

Report to: Council

Meeting Date: 26 February 2025

Subject: Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report: Financial Year 2023/2024

Report for: Information

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Endorsed By: Sharon Robinson



**LICENSING & COMPLIANCE ADMINISTRATOR
EXECUTIVE MANAGER REGULATORY &
CUSTOMER SERVICES**

Purpose of Report | Te take mō te pūrongo

1. The Ruapehu District Council, as a territorial authority, is required to manage and enforce provisions pursuant to the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) and subsequent amendments in 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2010.
2. Section 10A of the Act requires the Council to report annually to the Secretary of Local Government on its Dog Control Policy and practices. This report fulfils this statutory requirement for the dog registration year: 1st July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Recommendation(s) | Ngā tūhunga

That the Council:

1. Receives the Report **Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report: Financial Year 2023/2024**;
2. Approves Ruapehu District Council Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report: Financial Year 2023/2024 in accordance with Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996;
3. Notes that approval will require the Council to give public notice of the report in accordance with section 5(1) of the Local Government Act 2002 and publish the report in one or more local newspapers, and the Council's website; and
4. Notes that a copy must be provided to the Secretary for Local Government within one month after the report has been adopted by the Council.

Well-Being Outcomes

In accordance with Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA): the purpose of Local Government is to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. Refer: [Pūwhenua ki Ruapehu Portal](#)

Social: Safe, healthy communities	Contributes	Detracts	No Impact
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic: Thriving economy	Contributes	Detracts	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental: Sustaining beautiful environments	Contributes	Detracts	No Impact
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural: Vibrant and diverse living	Contributes	Detracts	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance and Engagement | Takenga mai

Significance

This report does not trigger the [Significance and Engagement Policy](#).

Background | Tuhinga

1. Every year the Council is required, under the Act to report on the administration of its Policy and practices for the financial year and make the report publicly available on the Council website. The Act is specific on the report's scope and how it is publicised.
2. **THE COUNCIL'S DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES**
3. The Council adopted its [Dog Control Policy](#) in September 2022. The objectives of the policy are to:
 - a. promote responsible dog ownership for the enhancement and protection of the Ruapehu community
 - b. identify the obligations of dog owners in both public and private places,
 - c. identify the dog leashed areas, prohibited areas and off-leash areas within the Ruapehu District, and
 - d. comply with the requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996 (The Act).
4. General Comments relating to the implementation of the Policy are as follows:
5. **Bylaws And Wandering Dogs**
 - a. All dogs which are found wandering are secured and either returned to the owner, or impounded. In some cases, if the dog is registered with no history of valid complaints identified, the dog may be returned to the owner at no cost. If the dog was impounded, the owner is normally required to pay impounding fees and an infringement for failure to control is generally issued. The dog owner does have an opportunity to make a submission and request a waiver of the infringement notice.
6. **Impounded Dogs**
 - a. In most cases where a dog is impounded the full amount of fees as per Council's adopted fees and charges are payable before the dog is released. However, staff have reduced or waived fees in a case by case basis where payment in full has been identified will cause a financial burden on the dog owner and/or their whanau.
 - b. The Animal Control officers ensure a good home is located for those dogs that are identified as being suitable for rehoming. This year new owners have been found via word of mouth, through social media posts on the Council's Facebook page or customers have contacted Council expressing an interest to rehome a dog.
 - c. Dogs are only euthanised because of surrender or not being claimed and have been identified to be unsuitable for rehoming due to illness, temperament issues or breed. Euthanasia is undertaken by a licensed veterinarian.
7. **Exercise Areas**
 - a. Council established dog exercise areas and dog-prohibited areas within the district. The Policy also requires dogs to be on a leash at all times in a public place not deemed exercise areas with the exception of Ohura township. The exercise areas and dog prohibited areas are regularly monitored as part of normal patrols. There have been regular complaints relating to dogs off leash in leashed exercise areas.

8. Special Permits For More Than Two Dogs

- a. Owners with more than two dogs in any residential area not zoned rural must obtain a permit. The policy uses zones defined in the Council's operative District Plan. The property is inspected to assess whether or not the criteria is met prior to a permit being issued.

9. EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

- a. The Council communicates with the public by way of direct written communication, Council website, press releases in the local papers, radio advertisements and social media (Facebook).

10. Dog Control Officers

- a. Ruapehu District Council employs two Compliance Officers who are responsible for dog and other animal management issues. They are also responsible for noise control, litter, vehicle and parking enforcement, and other Council bylaws.
- b. Ruapehu District Council also employs a Pound Officer responsible for the day-to-day management of the District Pound in Taumarunui.

Discussion | He Kōrerorero

1. FEES FOR THE 2023/2024 REGISTRATION YEAR

2. Fees and charges are reviewed annually and set by the Council. The fees adopted in April 2023 are set out below.
3. Ruapehu District Council offers a Responsible Dog Owner status for owners who meet the following criteria:
 - a. Compliance with Dog Control Act 1996 and Ruapehu Bylaw 2022 and Dog Control Policy 2022;
 - b. Dog currently registered by due date (30 June of each registration year); and
 - c. Clear record for previous 12 months (including no history of complaints or impounding).
4. This status qualifies the owner for a discounted registration rate as noted below.

5. Registration Fees

Entire Dogs	\$160 (\$106 if paid by 30 June 2023)
Desexed Dogs	\$110 (\$73 if paid by 30 June 2023)
Responsible Dog Owner	\$42
Working Dogs	\$37 (\$25 if paid by 30 June 2023)
Hunting Dogs	\$41 (27 if paid by 30 June 2023)
Dangerous Dogs	Registration at 150% of the level that would apply if the dog were not classified as a Dangerous Dog
Late Payment Penalty	50% of the base fee

6. Impounding Fees

First Impounding: all dogs	\$90
Second Impounding: all dogs	\$180
Third Impounding: all dogs	\$285
Daily Sustenance	\$17
Registration Investigation	\$33
Surrender Fee	\$50
Rehoming Fee	\$50

7. In the Ruapehu District, dog registration fees help to pay for most of our animal service activities, including:
- Dog shelter facilities for the care, welfare and return of lost and stray dogs.
 - Investigation, monitoring and resolution of dog issues including nuisance, aggressive and dangerous dogs.
 - Patrols of public places to protect public, ensure safety and apply enforcement.
 - Friendly and professional advice on being a responsible owner.

8. **DOG CONTROL STATISTICS**

9. The dog control statistics for the Ruapehu District as required by Section 10A (2) (a) to (g) are detailed below.

10. **Registered Dogs**

Number of registered dogs	4220
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11. **Probationary and Disqualified Owners**

Number of probationary owners	1
Number of disqualified owners	Nil

12. **Dangerous and Menacing Dogs**

13. **The number of dogs classified as dangerous (under section 31 Dog Control Act 1996)**

Classification	2023/24
Dangerous by owner conviction S31(1)(a)	1
Dangerous by sworn evidence S31(1)(b)	4
Dangerous by owner admitting in writing S31(1)(C)	Nil
Total number of dogs classified as dangerous in the Ruapehu District	11
Total number of dogs classified as dangerous in 2023/24 year	4

14. **The number of dogs classified as menacing (under section 33A or section 33C Dog Control Act 1996)**

Classification	2023/24
Menacing by behaviour S33A(1)(b)(i)	6
Menacing by breed characteristics S33A(1)(b)(ii)	2
Menacing by Schedule 4 breed S33C(1)	15
Total number of dogs classified as menacing in the Ruapehu District	65
Total number of dogs classified as menacing in 2023/24 year	23

15. INFRINGEMENT NOTICES

16. The number of Infringement Notices issued

Category	2023/24
Failure to register a dog	61
Failure to control	33
Bylaw offences	25
Failure to comply with effects of menacing dog	4
Failure to comply with effects of dangerous dog	7
Willful obstruction of an officer	1

17. Impounding

Number of dogs Impounded	210
Number of dogs Returned to owner after being impounded	96
Number of dogs rehomed after being Impounded	35
Number of dogs euthanised after being Impounded	79

18. Complaints and Prosecutions

Category	2023/24
Attacks on people	3
Attacks on other animals	3
Uncontrolled dogs i.e., rushing, challenging or chasing traffic	1
Wandering	84
Barking dogs	360
Unregistered dogs	61
Welfare	49
Number of Prosecutions	Nil

Next Actions | Ngā mahinga e whai ake nei

1. Once Council has approved the Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report for the Financial Year 2023/2024, Officers will notify the public of the report and publish the report in one or more local newspapers, published to Council's website, and a copy sent to the Secretary for Local Government within one month after the report has been adopted by the Council.

Attachment(s) | Ngā āpitihanga

None