

New partnership will increase animal control in Aurora, Newmarket and Georgina

By Brock Weir

A new partnership between Aurora, Georgina and Newmarket promises to bring increased animal control services to all three municipalities starting on January 1.

The agreement between the three communities for amalgamated animal control services was announced Wednesday in a joint statement.

The two-year pilot project will allow all partners to work together to provide a higher level of animal services and extended coverage. Officers from each municipality will work together to provide animal services coverage seven days a week across three municipalities.

In a statement, Doug Nadorozny, CAO of the Town of Aurora, hailed the deal.

"This partnership is a great example of municipalities working together to find efficiencies while improving service delivery to our communities," he said. "We are always looking for ways that we can share our resources and this new agreement will standardize legislation and make our towns safer for humans and animals."

The new joint animal control team will be responsible for investigating complaints filed by residents, conducting proactive patrols of public parks and picking up lost, stray and injured animals. Officers will also provide active education programs to educate and encourage responsible pet ownership.

Shelter services will be provided by the Georgina Animal Shelter & Adoption Centre and Georgina CAO Winanne Grant said they are "Excited to be offering enhanced services to our residents by working with our municipal partners, while also increasing efficiencies."

All cats and dogs will be housed at the Georgina Animal Shelter and Adoption Centre.

Prior to this agreement, most animal control services in Aurora had been handled by the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA), which is based in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The OSPCA will still provide support to municipalities to investigate concerns of animal neglect and abuse. The OSPCA will also continue to help uphold the standard of care and prevention of cruelty to all animals.

This type of animal services partnership is the first of its kind in Ontario as most municipalities manage animal control independently, say the partners.

As of January 1, residents from Aurora, Newmarket and Georgina should report complaints through a dedicated hotline at 1-877-979-PAWS (7297) or by emailing animalservices@aurora.ca.