

Karen Brookes

Tabled at Regulatory
Committee meeting
-26 November 2020

Cats

I enrolled to speak here unaware that Paul Sheldon had been progressing the move to for a bylaw to cover our domestic and stray cat population which he'll present later during this meeting.

When I searched on Monday for TDC cat strategy I found nothing but I did know of Paul's involvement in the Regional Pest Strategy Management.

So I want to say that this is an idea for which the time has come.

If passed, it will provide better protection for dearly loved pets. Registration is no different to the responsibility owners take for their dogs. Registration and chipping allows a missing pet to be re-located with it's owner. And de-sexing of cats that are not owned for breeding purposes will lighten the load of owners, animal agencies and DOC by lessening the flood of unwanted kittens. Often these are cruelly abandoned. If they survive they become full time predators living from the fast shrinking population of our native biodiversity. DOC found one wild cat with a stomach contents of 17 rare lizards, all of which must have been eaten in the past few hours.

Cats are designed to respond to the cues of movement; whether they've been fed or not, that is their natural design response. The cat can't be blamed for having been brought into a land where they have no natural predators other than dogs. We humans must take the blame and responsibility for having done that.

Also timely is proposal to lobby the Government to bring in a national policy for cats. Now is the time to help put right the imbalance that has occurred because of our actions.

I'm aware that there are a lot of responsible owners out there some of whom already take measures to confine their healthy and happy cats because they have concerns about the cat effect on our birds and small creatures whose turangawaewae is Aotearoa. They exist nowhere else.

Overseas it's well accepted that your cat will be under curfew in the night hours, that you will provide a "catio" as an outdoor extension to it's indoor space.

Benefits of these laws are

no cats killed by cars,

or wounded in cat fights,

identification of your cat as a pet

quick return of your missing pet

no unwanted kittens

and a lessening of the spread of toxoplasmosis through cat faeces, which is known to affect both humans and marine mammals.

I hope council will make the right decision here for both our cats and our irreplaceable native creatures.

P.S. I have two rat bait stations on my property which deal satisfactorily with rodents.