



Te Kaupapahere o ngā Kurī me te Ture ā-Rohe mō Te Whakahaere Kurī | Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026)

Tauākī Tūtohu | Statement of Proposal

**Hei rapu whakaaro | For Consultation - 16 March to
19 April 2026**

Kupu Whakataki | Introduction

We're reviewing our Policy on Dogs (Policy) and Dog Control Bylaw (Bylaw) in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996 and the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). As required by section 10 of the Dog Control Act 1996, we are using the special consultative procedure. Accordingly, this Statement of Proposal is prepared under section 83 of the LGA.

The **Policy on Dogs** sets the overall approach for dog management in the district and includes six objectives to guide decision-making, enforcement, and education initiatives.

The **Dog Control Bylaw** provides the enforceable rules that give effect to the Policy, such as where dogs can and can't go, leash requirements, and responsible dog ownership.

This review aims to ensure both documents are fit for purpose, reflect what we have heard from the community and from operational experience, and provide clear, practical rules for dog owners and the wider public.

Following the strong response to our Paw and Order survey, where more than 1,000 people shared their views on dog access, safety, enforcement, and dog-friendly spaces in Matamata-Piako, we have used this feedback - along with operational experience, to shape the proposed changes to the Policy and Bylaw.

These changes aim to:

- better reflect what the community told us matters most;
- respond to operational issues identified by staff;
- improve clarity and support consistent, effective enforcement;
- promote safe, accessible, and enjoyable public spaces for everyone.

The survey gave us a clear picture of community preferences, but this formal consultation is an important next step. It allows us to check back in with the community on the draft Policy and Bylaw and make sure we've interpreted the feedback correctly and struck the right balance between safety, public amenity and dog-friendly access.

We want to hear feedback from our community - do these changes that we are proposing get it right, and do they reflect what the community told us during early engagement?

Summary of Information – Draft Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw (Amended 2026)

Council is proposing changes to the Policy on Dogs and the Dog Control Bylaw to ensure they remain up-to-date, reflect community expectations, and operational insights, and provide clear and practical rules for managing dogs in the Matamata-Piako District. Both documents were last fully reviewed in 2016, and feedback from more than 1,000 participants in the Paw and Order survey has strongly informed the proposed updates.

The changes aim to improve public safety, encourage responsible dog ownership, and make rules easier for the community to understand and follow. Key proposals include allowing dogs on-leash in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) at all times, allowing dogs on parts of the Hauraki Rail Trail (on-leash), and changing some existing off-leash areas in Matamata to on-leash areas. The proposal also updates policy objectives, clarifies neutering requirements for menacing dogs, and strengthens provisions promoting responsible dog ownership. If the community supports the proposed access changes, a six-month trial may occur to help assess how well they work in practice.

Other options considered include keeping the current rules without amendments, refining the proposed changes after consultation, or revoking the Bylaw altogether. Council's preferred option is to adopt the amended Policy and Bylaw as proposed because it reflects community feedback received to date, addresses safety concerns and operational insights, and supports consistent, enforceable rules.

Further information, including the Statement of Proposal (this document), draft Policy and draft Bylaw, is available at mpdc.nz/letstalk and can also be viewed at any Council office or library. The draft documents have also been attached to this document for ease of reference.

Consultation is open until **19 April 2026**. Anyone interested in the proposal may provide written feedback during this period and may also ask to speak to Council at a meeting scheduled for 12/13 May 2026. Council staff will contact submitters who request to be heard to confirm speaking arrangements, with both in-person and online options available.

Ngā Take mō te Tūtohutanga | Reasons for the Proposal

Under the legislation, we're required to review the bylaw every ten years and the policy must be reviewed alongside it. These documents were last fully reviewed in 2016 (there have been minor amendments since then), and we want to ensure that they reflect the community that we live in today and the future we aspire to.

We are proposing an amendment to the existing Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw. Because the Bylaw is being amended rather than replaced, the statutory review period will remain at ten years in line with the Local Government Act 2002.

The current Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw are available for viewing on our website: mpdc.govt.nz/. These documents may also be viewed at any of our Council offices or libraries and attached to this document.

Maps showing our current dog access rules can also be found on our website.

What are the current rules?

The current **Policy** sets out the overall approach and objectives for how the Council manages dogs in the district in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996. It provides the strategic direction and identifies seven key objectives, which are:

1. Minimise danger, distress and nuisance
2. Minimise fouling in public places
3. Provide exercise and recreation opportunities
4. Promote education and awareness
5. Encourage responsible ownership through rebates
6. Fund activities through dog-related fees
7. Recognise the significance of kurī to Māori.

The current **Bylaw** sets rules to manage dogs in our district. These include requirements for:

Clause	Content
Dogs in public places	Requires dogs to be kept under control at all times.
Prohibited areas	Dogs are not allowed in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Within 15 metres of any playground or play equipment. <input type="checkbox"/> The central business districts (CBDs) of Matamata, Morrinsville, and Te Aroha between 8.00am and 6.00pm - 7 days a week. <input type="checkbox"/> The Hauraki Rail Trail (the area between Stirling Street and Farmer Street in Te Aroha). <input type="checkbox"/> Various local parks and reserves across the district.
On-leash areas	Areas where dogs must be on leash at all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All urban areas (excluding designated dog exercise areas). <input type="checkbox"/> Prohibited areas (outside of the hours dogs are prohibited). <input type="checkbox"/> Waharoa (Matamata) Aerodrome. <input type="checkbox"/> Council cemeteries. <input type="checkbox"/> Te Miro Forest (Waterworks Road Reserve). <input type="checkbox"/> Te Aroha Domain and associated track network. <input type="checkbox"/> All parks not specifically listed as either Prohibited Areas or Dog Exercise Areas. <input type="checkbox"/> All walking and cycling tracks managed by Council, unless listed as a Dog Exercise Area or Prohibited Area.
Dog exercise areas	Dogs may be exercised off leash (however, must be under the control of a person capable of physically restraining the dog and of exercising oral and visual control). The current dog exercise areas are: <p><u>Matamata</u> a) Centennial Drive from Tainui Street to Broadway. b) Tom Grant Drive from Rawhiti Avenue to Tawari Street.</p> <p>c) Furness Reserve. d) Founders Park. e) Peria Road Reserve (portion excluding memorial plantings and pathway).</p>

Clause	Content
	<p><u>Morrinsville</u> a) Murray Oaks Reserve – State Highway 26. b) The Morrinsville Recreation Grounds Polo Field area only at</p> <p>times when there is no Horse or Sports Activity.</p> <p>c) Holmwood Park (lower portion near the Piako River).</p> <p><u>Te Aroha</u></p> <p>a) Spur Street Esplanade (portion near the Waihou River under the footbridge)</p> <p>b) Reserve on Spur Street (portion opposite netball club and bmx track).</p>
Minimum standards for accommodation	Dog owners must provide suitable shelter with shade, warmth, and enough space for the dog to move comfortably. The shelter must be at least two metres from the property boundary, and dogs must receive proper care, including food, water, exercise, and veterinary treatment when required.
Dog limits	A maximum of two dogs (greater than three months) allowed per property in urban areas. There are no limits in rural areas.
Fouling in public places	Requirements to clean up dog waste in public places and on land not owned or occupied by the dog owner.
Nuisance provisions	<p>Dogs must not be kept on a property if they cause a nuisance, pose a significant risk to others' health or safety, or rush/intimidate any persons.</p> <p>A female dog in season must be kept securely on the owner's property. The dog shall be regularly exercised under control during this period of containment.</p> <p>If a dog is causing or likely to cause a nuisance or breach of the bylaw, a written notice may be issued requiring the owner to fix the issue. The owner must comply within the timeframe given.</p>
Impounding	<p>Any dog found wandering:</p> <p>a) In a public place or on any other land without the consent of the owner and/or;</p> <p>b) In any public place in breach of the bylaw,</p> <p>May be seized and impounded.</p> <p>Any dog impounded will not be released until all impounding fees set by Council and the full registration fee, if applicable, have been paid.</p> <p>If the dog is not claimed and fees remain unpaid within seven days of the owner receiving written notice in accordance with section 69 of the Act, the Council may sell, destroy, or otherwise dispose of the dog in such manner as it thinks fit. If the owner cannot be identified, the Council may do the same, seven days after the date of seizure of the dog.</p>
Offences and Penalties	Includes the legislative provisions for breaches of the Bylaw.

Here's a summary of what the community has told us so far:

As part of this review, we asked the community for their views on dogs in Matamata-Piako through the Paw and Order survey, which received over 1,000 responses. Key themes identified from the feedback received are summarised below:

- Dogs are an important part of people's lives, and many want more dog-friendly spaces.
- There is strong support for allowing dogs in more public areas, provided they are on-leash, under control, and owners pick up after their dogs;
- Mixed views on CBD access:
 - The majority of people supported dogs on-leash at all times;
 - Others prefer restrictions during peak hours;
 - Some oppose dogs in CBD areas completely.
- Safety is a priority: strong concerns about roaming dogs, aggressive behaviour, and lack of enforcement.
- Clear rules and better education and signage are needed - many people didn't know about the current rules/restrictions about where dogs can and cannot go.
- There is a desire for more and improved dog exercise areas, including fenced spaces, shade, water, and separate areas for small and large dogs.
- Feedback on the Hauraki Rail Trail indicated:
 - The majority of people wanted to allow dogs on-leash;
 - There was also opposition due to the potential safety risks for livestock and cyclists, and hygiene concerns for cyclists and other users of the trail (dog waste left behind).
- The consistent message received was that responsible ownership matters - owners should clean up after their dogs, keep them under control and prevent them from being a danger or a nuisance.

A detailed analysis of community feedback, and how this has been reflected in the draft documents is available on our website.

Te mānuka e kawea ake ana | What we're proposing

We are proposing to amend both the Policy and Bylaw to bring them up to date - making them clearer, easier to understand, and better aligned with current legislation, operational needs, and the feedback the community has shared with us.

1. Proposed changes to the Policy

The proposed updates to the Policy respond directly to key themes from community engagement, particularly the desire for clearer rules, a stronger focus on responsible dog ownership, and improved safety and confidence in public places.

Key changes include:

Streamlining and structural improvements

The Policy has been simplified by adding a clear purpose statement, removing duplicated legislative content, strengthening enforcement provisions, and introducing a new monitoring and review section. Minor updates have also been made to dog classification guidelines to reflect current operational practice.

Refined Policy objectives

The objectives have been reviewed to improve clarity, strengthen their focus on outcomes, and make them easier for the community to understand.

Key proposed updates include:

- Consolidating responsibilities such as education, enforcement, and owner obligations under a single objective promoting responsible dog ownership.
- Clarifying that all dogs must be under control at all times, and on-leash in specified areas.
- Refining criteria for prohibited areas to better reflect vulnerable users, reserve status, ecological considerations, and community feedback.
- Adding a new objective supporting public confidence and safety, including better education and clearer information such as signage and maps.
- Clarifying provisions on dog fouling, with expectations for waste removal in all areas outside an owner's property.
- Removing the previous statement that exclusive dog exercise areas would not be provided; the updated Policy supports maintaining and improving designated fenced exercise areas.
- Relocating and expanding the acknowledgement of kurī (dog) within the Policy, with wording developed in partnership with Te Manawhenua Forum mō Matamata-Piako.

Focus on responsible dog ownership

A new section clearly outlines Council's role in dog management and sets expectations for dog owners. This reflects strong community feedback that promoting responsible dog ownership should be a core focus of Council's approach.

Further clarity provided

- We've clarified neutering requirements for dogs classified as menacing and set out when exemptions may apply, including for dogs classified by other councils.
- We're also clarifying the circumstances where a dog may be destroyed:
 - The District Court can order a dog to be destroyed after serious incidents, such as attacks.
 - Council may only destroy a dog if it has been impounded, remains unclaimed after the statutory period or is surrendered, and noting Council will take reasonable efforts to return or rehome the dog.

2. Proposed changes to the Bylaw

We are proposing some significant changes to where dogs can and can't go. We've tried to find a fair balance: opening up more places for dogs to go (with controls like keeping dogs on a leash) while restricting access in other areas to protect safety or where other users need extra protection.

The proposed changes that would **open up** dog access include:

Allow dogs in the CBD areas at all times (on leash)

Current Rule	Proposed Change
<p>Dogs are currently prohibited from the Central Business Districts (CBDs) of Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha between 8.00am and 6.00pm, seven days a week.</p> <p>Outside these hours, dogs may enter the CBDs but must be on-leash and under control.</p>	<p>Dogs would be permitted in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) of Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha at all times provided they are on a leash and under control.</p> <p>This proposed change reflects strong community support for dog-friendly spaces and aligns with practices in other towns and cities.</p>

Allow dogs on some parts of the Hauraki Rail Trail (on-leash)

Current Rule	Proposed Change
<p>Dogs are currently prohibited from the area of the Hauraki Rail Trail from Stanley Street to Farmer Street (Te Aroha).</p>	<p>Dogs would be allowed on the Hauraki Rail Trail section through the Te Aroha township and out to Matamata provided they are on a leash and under control.</p> <p>This supports recreational opportunities for dog owners while maintaining safety for all trail users.</p> <p><i>Note: The section from Stanley Street in Te Aroha to the Hauraki District Council boundary will remain a no-dog area due to existing restrictions (a designation is in place).</i></p>

Note: If supported by community feedback, Council may choose to trial the proposed dog access changes in the CBDs and on the Hauraki Rail Trail for six months after adopting the final bylaw. The purpose of a potential trial would be to monitor impacts and determine whether the approach is suitable for long-term implementation..

The proposed changes that would **restrict** dog access include:

Remove off-leash status for Tom Grant Drive and Centennial Drive (Matamata)

Current Rule	Proposed Change
Tom Grant Drive and Centennial Drive in Matamata are dog exercise areas which means dogs are allowed to be exercised off-leash.	<p>These areas would be removed as areas where dogs can be exercised off-leash and would instead require dogs to be on-leash areas.</p> <p>This change is proposed to address safety concerns raised in feedback, including conflicts between dogs and other users and the proximity of a playground (in Tom Grant Drive).</p>

Prohibit dogs from Farmer Street Reserve in Te Aroha

Current Rule	Proposed Change
Dogs are not allowed within 15 metres of any children's play area or individual item of play equipment.	<p>Dogs would not be allowed at the Farmer Street Reserve in Te Aroha.</p> <p>With the planned playground upgrade, most of the park will fall within the 15-metre buffer zone where dogs are already prohibited. To provide a clear and consistent rule, we are proposing to classify the entire area as a prohibited area, similar to our approach in other areas such as Thomas Park (Morrinsville), Kowhai Street Reserve (Matamata), and Kennedy Street Reserve (Te Aroha).</p> <p>The 15-metre buffer zone around playgrounds and play equipment will remain in place.</p>

What we are proposing to stay the same

Dog Limits

- We are proposing to retain the current limit of two dogs in urban areas (over three months of age) before a permit is required, with no limit applying in rural areas.

Welfare and Accommodation

- We are not proposing any changes. Dogs must be provided with suitable shelter with shade, warmth, and enough space for the dog to move comfortably. The shelter must be at least two metres from the property boundary, and dogs must receive proper care, including food, water, exercise, and veterinary treatment when required.

Option 1: Adopt the draft Policy on Dogs 2010 (Amended 2026) and Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) as proposed to the community

This is Council's preferred option

This option involves adopting the amended Policy and Bylaw with all proposed changes, including allowing dogs (on-leash) in the CBDs and on some areas of the Hauraki Rail Trail, and changing Tom Grant Drive and Centennial Drive in Matamata from off-leash to on-leash areas. If supported through consultation, Council may choose to trial the proposed dog access changes in the CBDs and on the Hauraki Rail Trail for six months after adopting the final bylaw.

Advantages +	Disadvantages -
Reflects strong community feedback from the Paw and Order survey, ensuring the Policy and Bylaw align with current expectations.	Some dog owners may perceive the removal of off leash areas as too restrictive (Tom Grant Drive and Centennial Drive in Matamata)
There is the option to trial key changes around dog access (e.g. CBD areas and the Hauraki Rail Trail) for six months to ensure any change works for the community.	Additional signage and communication will be required to inform the public of the changes (additional cost).
Provides clarity and consistency for dog owners, the public, and Council enforcement.	Expanded dog access may increase risk of incidents in busy areas like the CBDs and the Hauraki Rail Trail.
Supports public safety by including leash requirements in high use areas.	More dogs in public spaces could lead to hygiene issues if owners do not comply with rules.
Dog owners are able to take their dogs to more places with them (for exercise and socialisation).	
The Policy objectives reflect community feedback.	
The draft Bylaw includes some further restrictions to dog access to reflect concerns raised and to support safety for all users of public places.	

Ētahi atu kōwhiringa me whakaaro ake | Other options we could consider

Option 2: Status Quo – Keep the existing Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw as is without any amendments

This option means Council would retain the current policy and bylaw in its existing form and make no changes. The current policy and bylaw would continue to apply as is and would be adopted without the proposed changes made to address identified issues, evolving community needs/preferences and operational matters.

Advantages +	Disadvantages -
Familiarity for dog owners who may be accustomed to current rules.	The existing Policy and Bylaw do not reflect the proposed updates made to reflect local issues and what the community told us.
No immediate cost to update signage or communications.	Feedback indicates that some of the current rules are not well understood, and limited awareness or enforcement may be causing ongoing frustration for the public. This lack of clarity increases the risk of non-compliance, creates ongoing challenges for enforcement, and undermines Council's ability to achieve safe, healthy, and well-managed public spaces.
The current restrictions around dogs in the CBDs and Hauraki Rail Trail may provide a sense of safety for all users of these spaces, including those who may have a fear of dogs.	Safety concerns have been identified in areas proposed for restricted access in Matamata (Tom Grant Drive and Centennial Drive). If no changes are made, this may present an ongoing risk of further incidents.

Option 3: Adopt the draft Policy on Dogs 2010 (Amended 2026) and Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) with further amendments.

This option allows Council to adopt the changes as proposed to the community, but incorporate additional refinements based on feedback received during this consultation process.

Note that further community consultation may be required if the changes are significant.

Advantages +	Disadvantages -
Allows for refinement based on feedback received during formal consultation.	May delay implementation if significant changes require additional consultation.
Provides flexibility to address further emerging issues or community suggestions.	Additional consultation would involve further costs and resources.

Option 4: Revoke the current Dog Control Bylaw and do not adopt the draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) as proposed to the community.

Under this option, Council would revoke the existing Dog Control Bylaw and choose not to adopt a new bylaw. The Policy on Dogs would remain in place because it is required by legislation under the Dog Control Act 1996. However, without a supporting bylaw, the Policy would not be implemented or enforced through legally enforceable rules. This means the objectives set out in the Policy would rely solely on voluntary compliance and national legislation (Dog Control Act 1996).

Advantages +	Disadvantages -
Removes the need for ongoing maintenance and review of a local bylaw. This may result in a cost saving by reducing administrative and enforcement costs associated with managing a bylaw.	There would be no legally enforceable rules to support the Policy, making it difficult to achieve its objectives.
May simplify the regulatory framework by relying on national legislation only.	There would be no local rules around dog access/leash requirements etc. - potentially leading to more incidents and higher risks to the community.
	May result in more complaints and less clarity for the community about dog access rules and acceptable behaviours.
	Council would lose an important enforcement tool for managing dog-related issues such as safety risks and nuisance.
	Could be perceived as a reduction in service quality and commitment to public safety and amenity.
	Leaves Council out of step with other local authorities that maintain dog control bylaws, potentially creating confusion for residents and visitors.

Ngā Whakaarotanga ā-Ture | Legal Considerations

Section 10 of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires all councils to have a Policy on Dogs. The Policy must:

- Provide for public safety and reduce nuisance caused by dogs;
- Identify areas where dogs are prohibited, allowed on-leash, or allowed off-leash;
- Specify requirements for dog exercise areas.

In order to give effect to the Policy, Council must implement a Bylaw. The Local Government Act 2002 sets out the procedure for making and reviewing bylaws. Under section 155, Council must determine whether a bylaw:

- is the most appropriate way of addressing the perceived problem;
- is the most appropriate form of the bylaw; and
- gives rise to any implications under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.

These considerations are addressed below:

Is a Bylaw the appropriate means of addressing the perceived problem?

A bylaw is considered the most appropriate mechanism for managing dog related safety, nuisance, and amenity issues in the district. Community engagement, operational experience, and complaint data show the need for clear, enforceable local rules to address:

- safety risks in high use public places;
- conflicts between dog owners and other users;
- nuisance issues such as roaming, fouling, and aggressive behaviour; and
- the need for consistent rules that support responsible dog ownership.

The Dog Control Act 1996 provides a national framework but does not provide the level of local specificity needed to manage dog access and control requirements in particular locations. Without a bylaw, Council would need to rely on education, voluntary compliance and the provisions in the Act, which would not adequately address identified risks or community expectations. Alternative regulatory approaches - such as requiring leashing in all public places, were considered but would unnecessarily restrict off-leash exercise opportunities.

A bylaw enables Council to give effect to its Policy on Dogs, tailor dog control rules to local circumstances, provide clarity for the community, and ensure consistent enforcement. For these reasons, a bylaw remains the most appropriate way to address the identified problems.

Is the draft Bylaw the most appropriate form of Bylaw?

The draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) is considered the most appropriate form because it:

- aligns with the Policy on Dogs and the Dog Control Act 1996;
- uses a clear structure with defined terms and schedules specifying dog access requirements and rules;
- provides straightforward, place-based rules that are easy to understand;
- includes appropriate enforcement tools; and

- incorporates reasonable flexibility, including exemptions (e.g., for disability assist dogs).

The draft Bylaw is designed to be practical, accessible, and enforceable.

Is the draft Bylaw consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990?

Summary

The draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) has been assessed against the Bill of Rights Act 1990 (NZBORA). The restrictions it introduces relate to dog access and control, not to the movement of people. Any indirect effect on freedom of movement (e.g., people not being able to take a dog into certain areas) is minimal and is justified by the need to protect public safety, prevent nuisance, and manage dogs effectively.

The restrictions are:

- limited to specific higher-risk locations;
- proportionate to the identified issues;
- accompanied by alternative areas for dog exercise; and
- expressly authorised under the Dog Control Act 1996.

Procedural fairness/natural justice (Section 27 NZBORA)

The Council will administer, enforce, and decide matters under the Bylaw in accordance with the principles of natural justice in section 27 of the NZBORA, including providing affected persons with notice of issues raised, a reasonable opportunity to respond, written reasons, and access to review or appeal processes. The Dog Control Act 1996 provides specific mechanisms that give effect to these safeguards, including:

- Objections/hearings for classifications - owners may object to a menacing classification and have the right to be heard, with Council required to consider the evidence and give written reasons;
- Infringement notices and hearings - infringement notices must state the right to request a hearing and the consequences if not exercised ensuring owners can contest alleged breaches in court.

These features, together with the availability of judicial review of Council determinations, satisfy expectations of procedural fairness and align with section 27 of NZBORA.

Rights engaged

- section 18 Freedom of movement - engaged indirectly because restrictions apply to dogs, which can affect where owners can go with a dog.
- Section 19 Freedom from discrimination - potentially engaged for disabled people who rely on disability assist dogs; addressed by an express exemption in the draft Bylaw.

Is there a limit?

Yes. Dog access controls (prohibitions/on-leash areas) are limits on dog presence, with indirect effects on people's movement and participation. The drafting minimises these effects through targeted, place-based rules and by providing alternative exercise areas.

Is the limit prescribed by law?

Yes. The Dog Control Act 1996 expressly empowers territorial authorities to make bylaws controlling dog access, leashing, and exercise areas, and bylaws must be made in accordance with the LGA. No bylaw may be made that is inconsistent with NZBORA (LGA s155(3)).

Is any limit demonstrably justified under NZBORA?

Yes. The restrictions pursue pressing objectives of public safety, nuisance reduction, and amenity protection; and are rationally connected to those aims. They impair rights no more than reasonably necessary by confining restrictions to higher risk locations and providing alternative off-leash areas; and overall effects are proportionate to the benefits. Accordingly, any indirect impact on section 18 of NZBORA is reasonable and justified in a free and democratic society.

Conclusion: With the explicit disability assist dog exemption in place and the procedural fairness features described above, the draft Bylaw is consistent with NZBORA.

This assessment will be revisited following public feedback, Council deliberations, and any resulting changes to the draft documents, with any impacts reassessed at that time.

Ētahi atu mōhiohio | More information

For more information about this proposal, and to see what else we are seeking feedback on go to mpdc.nz/letstalk

Me pēhea te tuku urupare | How to give your feedback

As part of the consultation process, we encourage everyone in the community to share their views. Feedback may be submitted in writing, and those who wish to speak to Elected Members will be offered a scheduled time to present their views, either in person or online. We also offer New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) and other forms of support to make sure people can take part in a way that suits their needs. All submissions will be considered with an open mind before Councillors make their final decision.

Want to speak to Council?

Anyone making a submission may also request the opportunity to speak to Council. Submitters can indicate this preference when providing their feedback. A meeting for submitters who wish to be heard will be held on 12/13 May 2026. Council staff will contact those who have requested to speak to confirm a time and provide details about the hearing process. Both in-person and online options will be available to support participation.

There are a number of ways you can provide feedback:

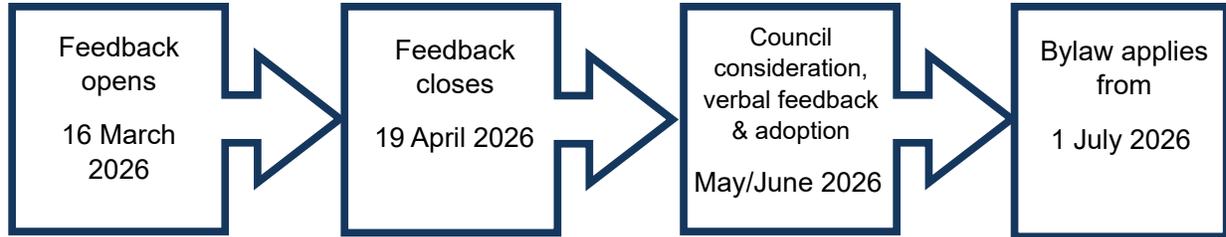
📄 Online: Go to mpdc.nz/letstalk to fill out the online form.

✉️ Mail to: Matamata-Piako District Council, PO Box 266, Te Aroha 3342

✉ Email: info@mpdc.govt.nz

👤 In person: You can drop your feedback form into any of our Council offices or libraries.

Ngā Rā Matua | Key dates



Puka whakahoki kōrero | Feedback form – Draft Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw

Name/Organisation: _____

For individuals please simply write name/names, for organisations please write the full organisation name

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address: _____

Town Matamata Morrinsville Te Aroha Other: _____

Age Under 18 18–24 25–34 35–44 45–64 65–74 75+

Would you like to speak to the Mayor and Councillors about your feedback?

If you would like to speak to your submission, Council will contact you after consultation closes to confirm the hearing date (expected 12/13 May 2026) and schedule a speaking time. In-person and online options will be available and accessibility support can be arranged if needed.

Yes, I would like to speak to my submission

No, I do not wish to speak to my submission

Privacy statement: Please be aware that feedback made to Council is public information. Feedback will be used and reproduced for purposes such as reports to Elected Members, which are made available to the public. Submitters will be able to access a summary of submissions and deliberations to understand how feedback has been considered and how decisions were reached.

Note that individual submissions will be made publicly available in full (including your name and any organisation you represent), unless you request confidentiality and this may be able to be accommodated under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

For more information about how we collect, use, and protect personal information, please see MPDC's Privacy Policy on our website: www.mpd.govt.nz/contact-us/privacy-policy

Section 1: Overall Position

1. Which of these options do you support?

Option 1: Proposed option: Adopt the draft Policy on Dogs 2010 (Amended 2026) and draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) as proposed to the community

- The Policy and Bylaw would be adopted as proposed to reflect current issues and community feedback.

Option 2: Status Quo: Keep the existing Policy on Dogs and Dog Control Bylaw as is without any amendments

- Keep the current Policy on Dogs 2010 (Amended 2016) and Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2016) as is without any amendments.

Option 3: Adopt the draft Policy on Dogs 2010 (Amended 2026) and draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) with further amendments.

- Adopt the Policy and Bylaw as proposed to the community with further changes suggested by submitters.

Option 4: : Revoke the current Dog Control Bylaw and do not adopt the draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026).

- Revoke the existing Dog Control Bylaw and do not adopt the draft Dog Control Bylaw 2010 (Amended 2026) as proposed to the community. *Note that the Policy on Dogs would still be adopted as it is required by legislation.*

Option 5: Other

You may like to suggest a different option. Tell us what you think would work best.

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

Section 2: Draft Policy on Dogs

2. Do you agree with the clearer layout of the Policy, and the stronger focus on responsible dog ownership?

- Yes
- No
- Other/I have another suggestion

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

3. Do you agree with the updated Policy objectives?

- Yes
- No
- Other/I have another suggestion

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

Section 3: Draft Dog Control Bylaw

Proposed Changes – Prohibited Areas

4. Do you support adding Farmer Street Reserve (Te Aroha) as a prohibited area?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

Proposed Changes – Leash Control Areas

5. Do you support dogs being allowed in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) at any time, as long as they are on a leash and under control?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

6. Do you support allowing dogs on the Hauraki Rail Trail area in Te Aroha and through to Matamata as long as they are on a leash and under control?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

7. If the community agrees, the above changes to the CBD and Hauraki Rail Trial areas could run as a six-month trial. Do you support trying them out first?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

8. Do you support changing Centennial Drive and Tom Grant Drive in Matamata from off-leash areas to on-leash areas?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

Rules proposed to remain the same

9. Do you support the rule of having up to two dogs in town areas (before needing a permit) to stay the same?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

10. Do you support keeping the current minimum standards for how dogs must be housed and cared for?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/Other

Additional Comments to support the option chosen above: _____

Section 4: General Feedback

Feedback Form – Page 6

11. Is there anything else you'd like Council to consider as part of this review?

Please provide any further comments below

Please provide your feedback by 19 April 2026