



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Council

**FROM:** Alain D. Muise, CPA. Chief Administrative Officer

**SUBJECT:** SPCA Dog control update

**DATE:** September 19, 2025

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At the request of Council, please find an update regarding dog control services and our affiliation with the SPCA NS.

Currently, we do not have a signed contract with the SPCA. Prior to July of 2025, we had a contract with the SPCA for bylaw enforcement of all dog control issues and sheltering services related thereto.

Under the current model, our bylaw enforcement officer addresses dog control issues considered as minor infractions. This includes but is not limited to dog barking and unleashed dog offences. These infractions are often warning based, and the dog owner is provided a copy of the bylaw so that they can correct the infraction. In most cases this is a successful outcome.

There are major infractions that require additional services from the SPCA. This includes dog abandonment and cruelty, dog bites, and fierce and dangerous dog incidents. In these cases, the SPCA first provides guidance to our bylaw enforcement officer insofar as dealing with the dog owner. Also, our bylaw provides instructions as to how the dog owner must handle dogs that are considered fierce and dangerous. The SPCA may play a role in a removal of a dog.

Our experience in this new environment is still cloudy. Our bylaw enforcement officer is under strict guidance not to personally deal with a dog in incidents of major infractions but addresses this bylaw enforcement rules with the owner. The SPCA service is changed, and the municipality shall assess the regional demand for a more local dog control service.

I have asked the SPCA to finalize the contract with Argyle, but as of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, we have yet to receive a response to those requests. The costing of their services was negotiated and finalized.

Incidents of a major infraction of the bylaw are rare in Argyle, but they do occur, and we continue to examine how the absence of SPCA bylaw services is impacting residential service provision.