

6 August 2024

Shane Sharma



Dear Shane Sharma

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (the Act) 1987

We refer to your email dated 24 July 2024 for:

Also under the OIA, can you please provide a breakdown of where and how much of this money was spent? There are very few dog parks in Hutt so why we pay for parks when we don't have many close by?

Response:

Please find attached last years Animal Control report which helps explain what Animal Services uses Rates and Registration fees for.

Also, please see our document on how Animal Services is funded.

<https://hccpublicdocs.azurewebsites.net/api/download/9153b75d08c44c71967702a7fcf071af/RevenueandFinancingPolicy-2021/d4a5788d69b864a1abbc785d0641ffc5a>

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website. Please refer to the following link: www.huttcity.govt.nz/council/contactus/make-an-official-information-act-request/proactive-releases

Yours sincerely

Philip Rossiter

Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

Hutt City Council

Annual Dog Control Report

2023-2024



1. Purpose of Report

Hutt City Council is required to manage and enforce provisions under the **Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act)** and subsequent amendments in 2003, 2004, 2006, and 2010.

Section 10A of **the Act** requires the Council to report annually on its dog control policy and operations. This section requires the Council to report on several statistical aspects of its dog control policy and practices and to make the report publicly available.

This report fulfils the statutory requirement for dog registration year 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

2. Dog Control Policy and Practices



The Council adopted a Dog Policy in May 2005 which provides a practical framework for the care and control of dogs in the city. The policy was revised in 2015 and the Council adopted the final Dog Policy on 15 December 2015. The policy and its amendments are enforceable under the HCC Bylaw 2015 effective 8 February 2016

The Hutt City Council Dog Control Bylaw 2015 (Part 4 - Dog Control) recognises that the majority of dog owners in Hutt City are responsible and that most interaction between dogs and the public is positive.

This bylaw aims to achieve a balance between the control of dogs and recognition of the health benefits of dog ownership.

It also gives legal powers to enforce the bylaw and determines requirements for keeping dogs in a way that:

- protects the public from nuisance
- maintains and promotes public health and safety
- safeguards the welfare of animals.

3. Animal Services Teams

- a) The Hutt City Council Animal Services Team operates for Lower Hutt and Moa Point and has since 2012 delivered animal services functions for Wellington City under contract.
- b) The Hutt City team comprises of a Team Leader, a Principle Animal Control Officer, a Senior Animal Control Officer, 3 Animal Control Officers and a Shelter Officer. They are based at 21 Meachen street, Seaview.
- c) The Hutt City Animal Administration team comprises of a Team Leader, 2 full time Administrators, a part time administrator and a casual administrator employed for the re-registering of dogs.
- d) The Wellington Team consists of a Team Leader, a Senior Animal control Officer and 3 Animal Control Officers. They are based at the Moa Point Shelter.
- e) Hutt City has a Memorandum of understanding with Upper Hutt City Council which gives UHCC Animal Control Officers access to the Seaview shelter to house its dogs which are seized after hours. All veterinary, sustenance, shelter and other services are charged back to UHCC.

4. Fees

Dog registration fees and impound fees contribute approximately 70% to the cost of dog control in Hutt City. Dog registration fees are set by Council resolution and were increased during this year by 2.50% to reflect inflationary increases



Fees are used for

Dog registration fees cover a range of different services that allow us to provide a safe and healthy community for all residents and dogs. The fee increase was necessary in order for us to deliver various services that include:

- promoting care and control of over 12,000 dogs in Lower Hutt
- patrolling public areas and enforcement of the Dog Control Bylaw
- encouraging responsible dog ownership - we have over 1,600 dog owners with Responsible Dog Owner status in Lower Hutt
- maintaining national dog database records
- responding to public inquiries about dogs - [Report a problem](#)
- providing education to schools and other groups free of charge
- maintaining dog parks and off-leash exercise areas including the Les Dalton Dog Park.

Our fees are set in accordance with Section 37 of the Dog Controls Act 1996 and are available for public submissions before being considered and ratified by the Council ([Section 37: Dog Control Act 1996](#)).

The Council also operates a responsible dog owner scheme which provides a discounted rate for dog owners who meet the relevant criteria.

The current year fees can be found here: [Fees and Charges](#)

Hutt City Council has 5 ACOs, 3 full-time Administrative Staff members, 1 part-time administration officer, and 1 full-time Kennel Officer.

The Officers are responsible for dog control activities throughout the Hutt City precinct.

After a procurement process After Hours Animal services for urgent requests were contracted to Amourguard Ltd from the 15th May, 2024. They respond to requests from 5pm to 8am weekdays, weekends and public holidays. Urgent requests cover attacks on animals or people, aggressive roaming dogs, dogs secured by members of the public and dogs on roadways impacting traffic.

Hutt City is contracted to manage the operations of WCC's animal management functions and has a team of 5 ACOs based at Moa Point Animal Control Shelter.

5. Key achievements

The animal services team has officers dedicated to 6 city wards which allow for the officers to interact with dog owners and the public in those areas. By having the local knowledge of each ward, the officers can respond to complaints and requests for service in a very timely way.

SPCA were hosted at the Seaview pound for their annual de-dexing clinic. They completed X numbers of dexing.

A new co-operative initiative has been launched with SPCA to specifically target desexing dogs to

has a large number of un-desexed dogs within their area, resulting in unwanted litters, straying, and aggressive behaviours from some un-desexed dogs in the community. These un-desexed dogs often have poor welfare outcomes, and there can be a risk to the public's safety. Desexing has been proven to improve these outcomes and encourage responsible pet ownership.

6. Rehoming program

Officers continue to run a very successful rehoming program for Wellington and the Hutt Valley. The Facebook page for Animal Services Wellington and the Hutt Valley ([Animal Services Wellington & Hutt Valley](#)) is well-received nationwide and has a huge following of almost 14,000 followers. Dogs are rehomed throughout New Zealand. Dogs are carefully assessed to ensure their suitability for adoption.

At the Mōa Point Dog Shelter, there is a serious and hard-working colleague who rules the roost – Colin Feral, the cat. As the live-in shelter cat, Colin has the official job of Chief Temperament Tester.

When we are adopting out dogs, people always want to know if the dog is going to be good with cats, and we can test those dogs on Colin safely.

Colin's presence is used to see how dogs react to him as they come through the shelter doors.

Colin did not react to the dogs, meaning the staff could simply sit him on a swivel chair and then bring a dog in to see their reaction.

Usually, it's quite good, weirdly a lot of dogs are quite good with cats, but we do get the ones that, you know, they're going to be the chasers. [watch Colin here](#)



7. Community engagement

Animal Control Officers continue to build positive relationships with our dog owners which includes dog behavioural and training advice via home visits on requests.

During the COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic lights), Animal Control Officers responded to emergency calls and worked remotely from home via email and by phone to resolve any breaches.

Due to the increase in people walking their dogs, there was an increase in dog roaming/ threatening and attack reports which kept our Animal Control Officers very busy.

Due to COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic lights) restrictions, some events had to be postponed or cancelled but during the second half of the year when fewer restrictions were in place, our community engagement programs were very successful. We look forward to participating in community events in the future, and educating dog owners, as education is still the best tool for dog management and a safer, more informed community.

Animal Control Officers continue providing an education program to schools on dog bite prevention and training for those persons who interact with dogs during their day-to-day workout in the community.

Animal Control Officers continue to work with the SPCA and HUHA and are working on a Regional Welfare Companion Animal Emergency Plan to ensure animal welfare in the event of an emergency.

Our online registration system for new and previously registered dogs has received positive feedback as it is simple and effective to use.

We will continue with our cellphone text alerts to dog owners for registration reminders, river algae warnings in the summer months, and any 1080 operations by the Department of Conservation.

Hutt City Council has 45 Dog Bag Dispenser Locations around Hutt City to keep our City free from dog "land mines".

Animal Control Officers represented Animal Services at the Hutt City Council stalls at the Petone Rotary Fair and Te Whiti Park events.

8. Dog Welfare

We have responsibilities under the Dog Control Act 1996 to ensure all dogs are cared for and provided with the necessities at all times.

We work alongside SPCA and HUHANZ officers in most cases to ensure that dogs are receiving the care required and in some cases will seize those dogs where owners have failed to adhere to warnings previously.

9. Responsible dog owner ([How to be a responsible dog owner](#))

You will be recognised as a responsible dog owner (RDO) if you meet the following conditions and requirements:

- your annual dog registration fees are paid on time
- your dog has free access to a fully enclosed containment area on your property (this doesn't have to be a fully fenced garden or yard)
- in the last year, your dog has not been impounded, been the subject of a substantiated public complaint, or received an infringement notice
- you have not received any convictions under the Wellington Consolidated Bylaw: Part 2 - Animals; the Dog Control Act 1996; or the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

Where you can take your dog to exercise (See all [Dog exercise areas](#))

In designated dog exercise areas, your dog doesn't need to be on a lead but you need to have one with you. Even when you're exercising off-leash, you must keep your dog under control at all times.

In public places, your dog needs to be on a lead.

If you're taking your dog out in public it's your responsibility to clean up after it. Used litter bags can be placed in public rubbish bins on the street.

Where you can't take your dog (See all [Prohibited Areas](#))

Unless your dog is a guide dog, hearing ear dog, companion dog, or a working dog being used by the Police or a Security Company, you can't take your dog to:

- public libraries
- playgrounds
- council swimming pools
- kindergartens and play centres
- marked sports fields
- special events, where advertised.

Microchipping is enforced. ([Dog Control Act 1996 Section 36A](#))

Dog registration and microchipping are not the same things. You must register your dog each year, but you only need to microchip your dog once.

Microchipping is a simple procedure. A microchip is a tiny chip with a unique ID number that is inserted into your dog's neck. It only takes seconds to insert. The chip can then be scanned at vet clinics and animal shelters to identify your dog.

All new puppies and any dogs registered from 1 July 1996 (except working farm dogs) in New Zealand for the first time must be microchipped within two months of being registered.

10. Dog Control Statistics 2022/2023

Dogs registered for the year:

10,369

Probationary owners and disqualified owners:

We have not disqualified or applied probationary classifications to any dog owners during this period.

The number of dogs that have been classified as dangerous this year (S31 Dog Control Act 1996):

Five (5)

The number of dogs that have been classified as menacing this year (S33A and S33C):

Twenty-Two (22)

The number of infringement notices issued:

We have issued 52 infringement notices

Dog related complaints

Complaint	Total
Barking dogs	914

Dogs attacking people	100
Dogs attacking animal	108
Dogs threatening	180
Uncontrolled dogs	1103
Roaming dogs	630
Lost dogs	199
Found dogs	239
Total	5,919

Miscellaneous	Total
Roaming Stock	52
Dogs returned to owner	330
Welfare Investigations	70
Microchipping	89
Boarding dogs	109
Adoptions	9
Transferred to another TA	23
Impounded dogs	375
Total	897

Number of owners prosecuted by Hutt City Council

We did not prosecute any dog owners during the year.

11. Appendices

None

Author: Derek Kerete
Head of Regulatory Services

Approved By: Alison Geddes
Director of Environmental and Sustainability