog owners in Whanganui.

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.

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

The Animal Control functions of the Dog Control Act 1996 are managed through our Compliance Team. Animal Management Officers are directly employed as Council Officers with delegated authority under the Act.

In February 2020 following the resignation of Council's Animal Management Support Officer and one Animal Management Officer, changes were made to staffing responsibilities within the Compliance Team to improve service delivery whilst maintaining the same level of resourcing.

A dog pound is operated and maintained by Council for temporary housing of impounded dogs and smaller animals as well as providing a facility for companion animals during a major event such as a natural disaster.

The dog pound is located at 174 Ridgway Street and is a key source of dog rehoming. Rehoming is also undertaken through work with other animal rescue centres and the Council adopt a dog facebook page which has nearly 2700 followers and has proven very successful.

Low cost micro-chipping is available at the dog pound for \$25 as well as discounted leads, collars and worming tablets.

Relevant campaigns informing dog owners of their responsibilities are displayed through signage on Animal Management vehicles, regular features through the Council Community Link page in local newspapers and radio advertising.

Proactive patrols are undertaken around the District, with a particular focus on public spaces such as beaches and reserves to ensure compliance with the Dog Control Act 1996 and Whanganui District Council Dog Control Policy and Bylaw.

During Covid19 levels 3 and 4 lockdown the team continued to provide essential services to the Community. This included Pound management and responding to priority incidents.

Part 2 Statistical Information

- **Dog registration.**
 - As at 30 June 2020 there were 8288 registered dogs in Whanganui.
- **Probationary and Disqualified owners.**
 - In 2019/2020 period, one owner was disqualified.
 - There were no owners classified probationary.

- **Classified Dangerous dogs.**
 - 2 dogs were classified during 2019/2020 period.

Dangerous by owner conviction under s31(1)(a)	0
Dangerous by sworn evidence s31(1)(b)	0
Dangerous by owner admittance in writing s31(1)(c)	2
TOTAL (2019/20)	2

- **Classified Menacing dogs.**
 - 41 dogs were classified during 2019/2020 period

Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) (Behaviour)	15
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) (Characteristics)	0
Menacing under s33C(1) (Breed)	26
TOTAL (2019/20)	41

- One objection to classification was received for two dogs during this period. The classifications were subsequently rescinded (and is not shown in the above statistic).

- **Infringement notices issued.**
 - A large number of infringements were issued in October 2019 for unregistered dogs. A number of these infringements were then withdrawn with the owner gaining compliance by registering. This contributed to a large number of 'write offs' for the period.

In Process (eg. Recently issued)	36
Paid	14
Written of	277
Lodged at Court	199
TOTAL ISSUED	526

- **Dog control requests for service.**

- A total of 5460 animal related request for services were logged during this period of which 3767 were dog related. This is a decrease on 2018/19.
- The most notable increase was seen in registration information. This is due to a focus on Owners contacting us to update their registration information in June 2020.

Request type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Barking Dog	1057	917	859
Dog attack	159	82	103
Dog rush	174	125	101
Ill treatment	74	38	32
Secured dog*	595	672	621
Rego/info	411	907	1069
Trap	10	19	18
Wandering Animal	1210	1186	964
TOTAL	4314	3946	3767

- **Prosecution**

- Two dog attacks were resolved by way of prosecution before the Court. Both resulted in successful convictions and subsequent destruction of the attacking dogs.
- There are currently four prosecutions in process before the Court. One incident involved a dog attack on a cat, other was a dog attack on poultry and the two other incidents were on other dogs.

For any queries on this report please contact:

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