
MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL, MIRANDA STREET, STRATFORD ON TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 2.24PM TO HEAR AND CONSIDER SUBMISSIONS TO THE KEEPING OF ANIMALS, POULTRY AND BEES BYLAW

PRESENT

The Deputy Mayor A L Jamieson (the Chairman), the District Mayor N C Volzke, Councillors M McKay, V R Jones, R W Coplestone, G W Boyde, W J Sandford, A K Harris, J M S Erwood, and G M Webby.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Director – Corporate Services – Mrs T Radich (acting Chief Executive during the meeting), the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Director – Assets – Mrs V Araba, the Executive Administration Officer – Mrs E Bishop, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Environmental Health Manager – Ms R Otter the Environmental Health Officer – Mrs S Horton, one member of the media (Stratford Press) and one submitter A Geary (NZ Forest and Bird *via audio visual link*).

1. **WELCOME**

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the District Mayor, the Chief Executive, Councillors, staff, and the media. He reminded Councillors to ensure they are familiar with the health and safety message including evacuation procedures.

2. **APOLOGIES**

A leave of absence was noted for Councillor P S Dalziel and apologies noted from the Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne and the Director – Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the apology be received.

JAMIESON/SANDFORD
Carried
P&S/20/178

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Policy and Services Committee meeting. It was reinforced to Councillors that the purpose of this meeting is to hear submissions on the Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees Bylaw. Councillors were asked to hear submissions with an open mind and to restrict their question time to the submitters to points of clarification or issues pertaining to subject matter. Councillors were requested not to get into direct dialogue with the submitter.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST**

The Deputy Mayor requested Councillors to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE**

The Attendance Schedule for Policy and Services Committee meetings, including hearings, was attached.

6. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUBMISSIONS**

Submissions pages 21-50

Attached were the thirteen (13) submissions received. A fourteenth submission, Mrs J Clarkson, was pre-circulated to Councillors and formally received by this Committee and included management response and summary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT each of the fourteen (14) submissions to the Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees Bylaw be received.

HARRIS/ERWOOD
Carried
P&S/20/179

2. THAT each submitter be individually thanked for their submission, and a copy of the minutes of this Policy & Services Committee Meeting and subsequent meetings be provided to each submitter.

WEBBY/COPLESTONE
Carried
P&S/20/180

Recommended Reason

Each submission is formally received and the submitter provided with information on decisions made.

7. **SUBMITTERS TO BE HEARD**

(No report)

There is one (1) submitter wishing to be heard.

Submitters are given 5 minutes to speak to the Committee. Five minutes is also allocated for questions from the Committee.

Name	Organisation	Sub No.
Amelia Geary	North & South Taranaki Branches - Forest and Bird Protection Society (Forest and Bird)	4
<p>Points noted in discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The points presented to focus on within this presentation were limiting cats to three (3) per household, mandatory microchipping and compulsory desexing. • Limiting the number of cats is an attempt to reconcile a conflicting issue to cat and property owners and an overall attempt to manage cat numbers. Fewer cat numbers per property would have a better impact on Taranaki’s predator free ambitions. • The officers points in the report stating there are studies supporting restricted numbers does not mean the impact cats have on human and environmental health is not well documented. Absence of evidence does not mean there are not issues. • Cat welfare is impacted by multi cat households as those environments can be stressful on the cats. • Microchipping is a well-supported management tool. Wellington City Council passed mandatory microchipping in 2016 and this received 89% of submissions in support of this being introduced with 82% of those in support being cat owners. Referring to the Privacy Act in regards to this is a red herring, Wellington City Council confirmed they did not have to go to vets to enforce the bylaw. She noted the absence of national legislation in regards to this does not dissolve Councils of its responsibilities. A message needs to be sent to Central Government from grass roots level. • It was noted that microchipped animals were able to be reconnected with their owners in just three hours after the Christchurch earthquakes, with non-microchipped animals taking seven days. • She noted their strong support for compulsory desexing to be included in the bylaw and noted a female can breed 300 kittens within their lifetime with males producing well above that. Overpopulation of cats results in thousands of cats and kittens being abandoned. • The National Cat Management Strategy has been updated this year and co-written by Local Government New Zealand and relevant associations nationwide. This is core document for use in lobbying central Government to get national direction. 		

8. DECISION REPORT - ADOPTION KEEPING OF ANIMALS, POULTRY AND ANIMALS BYLAW

D20/27273 (Pages 6-58)

Discussion

Council needs to consider submissions to the Dog Control Policy as part of the consultation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report be received.

COPLESTONE/BOYDE
Carried
P&S/20/181

2. THAT The council considers submissions received as part of the public consultation process of the bylaw and the subsequent adoption of the Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees Bylaw 2020 (attached).

3. THAT the commencement date of the Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees Bylaw 2020 be Wednesday 9 December 2020.

ERWOOD/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/20/182

Recommended Reason

The *draft* Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees Bylaw 2020 has gone through the public consultation process, required by Sections 82 and 83 of the Local Government Act 2002. Five submissions were received as a result of the public consultation process.

Points Noted in Discussion:

- The District Mayor noted there are a number of people who have submitted on making the bylaw tougher including implementing a restriction of the number of cats. This is largely due to the environmental harm caused by cats and the effect on native birdlife. He noted the purpose of the bylaw is to address health related and nuisance issues and to introduce a cap on the number of cats would be a fundamental change to this direction. He noted there were 13 councils nationwide that have restrictions for the number of cats in their bylaws, there are then 54 that do not. He noted he did not support a cap being put on cat ownership.
- The Deputy Mayor noted littering and loitering was also an issue raised in submissions.
- Councillor Coplestone noted the impact of campylobacter and toxoplasmosis on young families and women wanting to get pregnant or who are pregnant. He noted this was a huge problem in farming and supported restricting cat numbers. It was noted the wording amendment suggested by the Medical Officer of Health would help cover some of these health related issues.
- It was clarified that unless there was some government legislation to allow for enforcement it would be difficult for Council to implement compulsory microchipping, desexing or registration of cats. The Dog Control Act allows for management of dogs, registration and collation of data. The bylaw currently allows for abatement of the nuisance but not for infringements.
- Councillor Sandford noted his support for compulsory microchipping but acknowledged there is no legislation to assist with restrictions or rules. He noted a friend outside of the district had had 28 cats dumped near their property and this is an ongoing issue.

- Councillor Harris acknowledged the education and promotion undertaken by vets including incentives for desexing but felt there could be more done in these areas.
- It was clarified the bylaw allows Officers to reduce the number of cats on a property where there is a health related issue or perceived problem. There is an issue where the amount of cats on a property is unknown.
- It was agreed to amend the wording in the bylaw to those suggested by the Medical Officer of Health.
- It was noted there was one submission relating to bees which supported the bylaw and helped maintain bee keeping standards. The submissions regarding roosters supported the decision to ban roosters within the urban area.
- It was clarified that the current wording in the bylaw would give Officers the ability to reduce the number of cats on a property to zero if a health related issue required this action. This work would generally be undertaken in conjunction with the Taranaki District Health Board or vets.
- It was noted that Council would support national initiatives to bring about more controls regarding cats and would support enforcement on a local level. It was noted dog control works well as it is uniformed throughout the country.

The meeting closed at 2.51pm.

A L Jamieson
CHAIRMAN

Confirmed this 26th day of January 2021.

N C Volzke
DISTRICT MAYOR