

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Action	Role of Council	Measure	Timeframe	Status	Comments
Focus Area 1 - Authorised Officer Training					
Ensure Authorised Officers receive adequate training in line with operational requirements including attending industry conferences, regional professional meetings, participation in formal training and information workshops.	Deliver	Completion of training by Authorised Officers	Ongoing	Ongoing	Authorised Officers continue to undertake training and required and identified. In 2022/23, Officers attended aggressive dog training, first aid, traffic control and mosquito control courses to further their skills.
Maintain accurate staff training register.	Deliver	Register maintained	Ongoing	Ongoing	A skills and training register has been developed in conjunction with the People and Culture Department to track training and required updates.
Identify additional training requirements in response to service demands, legislative change, and emerging risks.	Develop	Training completed	Annually	Ongoing	Training options are identified as a part of Performance Development Plans and actioned during the relevant year.

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Focus Area 2 - Responsible Pet Ownership					
<p>Develop a communication program for responsible pet ownership, raising the profile and awareness of the scope of Council's animal management service. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •review information currently provided on Council's website •develop an annual communications program through a range of channels and different media, including social media, Council's website, hard copy, media releases •provide accessible information including languages other than English •addressing significant number of new and possibly first-time pet owners during COVID. <p>Issues to build awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •dogs on leash •pick up after your dog •keeping children safe around pets •appropriate selection of pets •relevant pet care/welfare information •criteria that determine "having effective control" of their dog •benefits of preventing cats from wandering 	<p>Develop</p> <p>Deliver</p>	<p>Communication plan developed</p> <p>Communication plan implemented</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 2 to 4</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>A Communications plan has been developed and is being implemented via Council's communications platforms. Significant work has been undertaken to update information on Council's webpage.</p>
<p>Piloting a pet-friendly event with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •profiling the scope of the animal management service and other local businesses, community support groups and agencies •building community relationships to address key service issues eg: control of dogs in off leash areas •neighbourhood social connection and active participation •consider COVID Safe events such as online photo competition or informative webinars. 	<p>Develop</p>	<p>Event Scoped</p> <p>Event Completed</p>	<p>Year 2</p> <p>Year 3</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p>Deliver community awareness programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •about the benefits of adopting from animal shelters •to dispel myths about animals that come from shelters 	<p>Deliver</p>	<p>Information researched in conjunction with relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Information prepared and promoted</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Undertaken as part of the communications plan above</p>
<p>Actively encourage the adoption of animals from animal shelters and promote adoption opportunities available to Strathbogie residents</p>	<p>Deliver</p>	<p>Promotion undertaken as per the Communications Plan</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Undertaken as part of the communications plan above.</p>

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Focus Area 3 - Minimising the risk of dog attacks					
Review the data collected relating to dog attacks to identify if there are any patterns/trends that could be addressed via targeted strategies	Deliver	Data reviewed and additional data collected if required	Annually	Ongoing	Data has been collated and reviewed. No specific trends identified this year.
Investigate the benefits of promoting Court outcomes of dog attack investigations as a way of raising awareness to prevent dog attacks	Deliver	Number of media stories released	Ongoing	Ongoing	Media stories regarding responsible dog ownership continue to be released.
Timely and thorough investigation of all dog attacks and dog rushes and appropriate enforcement action undertaken	Deliver	Number of investigations Number of successful court outcomes	Ongoing	Ongoing	29 investigations were completed in 2022/23. No animal prosecutions in the 2022/23 reporting year.
Focus Area 4 - Animal registration and overpopulation					
Research successful strategies employed by other LGAs to increase compliance with registration requirements and consider how they might be applied in Strathbogie. Consider strategies associated with: •targeted educational programs (eg: localised programs) •social media •newer technology and continuous improvement of registration/renewal processes	Facilitate	Strategies investigated and/or researched Initiatives to increased rates of registration implemented	Annually	Ongoing	A social media campaign has been run this year around the benefits of registering your animals.
Ensure Council's registration database is maintained and accurate by: •cleansing records of all deceased / relocated pets etc. •cross referencing with microchip databases •annual registration door knock, SMS, and email reminders •cross referencing with State Government Pet Exchange Register to identify any Domestic Animal Breeders that require registration	Deliver	Updating of database undertaken Annual renewal process more efficient	Annually	Ongoing	Staff continue to make the animal registration process more streamlined by cleansing the database, a social media campaign to promote registration and cross referencing all registrations with microchip databases.
Development of 'new owner' pet ownership information pack	Deliver	Pet ownership pack developed	Year 2 to 3	Not started	
Assess if more appropriate cat registration tags would improve incidence of being worn as legislated	Deliver	Cat tags purchased	Year 3	Not started	
Continue to advocate through Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) for the Federal Government to develop a single industry microchip and registration database, and funds to develop this database	Advocate	Advocacy undertaken	Ongoing	Ongoing	Advocacy continues in this area through relevant channels.

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Continue to advocate to the State Government requesting legislated options to reduce registration fees (for example) for dogs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •that have completed obedience training •adopted pets •adopted older pets. 	Develop	Improved record keeping within Council database to assist the collection of statistics for animal related matters	Annually	Ongoing	Advocay continues in this area through relevant channels.
Monitor data for all impounded and surrendered animals captured through Council's pound provider, for trends that could assist in developing new projects, as well as understanding any impacts from COVID-19 (increase in pet ownership)	Develop	Improved record keeping within Council database to assist the collection of statistics for animal related matters	Annually	Ongoing	Council is updating the way we capture data to ensure that any trends are captured and can be analysed
Consider opportunities that will reduce overpopulation through the three areas of microchipping, desexing initiatives and increasing registration rates. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •recognising good behaviour of pet owners •free microchipping day •desexing initiative •incentives for cat owners to register cats •further incentives for dog/cat owners to desex their animal. 	Deliver and support	Opportunities /benefits considered Events /activities implemented (depending on funding) Available State and Federal Grants for desexing programs applied for	Year 2 to 4	Not started	
Focus Area 5 - Nuisance dogs and cats					
Review information resources for use by Council and pet owners in relation to barking dog complaints	Deliver	Information resources reviewed	Year 1	Completed	Clear information is available on Councils website
Investigate partnership opportunities with community-based and dog training providers to develop initiatives and incentives that encourage dog owners to attend dog training and obedience classes	Facilitate	Promotion of providers/programs	Year 2 to 4	Not started	
Investigate provision and cost of litter bags, bins, and waste bin collections in specific public areas to reduce the impact of dog litter	Deliver	Benchmarking, cost analysis and consultation complete	Year 3 to 4	Not started	

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Routine patrolling of public places such as reserves, residential areas and townships, trails etc., with a particular focus on addressing 'high complaint' areas	Deliver	Patrol schedule completed	Ongoing	Ongoing	Rangers are undertaking routine proactive patrols daily. These include education for pet owners regarding their responsibilities, registration of animals, and dogs off leash.
Investigate successful industry/sector programs that have achieved reduced incidents of cat trespass/wandering	Facilitate	Investigation/research undertaken	Year 2	Not started	
		Initiatives considered for implementation	Year 3 to 4	Not started	
Promote the benefits of preventing cats from wandering to reduce cat nuisance complaints	Deliver	Number of cat nuisance complaints reduced	Year 2 to 4	Not started	
Promote the cat cage service provided by Council to assist dealing with nuisance complaints	Deliver	Cat traps acquired if demand warrants	Ongoing	Ongoing	Council continues to have cat cage service available to residents and last year 45 requests were made to Council for cages.
Gauge community sentiment for restrictions on cat curfew times	Deliver	Review/community consultation undertaken	Year 3 to 4	Not started	
Update information resources for cat owners whose cats are the subject of cat trespass complaints	Deliver	Information reviewed and made available	Year 2	Not started	
Consider incentives for cat owners who build in and secure their cats to their property 24/7	Deliver	Incentive program scoped	Year 3 to 4	Not started	
Work with Council's pound provider and our neighbouring Councils to:	Facilitate	Partnership established	Year 2 to 3	Not started	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve information to the community about managing and addressing the semi-owned cat population • establish programs to address issues associated with the un-owned and semi-owned cat populations. 		Target programs established, including key performance measures			
Enhance promotion/distribution and/or develop information that assists residents to make appropriate pet selection, particularly in relation to dogs.	Deliver	Information more widely promoted in conjunction with promotional partners	Year 2 to 4	Not started	

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Focus Area 6 - Dangerous dogs					
Review and enhance information for dog owners to ensure there is a clear understanding as to dog behaviour that may lead to their dog being 'declared' as a dangerous or menacing dog.	Deliver	Information reviewed and promoted more widely	Annual	Ongoing	Information available on Council's website and promoted as part of a social media/communications campaign.
Review and distribute information to owners of dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs, to ensure they are aware of current requirements and inspect premises to ensure compliance	Deliver	Information provided Inspections conducted	Annual	Ongoing	Information available on Council's website and promoted as part of a social media/communications campaign.
Cross reference microchip details of all dogs reported as missing from the Victorian Declared Dog Registry.	Deliver	Cross referencing completed	Annual	Ongoing	All microchips are cross referenced.
Undertake planned patrols in industrial estates and other appropriate areas for guard dogs and following up on any compliance action required.	Deliver	Patrols completed Number of dogs found to be not registered	Annual	Ongoing	Proactive patrols are undertaken by rangers on a weekly basis and appropriate enforcement action is undertaken when required. At this stage no dogs have been found to be unregistered in industrial estates.
Focus Area 7 - Off-leash areas					
Review and update Council's Local Order that stipulates any area in Strathbogie that has 'dog off-leash' areas, or "on-leash" only, and other restrictions within that public place.	Deliver	Community consultation completed	Year 1 to 2	Not started	
		Order is reviewed and adopted by Council			
Provide a new off-leash dog park at Nagambie based on community consultation and engagement.	Deliver	Dog Park completed	Year 3 to 4	Not started	
Undertake an audit of all signage in reserves and public walking tracks to ensure clear understanding of any restrictions for dogs in that area, particularly around schools and sports fields.	Deliver	Signage audit completed	Year 1 to 2	Not started	
Investigate use of QR scan codes at reserves to provide easy information. regarding any off-leash or on-leash areas	Deliver	Review completed	Year 2	Not started	
		Signage rollout completed	Year 3 to 4		
Review Strathbogie's Community Local Laws relating to animal management and seek amendment to the current Community Local Law if any deficiencies are identified.	Deliver	New Strathbogie Community Local Law enacted	Year 4	Not started	

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Focus Area 8 - Pets and People						
In partnership with Council's pound provider, develop an animal emergency accommodation policy for vulnerable residents that is built on the foundations of the DVRCV family violence program:	Deliver	Policy developed Policy endorsed	Year 1	Ongoing	Council has investigated reopening its pound and officers are completing relevant training to support delivery of this action.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance Officers complete appropriate training on emerging risks, including (but not limited to) domestic violence, homelessness, mental health, and drug use Develop procedures to support victims and pets 			Year 2 to 4	Not started		
Work with DVRCV to identify opportunities to better inform the community about the impact of domestic violence on pets and how to make them safe.	Deliver	Information updated	Year 1	Ongoing	Council is working with DVRCV to identify opportunities, this will then be feed into a communications plan.	
			Project plan scoped	Year 2		Not started
			Project implemented	Year 3 to 4		Not started
Work with Council's pound provider to identify strategies that address the root causes of animal abandonment.	Deliver	Opportunities identified and implemented	Annually	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Maintain emergency management plans that facilitate the safety of pets during emergencies.	Deliver	Plan reviewed	Annually	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Encourage other Council service areas to optimise health and wellbeing and community networking opportunities associated with pets in families.	Deliver	Activities included in relevant strategies	Annually	Ongoing	Ongoing, most recently in feedback contributed to the Open Spaces Strategy.	