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## Dog Control Policy and Dog Control Bylaw 2015 Hearing Subcommittee

### OPEN MINUTES

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**Minutes of a Meeting of the Dog Control Policy and Dog Control Bylaw held in Committee Room 1, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton on Thursday 7 May 2015 at 10:30am.**

#### PRESENT

Chairperson	Cr L Tooman
Members	Cr G Chesterman Cr A O'Leary
In attendance	Unit Manager Strategy and Research Unit Manager City Safe Programme Manager - Bylaws, Strategy and Research Manager Animal Education & Control Strategic Policy Analyst (Environment) Team Leader Planning and Assets
Also in attendance	Norman Kingsbury - Submitter Stef Holmes - Submitter
Committee Advisor	Mr B Stringer

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#### 1. Apologies

**Resolved:** (Crs Tooman/Chesterman)

That the apology for lateness from Councillor O'Leary be received and accepted.

#### 2. Confirmation of Agenda

**Resolved:** (Crs Tooman/Chesterman)

That the Agenda be confirmed.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

No members of the Subcommittee declared a Conflict of Interest.

#### 4. Dog Control Policy and Bylaw 2015 Hearings and Deliberation Report

The Programme Manager - Bylaws, Strategy and Research provided a brief introduction to her report with a summary of the key themes from the submissions that were sent to Council. She confirmed that submitters had been notified that the Subcommittee's Agenda (including the staff report) would be available online.

**Resolved:** (Crs Tooman/Chesterman)

That:

- a. The Report be received; and
- b. the Subcommittee hear the submitters wishing to present in support of their submission.

The following submissions were received:

**Norman Kingsbury** spoke in support of his submission that Hammond Park should not become an off-lead dog area. He highlighted the following that would be at risk if dogs were able to roam off-lead in the park:

- i. the important regeneration of wildlife in the park;
- ii. elderly people who wished to walk through the park unimpeded; and
- iii. people that wanted to participate in outdoor activities.

Mr Kingsbury confirmed that the staff's recommendation that Hammond Park would retain the requirement for dogs to be on a lead met his concerns.

**Stef Holmes** spoke in support of her submission with the aid of a visual presentation. She outlined her approval of the consultation process Council went through to enable residents to share their opinions. Ms Holmes emphasised the importance of providing written guidance to all dog owners and indicated her support of the proposed *Pooches and Parks* booklet. She suggested that some of the signage used in shared park facilities required greater clarity in terms of the responsibilities of dog owners.

The Manager Animal Education & Control and Team Leader Planning and Assets responded to the following question:

- **Communication with Submitters**

If the proposed Policy and Bylaw were adopted by Council, a communication would be sent to all registered dog owners summarising the process followed and decisions made. An update could also be circulated with new registration forms and the periodic newsletter sent to registered dog owners.

**The Meeting adjourned from 10:45 to 11:05 to enable the remaining submitters to attend and present their submissions.**

The Programme Manager confirmed no further submitters would be attending the Meeting. The Chair thanked the members of the public that provided written submissions and those who attended the Meeting.

The Chair provided an overview of the deliberation stage of the Subcommittee and the background of the Policy and Bylaw process.

The Elected Members noted the following in relation to the submissions, and staff responded to questions as appropriate:

- **Signage**

It was important for there to be clear, plain English signs so that dog owners and other public spaces' users were aware of their respective responsibilities. The Team Leader agreed and confirmed that this was being worked on through focus groups and the Communications Team. In particular, the Team Leader acknowledged that signage around Riverbank required improvement.

- **Restricted times for off-lead areas**

The Team Leader stated a proposed restricted time period, from 7pm to 7am, during which dogs would be able to be off-lead in an otherwise prohibited area, created confusion and was not feasible.

- **Days' Park**

It was necessary to find a balance between members of the public using the park for their dogs and those that wanted to use the area for other activities.

- **Innes Common Dog Exercise Area**

The Team Leader advised it was not recommended that this dog exercise area was extended, given the activities undertaken in neighbouring areas.

- **Incorrect statements in submissions**

It was suggested that staff should correct submitters that do not appear to be aware of the accurate position on particular matters or where further information would be of assistance. This included issues of multiple dog ownership and the euthanasia process and practices at the City pound.

- **Education campaigns**

In light of Council resources required to deal with roaming and nuisance dog behaviour, staff were asked to consider whether better education campaigns were required as to the responsibilities of dog ownership. The Manager Animal Education & Control noted the difficulty in dealing with unregistered dogs in that situation.

**Resolved:** (Crs Tooman/Chesterman)

That:

- a) the Subcommittee approve the staff recommendations to the proposed Dog Control Policy and Dog Control Bylaw 2015;
- b) the final draft of the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw, together with the report of the Subcommittee's Chairperson, be reported to the Strategy and Policy Committee for adoption.

The Programme Manager confirmed that a communication would be sent to each submitter following Council's final decision on the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw. This would detail the process and decision reached. Staff were also asked to address any specific issues raised by each submitter in the respective responses.

**Cr O'Leary joined the meeting (11:25am) during the above item and was present when the matter was voted on.**

The Chair thanked members of the public who had made submissions and staff for their efforts to date.

**The Meeting closed at 11:32am.**