

QLDC Council
27 November 2014

Report for Agenda Item: 1

Department:

Legal and Regulatory

1: Report on Dog Control Policy and Practices

Purpose

- 1 To present to Council a report on the administration of dog control policy and practices in the 2013/2014 financial year.

Recommendation

- 2 *That Council:*
 - a. **Approve** the form and content of the report as set out in Attachment A.
 - b. **Approve** the publication of the Dog Control Policy and Practices report and its presentation to the Secretary for Local Government pursuant to section 10A(3) of the Dog Control Act 1996.

Prepared by: Lee Webster

Reviewed and Authorised by:
Scott Carran



Regulatory Manager

General Manager, Legal and
Regulatory

12/11/2014

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Background

- 3 The Dog Control Act 1996 (the "Act") requires the Council to report on the administration of its dog control practices and dog control policy each financial year¹.
- 4 The report must include details regarding:
 - The number of registered dogs, probationary owners and disqualified owners in the district;
 - The number of dogs classified menacing or dangerous as a result of their actions, and the number of dogs classified as menacing by type or breed;

¹ Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996

- Infringement notices issued, the type and number of complaints received and prosecutions taken.
- 5 The Act also requires that the report of these activities must be publicly notified in one or more daily newspapers circulating in the district, or one or more newspapers that have at least an equivalent circulation in the district to that of daily newspapers.
 - 6 A copy of the report (Attachment A) must also be forwarded to the Secretary for the Local Government within one month after adopting the report².
 - 7 The scope of the report for Council's consideration is the dog control activities undertaken by Queenstown Lakes District Council in the financial year 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

Comment

- 8 Council has identified dog control as a primary area of focus within its recently adopted Enforcement Strategy and Enforcement Action Plan. In respect of dog control, the specific objective of the Strategy and Enforcement Action Plan is to ensure an environment safe from roaming and aggressive dogs.
- 9 Key statistics within the report are:
 - a) While there was a slight reduction (3%) in the total number of roaming dog complaints overall, the issue of roaming dogs remains the biggest issue in our community with 337 complaints received in total.
 - b) There has been a significant increase in the number of dog attacks over this period and notably dog attacks on people (rather than attacks on other dogs or animals) with an overall 216% increase (from a total of six to 19 attacks on people).
 - c) This is reflected in a 137% increase (from eight to 19) in the number of dogs classified as menacing by behaviour and 117% increase (from 17 to 37) in the number of infringements issued for dogs not being under control or confined.
 - d) The number of registered dogs has only increased slightly (by 4% or 146 dogs) over this last financial period, but the number of complaints received has risen 21% from 743 to 900. The increase in complaints (requests for service) continues the trend over the last three years. This may be attributed to our community acknowledging that poor dog owners' behaviour is not acceptable and reporting incidents to Council, and increased confidence that Council will take enforcement action.

² Section 10A(3) of the Dog Control Act 1996

- e) The Policy on Dogs is currently being reviewed to ensure it meets our community's needs. This is presented for Council's consideration as a separate agenda item,

Financial Implications

- 10 There are no budget implications resulting from this decision. There are minimal cost implications regarding the public notification of the report in a local newspaper.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions

- 11 The dog control activities undertaken achieve the purpose of the Local Government Act 2002 as they enable the efficient and effective conduct of Council's regulatory activities regarding the control of dogs across the district.

Council Policies

- 12 The following Council Policies were considered:

- Queenstown Lakes District Council Policy on Dogs – This policy provides the principal rules regarding dog control throughout the district.
- Council's Policy on Significance - The decision is not significant under the Council's Significance Policy.

Consultation

- 13 There has been no public consultation undertaken regarding the details of the report, as this is for information only and does not include a request for public feedback.

Publicity

- 14 The Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to give public notice of the report (Attachment B). It is intended to place a public notice in:
- Otago Daily Times
 - Lakes Weekly Bulletin
 - Upper Clutha Messenger

Attachments

- A Dog Control Activities and Practices Report 2013/2014
- B Public Notice