

## Official Information & Privacy Request Processing Form

REQUEST NUMBER: 180

TRIM NUMBER: D-1591086

To the General Manager: Brian Croad

Please deal with this request as soon as reasonably practical. The 20 day limit is the maximum time allowed (ten working days for transfer).

### Summary of Request

Type of Request: LGOIMA – Stray Cats

Writer: *Susan Stanford – Animal Education & Control Manager*

Organisation: *Hamilton City Council – City Safe Unit*

Request Topic: Stray cats in Hamilton and the Hamilton City Council's involvement with this issue.

Request Category:

Request Details:

This is an Official Information Act Request for information about stray cats in Hamilton and the Hamilton City Council's involvement with this issue.

**1. Is the number of stray cats in Hamilton a concern of the Hamilton City Council?  
Why/why not?**

Animal Education and Control (AE&C) have no legislative mandate or powers to manage stray and/or feral cats however there remains a public perception that they do.

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**This document is an adaptation of a document prepared in May 2007 for Greater Wellington Regional Council and current practice at Hamilton City Council.**

The Dog Control and Impounding Acts do not cover cats; AE&C are not warranted under any other act which might bestow power on them to manage stray and/or feral cats. Feral cats may be deemed as pests under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and therefore may be subject to control under a pest management plan/strategy such as the Waikato Regional Council Pest Management Plan.

[http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/PageFiles/21542/3583%20-%20RPMP\\_2014-24.pdf](http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/PageFiles/21542/3583%20-%20RPMP_2014-24.pdf)

Also there is some difficulty differentiating between feral cats and stray cats. Stray cats have usually been lost or abandoned by humans, have many of their needs indirectly supplied by humans, and continue to live near humans.

Feral cats have none of their needs provided by humans, and their population size fluctuates largely independently of humans. Feral cats don't generally live near humans. The feral cat population is self-sustaining and requires no input from the domestic cat population. Once caught in a cage they will act aggressively, hissing, growling and spraying. Feral cats do not meow or purr - this is a trait of contented domestic cats only. However it can be difficult to assess the true nature of the cat.

**2. Does the Hamilton City Council have any plans or policies in place to deal with the number of stray cats in Hamilton? If so, what are these plans or policies?**

The [Animal Nuisance Bylaw](#) is the only mechanism for managing animal nuisance including cats. However, the bylaw applies to the keeping of animals on private property and therefore does not cover the management of stray cats.

**3. Does the Hamilton City Council put any resources into dealing with stray cats in Hamilton?**

Animal Education and Control have small animal traps for hire. Individuals hiring traps sign an agreement which clearly states only possums and feral cats will be accepted by AE&C for disposal.

The individual who hires a trap is responsible for setting and checking the traps. The application for a small animal trap form clearly states that traps must be checked within 12 hours of sunrise on each day the trap remains set, beginning on the day immediately after the trap is first set.

Once an animal has been caught in the trap it is the responsibility of the individual to manage what happens next. AE&C have no control over what an individual chooses to do once they have caught an animal in a trap.

Cats that are caught and brought in to AE&C are assessed by AE&C staff to determine if they are feral; only cats that are feral will be accepted.

Cats which are strays are to be released in the area in which they were trapped or handed over to another agency involved in animal/cat welfare such as the SPCA, and Cats Protection League.

4. **Does the Hamilton City Council think anything should be done to deal with the number of stray cats in Hamilton?**

This question has been answered in the responses to question 1

5. **Any further information about Hamilton City Council's involvement with stray cats would be appreciated.**

Nil.

## **Key Dates**

Date request written: *7<sup>th</sup> October 2014*

Date request received: *10<sup>th</sup> October 2014*

Date request acknowledged: *10<sup>th</sup> October 2014*

10 working day deadline for transfer

20 working days: *4<sup>th</sup> November 2014*

## Processing Information

A comprehensive step-by-step guide is available from Democratic Services.

All requests must be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 or the Privacy Act 1993.

All responses must be cleared by the relevant General Manager, prior to despatch.

Responses involving the full or partial withholding of information, the transfer of a request, time extensions and charging may only be signed out by the General Manager.

Please see Democracy Services early if you are unsure how to deal with the request.

Reviewed by General Manager: .....

Reviewed by Democratic Services: .....

Replied to by: .....

Date despatched:.....

TRIM reference for response: .....

Time spent: .....