



Date: Tuesday, 11 August 2015
Time: 9.30am
Meeting Room: Rooms 1 and 2, Level 26
Venue: 135 Albert Street
Auckland

Regulatory and Bylaws Committee

OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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Memo

7 August 2015

To: Councillor Calum Penrose, Chair of the Regulatory and Bylaws Committee

From: Councillor George Wood

Subject: Item of Extraordinary Business: Dog Attacks

In light of the media coverage following the TVNZ Sunday programme on 2 August 2015, I wish to have dog attacks raised as an Item of Extraordinary Business at the Regulatory and Bylaws Committee meeting on Tuesday, 11 August 2015. Since the Sunday programme revealed the extent of the incidences of dog attacks, there has been considerable public disquiet. Auckland Council is at the forefront of prevention and prosecution of dog offences along with the NZ Police.

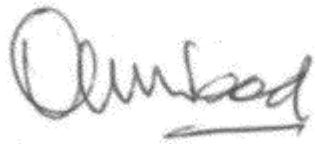
The Accident Compensation Corporation has publically stated that over the past 10 years they had received 100,000 claims for dog bite injuries. The Association of Plastic Surgeons estimate that dog injuries result in hospitalisation of almost two people, mainly children, per day.

It is my view that Regulatory and Bylaws Committee needs more information on the extent of the dog bite/attack problem and therefore I request that an urgent report be prepared on the extent of the incidents and how Auckland Council and Police are dealing with the problem. Particular issues to be addressed would be:

- What are the statistics since the Auckland Council amalgamation of dangerous dog and dog attack complaints within Auckland Council territory?
- Since the amalgamation, what has been the number of prosecutions in the District Court for dog attacks?
- How do the dog attack figures set out in the research that Mr Zachary Moaveni of Counties-Manukau DHB conducted relate to the figures recorded by Auckland Council?
- What the specific roles and responsibilities of Auckland Council for investigating dog attacks and how does this coincide with the duties of the NZ Police.

The recommendation to be put to forward to the committee: "That a report be prepared outlining the issues raised in this memorandum and presented to the appropriate committee of Auckland Council."

Kind Regards



Councillor George Wood

Item 12.1

Attachment A

Memo

10 August 2015

To: Councillor George Wood, Elected Representative
cc: Councillor Calum Penrose, Chair Regulatory and Bylaws Committee
Members of the Regulatory and Bylaws Committee
From: Grant Barnes, General Manager Licensing and Compliance Services

Subject: Dog attacks

Dear Councillor Wood

Following a TVNZ feature on 2 August 2015 regarding new research on dog attack numbers in New Zealand, you have requested that dog attacks be raised as an item of Extraordinary Business at the Regulatory and Bylaws Committee meeting on Tuesday, 11 August 2015.

You have sought answers to questions raised in your item of extraordinary business which I outline below in order to assist the committee with its discussion should they wish.

What are the statistics since the Auckland Council amalgamation of dangerous dog and dog attack complaints within Auckland Council territory?

The table below summarises the number of attacks on people, and number of aggression incidents that have been reported to Auckland Council since amalgamation in October 2010, as well as the number of dogs classified as Menacing or Dangerous. 2014/15 figures are still being collated from the end of financial year.

	Oct 10 - Jun 11	Jul 11 - Jun 12	Jul 12 - Jun 13	Jul 13 - Jun 14	Jul 14 - Jun 15
Number of incidents of dog attacks on people	694	806	877	822	820
Number of dog aggression incidents (incl. people & animals)	901	1276	1143	1363	1742
Classified Dangerous Dogs	65	70	56	41	Not available
Classified Menacing Dogs	1463	2275	1909	1266	Not available

Since the amalgamation, what has been the number of prosecutions in the District Court for dog attacks?

Prosecutions for Section 57, 57A or 58 of the Dog Control Act 1996 are sought in most cases of dog attacks on people or animals. The figures below are the number of completed prosecutions for attacks on either people or other animals.



Reporting systems have improved since 1 November 2014, allowing the confirmation of eight attacks on children in the period November 2014 – July 2015.

	Oct 10 - Jun 11	Jul 11 - Jun 12	Jul 12 - Jun 13	Jul 13 - Jun 14	Jul 14 - Jun 15
Prosecutions Completed	135	294	115	269	Not available

How do the dog attack figures set out in the research that Mr Zachary Moaveni of Counties-Manukau DHB conducted relate to the figures recorded by Auckland Council?

The statements from the research that dog attacks on people are increasing are not borne out by Auckland Council statistics, which show a slight reduction in complaints about dog attacks year on year for the past three years (877 in 2013 – 820 in 2015). However, Auckland Council has not yet had access to the research data to assess which of their statistics relate to the Auckland area, or how these statistics were calculated. The figures may not be comparable.

Of course, not all attacks are necessarily reported to council, particularly if the incident happens in the family home, or home of a friend or relative.

Bites on children are reported to council relatively rarely, but we take all seriously and will always remove the dog from the property and find a way to prosecute, even if the family are uncooperative. I understand the research is promoting education a means of prevention of attacks, which we are very keen on and are looking at improving and extending our education services.

Between March and July 2015, our officers have attended over 30 schools, events and sessions for “at risk” workers (meter readers, posties etc), with an outreach of over 2,000 people.

What the specific roles and responsibilities of Auckland Council for investigating dog attacks and how does this coincide with the duties of the NZ Police?

Auckland Council investigates dog attack matters. When Police are first called out to an incident in certain circumstances they will inform Auckland Council of the incident (dog attack) and an Animal Management Officer (AMO) will immediately be despatched to the scene as a Priority 1.

The Police will hand the matter over to council to deal with. In these cases the Police officer(s) will make a detailed statement of the incident and will hand the statement(s) to the AMO who will proceed to investigate the incident. This Police Officer’s statement will form part of the file which the AMO will put together for possible further legal action. The Police Officer may be the complainant or the witness in the file. The Compliance Specialist in Animal Management will work through each file and will make a recommendation to legal for further action if applicable.

Auckland Council legal team will deal with all attack matters.

It is possible that in a very serious attack matter the legal team and the Manager Animal Management may wish to refer the prosecution to the Crown prosecutors for further action.

The Police prefer to deal with the criminal matters only, however when a dog is used as “a weapon of attack” then the dog attack charge may be added to the Police docket and if that decision is



made by the Police, the Police will investigate the matter and they will proceed with the prosecution as well.

Yours sincerely

Grant Barnes
General Manager Licensing and Compliance Services