

12 January 2021

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information request – Documents relating to Dog Control Activity

I am writing in response to your information request of 24 November 2020 for information about documents relating to the dog control activity of Council. To ensure consistency I have restated your questions below together with our responses in [blue](#).

1. A copy of, and the date and place of publication of the notice for the Dog Control Policy and Practises Report for the financial years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, and links to the Reports.

The Animal Services Annual Report for the financial year 2018-2019 to the Department of Internal Affairs was advertised under the DCC Noticeboard in the Otago Daily Times on 24 August 2019 as part of notification of the Council meeting held on 27 August 2019.

The Animal Services Annual Report for the financial year 2019-2020 to the Department of Internal Affairs was advertised under the DCC Noticeboard in the Otago Daily Times on 19 September 2020 and tabled at the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 22 September 2020.

Links to the agenda (including the Animal Services Report) and minutes of these meeting are provided below:

https://infocouncil.dunedin.govt.nz/Open/2019/08/CNL_20190827_AGN_1019_AT.PDF

https://infocouncil.dunedin.govt.nz/Open/2019/08/CNL_20190827_MIN_1019.PDF

https://infocouncil.dunedin.govt.nz/Open/2020/09/PLA_20200922_AGN_1265_AT.PDF

https://infocouncil.dunedin.govt.nz/Open/2020/09/PLA_20200922_MIN_1265.PDF

The Annual Animal Services Report for the financial years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 are also attached for your information.

2. The financial statements for the “dog account” for the financial years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. You provided clarification on 8 December 2020 that “dog account” referred to the financial statements for the account referred to in s69(4) of the Dog Control Act 1996.

This information is unable to be provided, I therefore decline this request pursuant to section 17(g) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 as both the adoption and impounding fees for the financial years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 were included in the same revenue stream and not available as separate fee detail.

I am, however, able to advise that from 1 July 2021 adoption fees impounding fees will be separated to ensure this information can be easily captured in the future.

3. The information provided to dog owners when the Dog Control Policy/Bylaw was last reviewed. The dates the consultation period opened and closed, and the date the information was sent to dog owners.

Consultation was undertaken via the email-based "People's Panel". The Dog Control Bylaw Review Survey was open from 16 June to 28 June 2014. The Findings Report for the Survey was published on 21 October 2015 and available from the DCC website, the links are provided below:

<https://www.dunedin.govt.nz/council/peoples-panel/dog-control-survey-august-2014>

https://www.dunedin.govt.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/522677/Dog-Control-Survey-Report.pdf

The Dog Control Policy and Bylaw 2016 was adopted by Council on 23 May 2016 with an operative date of 1 July 2016. A link to the agenda, report and attachments is provided below.

https://infocouncil.dunedin.govt.nz/Open/2016/05/CNL_20160523_AGN_199_AT.PDF

As part of your request has been declined, 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.

Yours sincerely



Lauren McDonald
Governance Support Officer
CORPORATE SERVICES GROUP

Encls:2



DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL'S ANIMAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS FOR PERIOD ENDING 30 JUNE 2020

Dog Control Policy and Practices

1. The Dunedin City Council covers a large geographical area, which includes both urban and rural dog owners. As at 30 June 2020 there were 18,190 registered dogs (95% were pet dogs). This is an increase of 160 dogs on the previous year.
2. To deliver an animal control service, the Council has an Animal Services Unit consisting of a Manager, Team Leader, two Administration Officers and six FTE Animal Services Officers, one of which is a special duties officer who also conducts school and community education sessions.
3. The Animal Services Unit has a close working relationship with key stakeholders in the community such as the Society for the Protection of Animals, local veterinarians, Police, Department of Conservation, Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust, Dog Rescue Dunedin and dog clubs.

Dog Control Enforcement Practices

4. The Animal Services Unit operates a seven-day service from 7.00am to 8.00pm during the summer (daylight saving) and between 8.00am and 6.00pm during the winter. In addition, the unit operates a 24-hour standby service for emergency call outs.
5. Over the last 12 months the unit responded to 2,668 complaints. Complaints included aggression, attacking, barking, fouling and wandering dogs and dogs that were "contained" by members of the public. Of the total number of complaints 28% were in relation to barking and 10% in relation to wandering dogs. All complaints are followed through to completion.
6. In addition, 227 dogs were impounded over the review period, a decrease of 49 on the previous year.
7. During the course of enforcing the dog control legislation and policies, 565 infringement notices were issued to dog owners, a decrease of 67 on the previous year. Three owners were prosecuted for a breach of the Dog Control Act over the 12-month period.

Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise Areas

8. The majority of Dunedin dog owners are generally very compliant with regard to not exercising their dogs in prohibited areas and in the use of a leash in 'leash only' areas.

The Council has six dog exercise areas, three of which have a small dog exercise area within them, that are well patronised daily. Positive feedback from the public continues to confirm that they are very successful with both the socialisation of dogs and the interaction of people.

9. Each of the dog exercise parks has a unique design and has been built to maximise the use of the topography of the area. The surrounding areas are regularly maintained and upgraded. The ratio of dog exercise parks to known dogs (registered and unregistered) is 1:2,071.

10. All the parks have:
 - a. Re-fillable dog poo bag dispensers; and
 - b. Double gates (air lock) to provide safe access and exit for dog owners using the parks.
11. Most parks have:
 - a. Drinking fountains;
 - b. Shelters for dog owners;
 - c. Agility equipment; and
 - d. Solar lighting.

Dog Registration and Other Fees

12. There was no increase in dog registration fees. The fee to register a pet dog was \$106, \$51 for the first working dog and \$26 for the second and subsequent working dog/s. The annual rebate for registered neutered dog was \$10.
13. To ensure there is ongoing compliance with owners registering their dogs, the Animal Services Unit is continuing to undertake a zero-tolerance policy in regard to any known unregistered dogs, and any dogs that were still unregistered after being issued with an infringement notice were impounded. This strategy continues to be very successful with 98% of known dogs registered during this period.
14. In addition, the Unit is monitoring the number of impounded dogs that are unregistered and during this report period 53% of impounded dogs were unregistered. This is a 17% increase from the previous year. The increase reflects how Animal Services are focusing on unregistered dogs. All impounded dogs are legally required to be registered and microchipped prior to leaving the pound.

Dog Education

15. The Dunedin City Council's Responsible Dog Owner Policy (RDOP) exists to recognise and encourage responsible dog ownership. Providing the dog owner has not had any valid complaints in the previous two years regarding the management of their dog, they may apply for RDOP status and if successful will receive a 44% discount on future dog registration fees.
16. For dog owners to become Responsible Dog Owners they are required to be present during an inspection of their property by an Animal Services Officer. The inspection is to ensure that the property meets the required standard in relation to adequate fencing and to test the dog owner's knowledge of relevant aspects of the local bylaw and Dog Control Act.
17. Currently 31% of pet owners are classified as Responsible Dog Owners which is the same as the previous year.
18. The Unit is also very proactive in conducting newspaper and radio advertising programmes promoting dog owner responsibilities. This has been found to be a positive and effective medium to assist in having dogs accepted by the public in an urban environment.
19. A school and community group education programme is also conducted and over the twelve-month period the Animal Services Officer (Special Duties) visited seven schools and nine community groups in Dunedin. Presentations were given to 15 classes.

Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners

20. Over the last 12 months there were no dog owners classified as a probationary and no dog owners disqualified from owning a dog.

Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

21. The Council has classified 201 dogs as menacing (29 were classified during the last 12 months). Of the total 29 dogs classified as menacing, 19 were classified as menacing due to behaviour and 10 were classified by breed under s33 c (1) Schedule 4.
22. The Council has nine dogs classified as dangerous which is two more than the previous year. During the last 12 months one dog was classified as dangerous due to a rushing offence.

Pound Facility

23. The facility continues to provide an excellent standard of kennels. The security is to a very high standard which has resulted in no break-ins.

General Information

24. The Council promotes a dog neutering programme for owners who would have difficulty meeting the costs. The full cost of the operation is paid by the Dunedin City Council and the number of dogs neutered in the last 12 months was 237. This service is put out to tender to local veterinarians to ensure a competitive price is achieved.
25. As at 30 June 2020 a total of 11,012 pet dogs have been neutered under the neutering programme. Sixty four percent of registered pet dogs are neutered which is the same as the previous year.
26. Over the last year 97% of impounded dogs (220 of 227) were either claimed or adopted. The remaining seven dogs (3%) were euthanised due to not being claimed by their owner and were either classified as menacing by breed (therefore not permitted to be re-homed) or when assessed by staff were found to be unsuitable to be re-homed.
27. Ninety two percent of registered dogs are microchipped which is the same as the previous year. This includes 100% of the classified dangerous dogs and 98% of the classified menacing dogs. The benefits of microchipping have continued over the last 12 months by:
 - a. Making it easier for Animal Services Officers to identify the owners of wandering and impounded dogs;
 - b. Local veterinarians providing updated details of dogs they have microchipped which enables Animal Services to check they are registered.
28. When dog owners register a dog, they are given information packs that contain advice on how to care for their dog and their responsibilities as a dog owner.
29. To help reduce dog fouling in the city the following initiatives are in place:
 - a. Registered dog owners are being given six rolls of compostable poo bags spread out during the registration year;
 - b. New signage has been placed at popular dog walking places across the city; and
 - c. Staff regularly patrol popular dog walking places.
30. Dog Rescue Dunedin (DRD) continues to work alongside the Animal Services team under a Memorandum of Understanding helping to provide homes for unwanted pound dogs. The relationship between DRD and Animal Services has proven to be a very positive and constructive one.
31. Due the high number of barking complaints received annually by Animal Services the Animal Services Officers are now using 'bark boxes' to record barking. This device has been found to be invaluable when dealing with these complaints, particularly when dog owners are often not at home and do not realise how often their dog/s are barking. Three new devices were purchased in the last 12 months.

DOG CONTROL STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Section 10A(2) of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires territorial authorities to publicly report each financial year on a variety of dog control related statistics in a tabular format.

Column B shows the total number at 30 June 2020 on DCC record and Column C shows the number recorded during the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020. For example, as at 30 June 2020 the DCC have 12 dangerous dogs on record. This number changes each year as some dogs may have died and others may have moved districts. Of those 12 dogs six were classified in the last twelve months.

CATEGORY (A)	Total in Dunedin City as at 30 June 2020 (B)	Period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (C)
1) Total # Registered Dogs	18190	Statistics not required
2) Total # Probationary Owners	1	0
3) Total # Disqualified Owners	4	0
4) Total # Dangerous Dogs	12	6
Dangerous by Owner Conviction	9	5
Dangerous by Sworn Evidence	3	1
Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	0	0
5) Total # Menacing Dogs	201	29
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - ie by Behaviour	98	19
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) - by Breed Characteristics	0	0
Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed	103	10
6) Total # Infringement Notices	Statistics not required	565
7) Total # Complaints Received	Statistics not required	2,668
Aggressive	Statistics not required	205
Attack	Statistics not required	206
Barking	Statistics not required	757
Fouling	Statistics not required	30
Wandering	Statistics not required	898
Dogs Contained	Statistics not required	556
Dogs Impounded	Statistics not required	227
8) Total # Prosecutions Taken	Statistics not required	3
9) Total # Pet Dogs	Statistics not required	17,217
10) Total # Pet Dogs Neutered	Statistics not required	11,012
11) Total # Responsible Dog Owners	Statistics not required	4,352
12) Total # Schools Visited	Statistics not required	7
Number of Classes	Statistics not required	15
13) Total # Dog Exercise Areas	Statistics not required	8
Ratio of Known Dogs to Exercise Areas	Statistics not required	1 to 2,071

DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL'S ANIMAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS FOR PERIOD ENDING 30 JUNE 2019

Dog Control Policy and Practices

1. The Dunedin City Council covers a large geographical area, which includes both urban and rural dog owners. As at 30 June 2019 there were 18,030 registered dogs (93% were pet dogs). This is an increase of 565 dogs on the previous year.
2. To deliver an animal control service, the Council has an Animal Services Unit consisting of a Manager, Team Leader, two Administration Officers (1.6 FTEs) and six FTE Animal Services Officers, one of which is a special duties officer who also conducts school and community education sessions.
3. The Animal Services Unit has a close working relationship with key stakeholders in the community such as the Society for the Protection of Animals, local veterinarians, Police, Department of Conservation, Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust, Dog Rescue Dunedin and dog clubs.

Dog Control Enforcement Practices

4. The Animal Services Unit operates a seven-day service from 7.00am to 8.00pm during the summer (daylight saving) and between 8.00am and 6.00pm during the winter. In addition, the unit operates a 24-hour standby service for emergency call outs.
5. Over the last 12 months the unit responded to 3,393 complaints. Complaints included aggression, attacking, barking, fouling and wandering dogs and dogs that were "contained" by members of the public. Of the total number of complaints 29% were in relation to barking and 29% in relation to wandering dogs. All complaints are followed through to completion.
6. In addition, 276 dogs were impounded over the review period, a decrease of 27 on the previous year.
7. During the course of enforcing the dog control legislation and policies, 632 infringement notices were issued to dog owners, a decrease of 122 on the previous year. Two owners were prosecuted for a breach of the Dog Control Act over the 12-month period.

Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise Areas

8. The majority of Dunedin dog owners are generally very compliant with regard to not exercising their dogs in prohibited areas and in the use of a leash in "leash only" areas.

The Council has six dog exercise areas, two of which have a small dog exercise area within them, that are well patronised daily. Positive feedback from the public continues to confirm that they are very successful with both the socialisation of dogs and the interaction of people.

9. Each of the dog exercise parks has a unique design and has been built to maximise the use of the topography of the area. The surrounding areas are regularly maintained and

upgraded. The ratio of dog exercise parks to known dogs (registered and unregistered) is 1:2,289.

10. All the parks have:
 - a. Re-fillable dog poo bag dispensers; and
 - b. Double gates (air lock) to provide safe access and exit for dog owners using the parks.
11. Most parks have:
 - a. Drinking fountains;
 - b. Shelters for dog owners;
 - c. Agility equipment; and
 - d. Recently installed solar lighting.

Dog Registration and Other Fees

12. Dog registration fees increased from \$103 to \$106 to register a pet dog. The fee for the first working dog increased from \$49 to \$51 and the second and subsequent working dogs from \$25 to \$26. The annual rebate for registered neutered dog/s increased from \$6 to \$10.
13. To ensure there is ongoing compliance with owners registering their dogs, the Animal Services Unit is continuing to undertake a zero-tolerance policy in regard to any known unregistered dogs, and any dogs that were still unregistered after being issued with an infringement notice were impounded. This strategy continues to be very successful with 98% of known dogs registered during this period.
14. In addition, the Unit is monitoring the number of impounded dogs that are unregistered and during this report period 36% of impounded dogs were unregistered. This is an 8% decrease from the previous year. All impounded dogs are legally required to be registered and microchipped prior to leaving the pound.

Dog Education

15. The Dunedin City Council's Responsible Dog Owner Policy (RDOP) exists to recognise and encourage responsible dog ownership. Providing the dog owner has not had any valid complaints in the previous two years regarding the management of their dog, they may apply for RDOP status and if successful will receive a 43% discount on future dog registration fees.
16. For dog owners to become Responsible Dog Owners they are required to be present during an inspection of their property by an Animal Services Officer. The inspection is to ensure that the property meets the required standard in relation to adequate fencing and to test the dog owner's knowledge of relevant aspects of the local bylaw and Dog Control Act.
17. Currently 31% of pet owners are classified as "responsible dog owners" which is a 1% increase from the previous year.
18. The Unit is also very proactive in conducting newspaper and radio advertising programmes promoting dog owner responsibilities. This has been found to be a positive

and effective medium to assist in having dogs accepted by the public in an urban environment.

19. A school and community group education programme is also conducted and over the twelve-month period the Animal Services Officer (Special Duties) visited 8 schools and 2 community groups in Dunedin. Presentations were given to 23 classes.

Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners

20. Over the last 12 months no dog owners were classified as a probationary. One dog owner was disqualified from owning a dog.

Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

21. The Council has classified 201 dogs as menacing (37 were classified during the last 12 months). Of the total 37 dogs classified as menacing, 17 were classified as menacing due to behaviour and 20 were classified by breed under s33c(1) Schedule 4.
22. The Council has nine dogs classified as dangerous which is two less than the previous year. During the last 12 months one dog was classified as dangerous due to a rushing offence.

Pound Facility

23. The facility continues to provide an excellent standard of kennels. The security is to a very high standard which has resulted in no break-ins.

General Information

24. As at 30 June 2019 a total of 10,841 of pet dogs have been neutered in Dunedin, which is 60% of the total number of registered pet dogs and a 1% decrease from the previous year.
25. The Council promotes a dog neutering programme for owners who would have difficulty meeting the costs. The full cost of the operation is paid by the Dunedin City Council and the number of dogs neutered in the last 12 months was 246. This service is put out to tender to local veterinarians to ensure a competitive price is achieved.
26. Over the last year 99% of impounded dogs (274 of 276) were either claimed or adopted. Two dogs (1%) were euthanised due to not being claimed by their owner and were either classified as menacing by breed (therefore not permitted to be re-homed) or when assessed by staff were found to be unsuitable to be re-homed.
27. Ninety-one per cent of registered dogs are microchipped which is a 3% increase from the previous year. This includes 100% of the classified dangerous dogs and 98% of the classified menacing dogs. The benefits of microchipping have continued over the last 12 months by:
 - a. Making it easier for Animal Services Officers to identify the owners of wandering and impounded dogs;
 - b. Local veterinarians providing updated details of dogs they have microchipped which enables Animal Services to check they are registered.
28. When dog owners register a dog, they are given information packs that contain advice on how to care for their dog and their responsibilities as a dog owner.
29. To reduce dog fouling in the city more poo bag dispensers and signage have been placed at popular walking places across the city.
30. Dog Rescue Dunedin (DRD) continues to work alongside Dunedin City Council's Animal Services team under a Memorandum of Understanding helping to provide homes for unwanted pound dogs. The relationship between DRD and Animal Services has proven to be a very positive and constructive one. Because of DRD's hard work and dedication to this cause most of the unwanted pound dogs are rehomed.

31. Due the high number of barking complaints received annually by Animal Services the Animal Services Officers are now use 'bark boxes' to record barking. This device has been found to be invaluable when dealing with these complaints, particularly when dog owners are often not at home and do not realise how often their dog/s are barking.

DOG CONTROL STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Section 10A(2) of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires territorial authorities to publicly report each financial year on a variety of dog control related statistics in a tabular format.

Column B shows the total number at 30 June 2019 on DCC record and Column C shows the number recorded during the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019. For example, as at 30 June 2019 the DCC have seven dangerous dogs on record. This number changes each year as some dogs may have died and others may have moved districts. Of those seven dogs two were classified in the last twelve months.

CATEGORY (A)	Total in Dunedin City as at 30 June 2019 (B)	Period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (C)
1) Total # Registered Dogs	18,030	Statistics not required
2) Total # Probationary Owners	1	0
3) Total # Disqualified Owners	5	1
4) Total # Dangerous Dogs	9	1
Dangerous by Owner Conviction	6	1
Dangerous by Sworn Evidence	3	0
Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	0	0
5) Total # Menacing Dogs	201	37
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - ie by Behaviour	94	17
Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) - by Breed Characteristics	0	0
Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed	107	20
6) Total # Infringement Notices	Statistics not required	632
7) Total # Complaints Received	Statistics not required	3,393
Aggressive	Statistics not required	196
Attack	Statistics not required	218
Barking	Statistics not required	980
Fouling	Statistics not required	57
Wandering	Statistics not required	997
Dogs Contained	Statistics not required	688
Dogs Impounded	Statistics not required	276
8) Total # Prosecutions Taken	Statistics not required	2
9) Total # Pet Dogs	Statistics not required	16,845
10) Total # Pet Dogs Neutered	Statistics not required	10,841
11) Total # Responsible Dog Owners	Statistics not required	4,223
12) Total # Schools Visited	Statistics not required	8
Number of Classes	Statistics not required	23
13) Total # Dog Exercise Areas	Statistics not required	8
Ratio of Known Dogs to Exercise Areas	Statistics not required	2,289