

# Domestic Animal

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 2021-2025



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## Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

The City of Kingston recognises the Bunurong people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the municipality is a part. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who call Kingston home. Their enriched knowledge and wisdom of our land and waterways is an essential part of the culture of our community.

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# About the Plan

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, every Council must prepare a domestic animal management plan, as follows:

## Legislative Obligations

### Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

- (1)** Subject to subsection (1A), each Council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare a domestic animal management plan on 4 December 2021 and at the end of each period of 4 years after that day.
- (1A)** A Council may apply to the Secretary for an extension of time within which to prepare a domestic animal management plan.
- (1B)** The Secretary may grant an extension of time under subsection (1A) if the Secretary believes that special circumstances exist that warrant the granting of an extension.
- (2)** A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must—
  - (a)** set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this *Act* and the regulations; and
  - (b)** outline programs for the training of Authorised Officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this *Act* in the Council's municipal district; and
  - (c)** outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—
    - (i)** to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
    - (ii)** to ensure that people comply with this *Act*, the regulations and any related legislation; and
    - (iii)** to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
    - (iv)** to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
    - (v)** to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
    - (vi)** to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
    - (vii)** to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this *Act* and the regulations; and
  - (d)** provide for the review of existing orders made under this *Act* and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
  - (e)** provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
  - (f)** provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.
- (3)** Every Council must—
  - (a)** review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
  - (b)** provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
  - (c)** publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

# 1. Introduction

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) caters for the needs of companion animals, their owners and addresses the concerns of the general public in an equitable and compassionate manner.

The aim of this Plan is to facilitate co-existence of pets, pet owners and the general population whilst addressing the welfare and legislative issues relating to animal management in urban areas. This Plan also aims to promote responsible pet ownership and enhance the experience of animal ownership within the community.

The preparation of the Plan is in line with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (DAA) which requires all Victorian councils to have a four year plan in place for the management of dogs and cats within their area.

It is now well recognised by the community and governments alike that there is more to animal management than merely collecting stray dogs and enforcing offences against the laws. Not so well recognised is the role that local government plays in protecting and promoting responsible animal ownership in the community and the environment, both essential to maintaining sustainable communities and a healthy environment.

This Plan is designed to improve the provision of animal management services by maintaining the traditional local government role whilst expanding upon council's capacity to respond to new and emerging animal management issues and implementing identified treatments.

The Plan integrates the developing expertise in domestic animal management within Victoria and Australia. Furthermore, the Plan incorporates Council's understanding of its own local needs to produce a program of action to be undertaken over the next four years (2021-2025). Relevant issues include those prescribed under relevant legislation and local laws as well as the generally understood notion of responsible pet ownership.

## The aim of the plan

The principle aim of this plan is to create an environment where people and pets can peacefully and safely co-exist within the community and where pet owner's activities and those of their pets do not adversely affect the rest of the community or environment.

- ✓ Encourage statutory compliance and promote responsible pet ownership through education and enforcement
- ✓ Support and facilitate the benefits of animal ownership and companionship
- ✓ Increase public safety and general amenity by reducing nuisances caused by dogs and cats
- ✓ Increase public safety by ensuring compliance by owners of declared dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs
- ✓ Provide for the welfare of cats and dogs
- ✓ Reduce the number of unwanted animals bred and euthanized; and
- ✓ Ensure that Council fulfils its legislative responsibility



## Process applied in developing the Plan

In preparing this Plan, the following methodology has been applied:

- Existing animal management operations were reviewed including existing procedures, the Community Local Law and orders made under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- The strategic content of the previous plan was reviewed including plans and strategies that might be relevant to animal management
- A draft Plan is prepared and following Council's consideration, released for community consultation
- A community consultation questionnaire was conducted by Council during April 2021. This survey sought community input on a range of issues, including fully fenced dog off leash areas, animal registration, compulsory de-sexing, cat curfew and the foreshore regulations
- This Domestic Animal Management Plan was adopted by Council in November 2021.

ACTIVITY	WHEN
Public consultation consisting of an online questionnaire on Council website.	April 2021
Results of consultation collated and actions included in draft new plan.	May 2021
New plan drafted.	May and June 2021
Draft plan made available on Council website for public viewing and comments.	September 2021
Draft plan presented to Council for adoption.	November 2021

# 1. Introduction

## Kingston Council demographic profile

CATEGORY	DATA 1 JULY 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2020
Population	Approximately 165,000
Households	63,983
Area	91 square kilometres with 13 kilometres of foreshore area
EFT Authorised Officers	13
Registered dogs	14,272
Registered cats	5,059
Registered declared dangerous dogs	11
Number of dog and cat complaints	1,561
Animal prosecutions at court	7
Animal Infringements	1,179
Impounded dogs	294
Dogs reunited with owner	272
Dogs adopted through Lost Dogs Home	15
Dogs euthanized	7
Impounded cats	246 – majority were unowned wild cats
Cats reunited with owner	42
Cats adopted through Lost Dogs Home	53
Cats euthanized (wild)	125
Cats euthanized (aggressive / not suitable temperament)	26



## Current programs and services - service levels

Whether making decisions, advocating on behalf of others or enabling and facilitating networks, Council plays a crucial lead role in the field of dog and cat management.

Current services and programmes align to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and are based primarily on compliance through education and conciliation rather than enforcement activities. Service delivery is prioritized based on risk and resource availability.

## A snapshot of the City of Kingston

Located in Melbourne's south-east, the City of Kingston is one of Victoria's most dynamic and diverse municipalities. It combines substantial residential areas, significant open space and a strong industrial sector, including one of the largest and most concentrated manufacturing regions in Australia.

The City of Kingston is located in the middle and outer southern suburbs of Melbourne, approximately 20km south of the Melbourne CBD.

The City is bounded by the City of Monash and the City of Glen Eira to the north, the City of Greater Dandenong to the east, the City of Frankston to the south and the City of Bayside and Port Phillip Bay to the west. The municipality covers the suburbs of Moorabbin, Highett, Cheltenham, Clarinda, Oakleigh South, Braeside, Mentone, Clayton South, Dingley Village, Heatherton, Parkdale, Mordialloc, Aspendale, Aspendale Gardens, Edithvale, Chelsea, Chelsea Heights, Bonbeach, Carrum, Patterson Lakes and Waterways.

The City of Kingston spans 91 square kilometers with an estimated resident population of over 165,000 residents. The DAMP has been prepared specifically for the needs of the municipality, which is characterised by the following:

- Substantial residential areas
- Historic market garden districts
- One of the largest and most concentrated regions of manufacturing businesses in metropolitan Melbourne
- Includes Southland and other significant activity centres
- Some 13 kilometres of foreshore from Mentone in the north to Carrum in the south
- The Moorabbin Airport is centrally located within the municipality
- The Mordialloc Creek, Patterson River and Patterson Lakes System (managed by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Melbourne Water) is a unique environment which has a large amount of infrastructure and is home to hundreds of moored motor boats and yachts;
- Former land fill sites and quarry land
- The municipality boasts 11 Golf Courses, and has some major open green space
- Natural environments including Braeside Park and Karkarook Park managed by Parks Victoria; and
- Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands managed by Melbourne Water.

# 1. Introduction

Animal management staffing and operational structure





PROGRAM / SERVICE	SERVICE LEVEL
Identification and registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website information</li> <li>Improved registration process with online payment options</li> <li>Dedicated lost and found social media site</li> <li>Prompt reactive enforcement</li> <li>Mandatory registration of animals prior to release from pound</li> </ul>
Identification and registration campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual registration renewal door knock</li> <li>Annual registration give-away promotion</li> </ul>
Domestic animal complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response ASAP (prioritise by risk)</li> </ul>
Dangerous dogs complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response ASAP (high priority)</li> </ul>
Routine patrols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily on weekdays</li> <li>Targeted and random weekends patrols (roads/streets, foreshores, parks and reserves)</li> <li>Additional foreshore patrols in warmer season</li> </ul>
Pound services hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10am – 6pm weekdays</li> <li>9am – 1pm weekends</li> </ul>
Education and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 annual pet expo and registration give away prize</li> <li>Monthly publication of responsible pet ownership materials</li> </ul>
Domestic animal business registrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted annually in March and April</li> <li>Random inspection also conducted</li> </ul>
Dangerous/restricted breed dog inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted annually in March and April</li> <li>Random inspection also conducted</li> </ul>
De-sexing voucher program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available at Council's Customer Service Centres</li> <li>Expanded eligibility to subsidized desexing program</li> </ul>
Dogs on/off leash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order in place restricting dogs off leash in designated areas</li> <li>31 dog off leash areas</li> <li>4 dog agility courses</li> </ul>
Prohibited areas for dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order in place designating prohibited areas such as areas of the foreshore during designated times</li> </ul>
Prohibited areas for cats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 x designated prohibited area in Waterways Estate</li> <li>1 x night time curfew in place</li> </ul>
Prosecution for non-compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In house prosecutions team enforces non-compliance through the court systems</li> </ul>
Annual evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual evaluation and reporting of DAMP implementation</li> </ul>

The aim of this Domestic Animal Management Plan is

**To create an environment  
where people and pets can  
peacefully and safely co-exist  
within the community.**







## 2. Training of Authorised Officers

DAA Section 68(A)(2)(b) outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district.

### Context

The following data outlines the demographic makeup of Kingston, for which our Officers provide animal management services:

- The City of Kingston has an estimated resident population of over 165,000
- Council area covers 91.3 square kilometres
- 2019/2020 registration period there were 14,272 registered dogs
- 2019/2020 registration period there were 5,059 registered cats
- 21 registered domestic animal businesses which include:
  - 6 pet shops
  - 10 boarding establishments
  - 5 dog training establishment

### Full time authorised officers

- 1 x Manager (who leads four teams within the Compliance and Amenity Department; one team is unrelated to animal management)
- 1 x Local Laws Team Leader (leads Local Laws team in animal management and compliance with State and local legislation)
- 1 x Prosecutions Coordinator
- 1 x Local Laws Operations Coordinator
- 9 x Ranger/Local Laws Officers
- 1 x Local Laws Officer (Foreshore and Audits)
- 1 x Local Laws Officer (School Crossings)

### Our Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

- Employee development assistance policy - Council reference number 12/74479
- Operational procedures including Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.



## Current and planned training

All Authorised Officers are required to have a set standard of training qualifications prior to being employed with the City of Kingston, to meet the requirements of the position description for a Ranger/Local Laws Officer. Each Officer must successfully complete training in animal handling, investigation techniques and law enforcement including statement taking as a minimum. Formal post-secondary qualifications are an employment requirement such as the Diploma of Justice or other related industry course.

Council maintains a training register detailing all qualifications and training courses completed by each Authorised Officer. Each year a formal training review is undertaken prior to creating each Officer's annual performance and development plan.

Development of the individual at Kingston ensures that our employees continue to grow their skills, experience and confidence. This enables teams and the City of Kingston to operate in the most efficient and effective manner.

Each year a number of programs are offered to all employees through the annual learning and development calendar which is categorised into six key areas. These six key areas make up the Kingston learning and development model and is based upon the capability framework which sets out the skills and capabilities required in the organisation for the next 5 years.

These areas are:

**Leadership**

**Professional Development**

**System and Technology**

**Safety and Compliance**

**Wellness**

**Inspired Leaders**



This model assists everyone to understand what categories of development are on offer. By categorising learning into key areas allows for targeted employee development. Targeted development occurs only through defining development opportunities through the organisations training and development process and then providing specific development for these opportunities.

***Refer Attachment 1 – Authorised Officer Training Register***

## 2. Training of Authorised Officers

### Our plans

- All new Local Law staff are required to have or be committed to completing the minimum of Certificate IV in Justice or equivalent
- Identify required training for Authorised Officers and source appropriate training
- All staff to be provided with Council's Learning and Development calendar
- All staff to receive emails offering opportunities to undertake training using Council's online learning centre
- Review the Local Laws training register every 3 months to ensure appropriate training is being undertaken; and
- Ensure that all Authorised Officers have the opportunity to attend industry related training days and workshops/seminars throughout the year.

#### Objective 1:

Implement training guide that clearly identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by all Authorised Officers by 2025.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Identify minimum training requirements by consultation with Council's People Support team, management and staff	Annually	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into the current approved Local Laws training register by November 2022
Identify additional training opportunities by consultation with Council's People Support team, management and staff	Annually	Number of additional training sessions, records finalised and incorporated into the current approved Local Laws training register annually

#### Objective 2:

Maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training by 2022.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Maintain the current spreadsheet listing each officer's name, and their completed training, along with proposed training	Quarterly	Quarterly review of spreadsheet by Operations Coordinator, to ensure its accuracy and to determine whether proposed training goals have been met for each officer



**Objective 3:**

Ensure all new Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Identify minimum training requirements for newly appointed officers (e.g. OH&S, animal handling), and record on current Local Laws training register	Within 12 months of appointment	Quarterly review spreadsheet by Operations Coordinator and ensure each officer has completed their minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment

**Objective 4:**

Offer at least 2 opportunities for additional internal training each year.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. conflict management, communication / education techniques, note taking, statement taking	Annually	Review how many officers undertook training that was in addition to their minimum requirements. Meet objective of providing 2 additional internal training opportunities annually

# 3.

## Registration and identification

DAA 68A(2)(c)(v) outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats – also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

### Our current data

- State Government Legislation requires all dogs and cats to be registered with Council at 3 months of age.
- 2019/2020 registration period there were 14,272 registered dogs
- 2019/2020 registration period there were 5,059 registered cats

Council has responded to previous consultation and included several suggested animal management activities in the previous plan and the current plan. This includes improved education programs, procedural changes where registered pets found wandering close to home are returned and secured where possible rather than impounding and improvements to our lost and found data base service. Additional contact details have been added to registration forms and database.

Council has streamlined online registrations by enabling the application (and relevant supporting documents) and fee to be submitted online.

### Consultation

Based on a community consultation survey in 2021, results indicate that there is a large percentage of our population that are aware of the extent of the animal management services we provide.

148 people completed the community consultation survey

73 dog owners undertook the survey

15 cat owners undertook the survey

29 cat and dog owners undertook the survey

31 from pet free homes undertook the survey

93.9% of those completing the survey indicated that they were aware of the foreshore regulations

### Our Order, local laws, Council policies and procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols – education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Council introduced the following Order under *Domestic Animals Act 1994*:

As of 1 January 2009 all cats and dogs being registered for the first time (new registrations) must be de-sexed from the age of three months. Exemptions include any dog or cat registered with the City of Kingston before 1st January 2009 and animals exempt under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Exemptions include the following:

- A dog/cat that is owned by a person or body that conducts a domestic animal business registered with Council.
- Where the dog/cat is used for breeding purposes in connection with that business.
- A dangerous dog that is kept for guarding non-residential premises
- A dangerous dog that has undergone protection training
- A dog/cat that is the subject of written veterinary advice that the health of the dog/cat is liable to be significantly prejudiced if it is de-sexed
- A dog or cat that is owned by a person who is a current member of an \*applicable organisation and the animal is registered with that organisation (proof must be provided of both owners and dog/cat membership at the time of registration)

*\*Applicable Organisations:*

- Australian National Cats Inc.;
- Dogs Victoria;
- Feline Control Council (Victoria) Inc. ;
- The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy Australia and Victoria Inc; and
- Master Dog Breeders and Associates (MDBA)

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## Applicable Local Laws

- *2015 Community Local Law section 48* - Keeping of Animals
- *2015 Community Local Law section 52* - Animals and Amenity
- *2015 Community Local Law section 55* – Litters of Animals

## Our current education / promotion activities

- Use social media releases to advise of registration period and requirements
- Rewards program to recognise responsible pet ownership and compliance
- Registration/renewal of registration information listed on Council's website including advising when the date that registration is due, how to register, registration fee structure, what documents are required to be produced/supplied
- Registration form available for download on Council's website
- Include registration information and forms in kits provided to new residents
- Provide posters to local veterinarians, pet shops to advertise Pet Expo events
- Provide discounted microchipping at Pet Expo events
- Ensure that information is provided on Council's website to clearly identify the difference between registration and microchipping
- Conduct cat appreciation competitions at Council's Pet Expo events
- Report through the DAMP statistics on the number of impounded animals reunited with their owners to promote identification; and
- Include registration, identification and renewal information in Council newsletters, in Council displays, in Council telephone 'on-hold' message

# 3.

## Registration and identification

### Our current compliance activities

- Issue annual animal registration renewal notices
- Follow up renewal notices with reminder notices
- Dedicate one Officer to undertake door knock audit targeting properties that did not register after receiving renewal notices, usually done in August, September and October
- Undertake random door knock audits throughout year when unregistered animals detected
- Issue 7-day registration notices to pet owners throughout non audit period when finding unregistered animals
- Issue infringement notices for failing to register or renew
- Free replacement registration tags if tag has become worn, illegible or lost;
- Attempt to return home all registered animals
- Check registration details of all dogs encountered on the streets, parks and foreshore
- Conduct enforcement patrols along the entire foreshore area including the footpaths, cliff tops and sanded areas in order to educate foreshore users in the correct usage of the individual areas and to enforce the restrictions
- Check that registered dogs are wearing current and correct registration tags
- When dealing with animal complaints always check registration details
- Authorised Officers to be equipped with microchip scanners
- Provide all Authorised Officers with a laptop to be able to check animal registration and owner details whilst on patrol
- Ensure Council's on call after hours emergency staff use microchip scanner
- Check all injured and deceased animals for registration tag or micro-chip to be able to inform animal owner
- Update animal registration database when notified of deceased, moved or sold animals
- Ensure that all seized or impounded animals are registered prior to release to the owner

- Review animal registration fees annually during budget process
- Ensure that correct State Government levy is charged on animal registrations
- Provide domestic animal businesses with animal registration forms and information relating to animal owners' responsibilities under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*; and
- Audit all dog/cat sale notifications received from pet shops to ensure owners register their purchased animals

### Summary

Over the next four years Council will be seeking to raise the awareness of the requirement, and the benefits of cats and dogs registration and desexing. This is achieved through a combination of proactive education and promotion campaigns and enforcement actions. Council will be conducting annual pet expo, regular newsletters and social media campaigns of various pet related topics as well as random registration checks during patrols and or door knocking activity undertaken by Authorised Officers and checking registration details of all animals sighted during visits to residential/ commercial properties.





# 3.

## Registration and identification

### Our plans

- To promote awareness of the requirement to register dogs and cats
- To continue promoting the benefits of animal registration, identification and desexing using various social media sources and Council's web page
- To continue to undertake an annual registration audit

#### Objective 1:

Update the Council registration database by cross-referencing with pet shop dog and cat sales notifications data.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Update the Council pet registration database by checking the registration details of all notifications of dogs and cats sold at pet shops and follow up those that aren't already registered	Quarterly	Demonstrate that all dogs and cats being sold to Kingston residents are being registered with Council  Demonstrate increase in numbers of pets registered with Council following the receipt of pet shop sales notifications

#### Objective 2:

Promote awareness of dog and cat registration by ensuring procedural processes followed and annual actions implemented.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Send out registration reminder notices to those pet owners who have failed to re-register their pets are receiving a renewal notice	Annually in May	Number of animals re-registered after receiving the registration reminder notice
SMS and/or email registration renewal reminders to be sent to all owners of un-renewed pets with mobile numbers sent and email addresses listed	Annually in May	Review numbers of pets being registered after SMS & email reminders
Undertaking annual animal registration Door Knock Program - targeted door knocking of the municipality each year to check for unregistered dogs and cats	Annually - August, September and October	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Record of number of unregistered and un-identified animals detected during door knocks. Infringements issued for unregistered animals
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release from the pound.	Prior to animal being released from pound.	Review impounding and release forms to confirm all unregistered animals were registered prior to release from the pound.



### Objective 2 continued:

Promote awareness of dog and cat registration by ensuring procedural processes followed and annual actions implemented.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Use Council community events to promote animal registration and opportunities to register pets outside normal business hours	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of registrations processed at events</li><li>• Number of animals micro-chipped</li></ul>
Promote awareness of the benefits of animal registration through Council's website and other social media outlets.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of programs provided</li><li>• Community survey</li><li>• Information on penalties to be provided on Council's website</li></ul>
Ask puppy/kitten schools and obedience trainers to promote registration and identification – provide them with appropriate resources to do so.	Ongoing	Registration forms provided and requested
Promote the services provided from registration fees	Ongoing	Information provided on Council's website
Consider pro-rata refund of registration fee for animals relocating outside of the Kingston municipality	December 2021	Pro-rata refunds provided

### Objective 3:

Issue animal infringement notices to owners of pets that are found to be unregistered after receiving a registration renewal and reminder notice.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Issue animal infringement notices	Ongoing	Number of infringement notices issued and the registration of these animals
Seize animals that remain unregistered after enforcement action was taken.	Ongoing	Number of prosecutions undertaken and animals seized

### 3.

# Registration and identification

#### **Objective 4:**

Monitor and regulate excess animal permits

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Maintain an electronic register (Pathway) to record all permits issued and ensure all animals registered	Ongoing	Electronic data base maintained Review registration records against permit system each year  Excess animal permits and registrations up to date

#### **Objective 5:**

Increase awareness among culturally and linguistically diverse communities of pet registration requirements

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Produce information regarding registration and de-sexing requirements in multi-lingual formats	July 2023	Multi lingual information produced and made available on Council website







## 4. Nuisance

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(vi) outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

### Our current data

The following statistics are based on the 2019/2020 financial year.

- Council investigated 59 dog barking complaints
- Council investigated 444 dog wandering at large complaints
- Council investigated 175 cat wandering complaints
- Council issued 131 infringements for contravening Council's Order pursuant to Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (this includes offences such as dog in a prohibited area, dog not under effective control, failing to clean up dog faeces, failing to carry a litter removal device)
- Council impounded 294 dogs
- Council impounded 246 cats
- Total animals impounded 540

### Consultation

There appears to be a polarised view and opinion as to dogs being exercised off lead in on lead areas. Council's infringement statistics indicate that there is a reduction in this type of offence.

- 51% of residents surveyed believe there are enough dog off leash areas within Kingston.
- 49% of residents surveyed believe Kingston does not have enough dog off leash areas.
- 85% of residents surveyed believed that Kingston should have more fenced off leash areas.

Although a high percentage of residents surveyed supported off leash areas, Council received numerous comments strongly opposing off leash areas. There appears to be considerable polarisation regarding dog access to open spaces within our municipality. Council has previously undertaken public consultation regarding dog access to parks and our foreshore. In response to community feedback Council introduced balanced, equitable access and a Council Order regarding dog control to assist in minimising any nuisances that may occur. Access to open space within Kingston is limited in some areas, reducing the opportunities for off leash spaces.

Residents also responded that most off leash areas are too small. It has also been suggested that Council consider fencing off more dog off leash areas and provide more visible signage and free dog litter bags.

Council has considered the provision of dog poo bag dispensers and has installed 28 bag dispensers in 22 reserves. However, dog owners must "be prepared" and dog owners are required to carry litter removal devices at all times whilst out exercising their dog as the onus is still on the owner to take responsibility for their dog's excrement. To compensate for not providing dog poo bag dispensers at all reserves, Council provides free biodegradable bags at all customer service centres and free "Pooch Pouches" to all registered dog owners to promote compliance and Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO).

Community consultation indicates that residents continue to be inconvenienced by the failure of some dog owners to clean up after their dogs whilst in public places. Although Council has programs in place there is a strong call for continued education combined with increased enforcement.

In consultation with our community, rewards programs have been implemented to recognise owners for responsible pet ownership, compliance and prompt response and resolution of nuisances.

Council has previously reviewed dog access to environmentally sensitive areas, foreshore and local parks. Orders are in place which reflects the outcome of the consultation and assessment.

## Our Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

### **Council introduced the following Orders under *Domestic Animals Act 1994*:**

As of 1 January 2009 all cats and dogs being registered for the first time (new registrations) must be de-sexed from the age of three months. Exemptions include any dog or cat registered with the City of Kingston before 1st January 2009 and animals exempt under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

From 1st November 2010 pursuant to Section 25 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* all owners of a cat are required to keep that cat securely confined to the owner's property and not allow that cat to wander at large outside the owner's premises between sunset and sunrise. The time of sunset and sunrise will be determined by the Bureau of Meteorology. The Order covers all areas of the municipality.

From 1 December 2010 the City of Kingston introduced an Order under the provisions of section 26(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

#### **1. Dogs must be on leashes**

The owner of the dog must keep attached to the dog a chain, cord or leash and held by the owner when in any public place not designated as an off leash area, school grounds, railway land, or shopping centres where an agreement pursuant to Section 26 (2A) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* is in place in the municipality.

#### **2. Owners must be equipped to remove dog faeces**

The owner of a dog must not allow any part of that dog's excrement to remain on any public place, school ground, shopping centre or railway land in the municipality. The owner must carry a litter removal device to pick up and remove all of the dog's faeces and must produce the litter removal device upon request of an Authorised Officer.

### **3. Owner's obligations**

- 3.1 A dog may be exercised off a chain, cord or leash in a designated off leash area provided the owner:
  - a. Carries a chain, cord or leash, sufficient to bring the dog under effective control if the dog behaves in a manner which threatens any person or animal;
  - b. Remains in effective voice or hand control of the dog and within constant sight of the dog so as to be able to promptly place the dog on a chain, cord or leash if that becomes necessary; and
  - c. Does not allow the dog to worry, cause a nuisance or threaten any person or animal.
- 3.2 If a dog is off a chain, cord or a leash in a designated area it must be brought under effective control by means of a chain or cord or a leash if the dog is or likely to be within 20 metres of:
  - a. The arena or ground of an organised sporting or practice event
  - b. A children's play equipment area
  - c. A principal location of an organised public meeting or event
  - d. A permanent barbecue or picnic area.

### **4. Meaning of words**

In this order

'Owner' has the same meaning as the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*; and

'Designated off leash area' means any reserves, or part of a reserve, declared by resolution of the Council.

"Litter removal device" means an apparatus designed for or able to be used for the purpose of removing dog excrement and includes a paper or plastic bag.

'Public Place' means any reserves, or part of a reserve and Road (as defined in the *Local Government Act 1989*).



## 4. Nuisance

### Pursuant to Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*

- a. No dog access will be allowed in or onto the Foreshore Reserve sand areas from 1 November to 31 March between 10.00 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.
- b. The No Dog Zone boundaries in the northern district be amended to include the entire foreshore bounded by the Mordialloc Creek, Nepean Highway, Beach Road and the north western boundary of the Bay Street car park.
- c. A 24 hour dog off-leash area will commence from the northern foreshore municipal boundary adjacent to Charman Road, Mentone extending south along the foreshore approximately 450 meters to the foreshore entry point opposite Plummer Road, Mentone. The dog off leash area will be on the sand area only.
- d. The sand areas of the foreshore reserve be off leash between sunrise and 10.00 a.m. between 1st November and 31 March with the exception of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone.
- e. Outside the Mordialloc No Dog Zone the sand areas of the foreshore reserve be off leash before 11.00 a.m. and after 3.00 p.m. between 1 April and 31 October.
- f. Outside of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone dogs must remain on leash in or on the foreshore reserve between 11.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. between 1 April and 31 October unless in a designated off leash area.
- g. Notwithstanding clause b) of this order, dogs be permitted on leash only at any time on the concrete pathway which passes along the edge of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone as signed.
- h. Outside of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone dogs must remain on leash in or on the foreshore reserve between 7.30 p.m. and sunrise between 1 November and 31 March unless in a designated off leash area.

***Note that for the purposes of this order, sand area means:***

- i. north of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone all areas of the foreshore which are exclusively sand underfoot (i.e. excludes concrete pathways, maintained grass areas, vegetated areas and cliff tops)
- ii. south of Mordialloc No Dog Zone the entire foreshore reserve including vegetated areas.

## Pursuant to Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*

Designated the following reserves or parts thereof, as off leash reserves:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Amaroo Drive Reserve Chelsea Heights        | 28. Spring Road Reserve, Dingley Village |
| 2. Bald Hill Park Clayton South                | 29. Swallow Reserve Dingley Village      |
| 3. Bicentennial Park Chelsea                   | 30. Turner Road Reserve Highett          |
| 4. Bonbeach Sports Reserve Bonbeach            | 31. Walter Galt Reserve Parkdale         |
| 5. Browns Reserve Aspendale                    |  |
| 6. Chadwick Reserve Dingley Village            |  |
| 7. Dales Park Reserve Oakleigh South           |  |
| 8. Derring Lane Cheltenham                     |  |
| 9. Farm Road Reserve Cheltenham                |  |
| 10. George Woods Reserve Mordialloc            |  |
| 11. Glen Street Reserve Aspendale              |  |
| 12. GR Bricker Reserve Moorabbin               |  |
| 13. Heatherton Park Clayton South              |  |
| 14. Haughton Road/Orchid Street, Clayton South |  |
| 15. Iluka Reserve Aspendale                    |  |
| 16. Kevin Hayes Reserve Mordialloc             |  |
| 17. Kingston Heath Reserve Cheltenham          |  |
| 18. Le Page Park Cheltenham                    |  |
| 19. Mavis Hutter Reserve Oakleigh South        |  |
| 20. Moorabbin Reserve Moorabbin                |  |
| 21. Namatjira Park Clayton South               |  |
| 22. Nurten Parade Reserve Aspendale Gardens    |  |
| 23. Reg Marlow Reserve Mentone                 |  |
| 24. Roy Dore Reserve Carrum                    |  |
| 25. Sir William Fry Reserve Cheltenham         |  |
| 26. Snowden Drive Cheltenham                   |  |
| 27. Southern Road Reserve Mentone              |  |

## Local Laws

- *2015 Community Local Law section 48* - Keeping of Animals
- *2015 Community Local Law section 52* - Animals and Amenity
- *2015 Community Local Law section 55* – Litters of Animals

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# 4.

## Nuisance

### Council policies and procedures

- Kingston Enforcement Protocols - education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats
- Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system
- Procedure regarding noise nuisance complaints for dogs and/or cats (*DAA s.32*)
- Procedure for surrendered dogs and/or cats by owners (*DAA s.33A*)
- Nuisance Cat Trapping Procedure; and
- Procedure for After Hours Animal Emergency Service

## Our current education / promotion activities

- Provide information on Council's website and social media relating to:
  - The requirements of dogs being confined to their owner's property
  - Council's Order requiring all dogs to be on leash throughout the municipality unless in an area designated and signed as an off-leash area
  - Dog access to the foreshore
  - Dog socialisation, exercise & training and list local service providers
  - How to prevent and avoid dog attacks
  - What to do if your dog is involved in an attack and detail the signs of aggression in dogs
  - Reasons why dogs bark and make available a barking dog statement for residents to download and complete
  - Supervising dogs with children
  - Provide links on Council's website to animal related organisations
  - Responsible pet ownership
  - Cat confinement including various methods for the construction of cat enclosures
  - Resident's rights about wandering cats
  - Cat and dog de-sexing
  - Public health issues relating to cats and dogs
  - Cat trapping
  - promote off leash areas and dog exercise/agility parks
- Promote the various resources available to ensure the correct choice of a pet such as 'Choosing a Pet' program <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/choosing-a-pet> to assist prospective dog owners to choose an appropriate cat/dog to meet their lifestyle and circumstances. This will help reduce nuisances created and dog attacks
- Use social media to disseminate information to residents
- Provide a wide range of brochures
- Distribute brochures to residents when requested and when investigating complaints
- Liaise with Environmental Health team in cases of animal hoarding
- Rewards program to recognise and reward owners observed complying with legislation (free treats, show bags)
- Promote the areas designated for exercising dogs and the need for regular exercise to prevent behavioural and health problems
- Ensure Council staff provides a proactive service to the community to ensure that the public are well informed and aware of current pet management issues
- Provide free "Pooch Pouches" to all registered dog owners to enable them to carry litter removal bags on their dogs lead
- Provide free sample biodegradable dog litter removal bags at all customer service centres and libraries to encourage use of bio-degradable litter bags;
- Provide dog litter bag dispensers with free bags at selected reserves



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# 4.

## Nuisance

### Our current compliance activities

#### All nuisance

- Record all nuisance complaints on Council's Customer Complaint Management (CRM) system to track resolutions, repeat offenders and ensure Officers follow set tasks and procedures
- Investigate all reported alleged nuisance complaints within specified CRM timeframes
- Ensure nuisance investigation timeframes are as short as possible to reduce complainants' frustration
- Review Council Orders, Local Laws, Council policies and procedures relating to nuisance on a regular basis with Animal Management Officers (AMOs) / Local Law Officers/ Rangers and Senior Officer/s
- Report outcomes of prosecutions (and regular updates on number of infringements) regarding each area of nuisance to local media to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of preventing dog and cat nuisance
- Ensure notices to comply, notices of objection, infringements, prosecutions are in line with Council Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy, legislation and operational procedures
- Limit the number of cats/dogs that can be permitted to be kept on a premises, promote and enforce Council's Excess Animal Permits, monitor compliance of permit conditions to prevent nuisances and animal hoarding; and
- Require non-compliant owners to undertake a responsible dog ownership course and/or owner and dog to undertake basic dog training course

#### At large and trespass

*(see section 4 Nuisance and the following)*

- Patrol public places to check for dogs or cats at large or in prohibited public areas
- Increase patrols during holiday periods/at times when native protected fauna are breeding/etc.
- Introduced an Order for a cat curfew between sunset and sunrise in public places
- Introduced an Order associated with restraint of dogs in public places
- Provide cat cages free to local residents for trapping cats trespassing on their property
- Purchase additional cat cages and ensure compliant with *Prevention of the Cruelty of Animals Act 1986* (POCTA) Regulations on confinement traps
- Undertake cat trapping program to trap wild cats in response to complaints or where cat colonies are identified in the municipality
- Introduce a subsidized desexing program in targeted areas
- Impound all cats and dogs at large; and
- If possible, return wandering registered pets to owners free of charge if found in the immediate vicinity of their registered address then impound and enforce for repeat offences

### **Barking dogs**

*(see section 4 Nuisance and the following)*

- Operational procedure in place to ensure Officers investigate all alleged barking dog complaints within given time frames including the provision of noise log sheets to help gather evidence, provision of educational material
- Utilise available educational kits and information to assist in investigations of complaints; and
- Encourage complainant to contact owner of barking dog and advise them of their concerns as first step to resolving issue

### **Dog faeces**

*(see section 4 Nuisance and the following)*

- Order was introduced Under Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requiring the compulsory collection and disposal of dog faeces by owner/person in charge of the dog. Our community support this regulation
- It is a procedural requirement that Authorised Officers are to ask all dog owners who are found walking their dogs in public to produce a Litter Removal Device
- Infringements issued for failing to carry a Litter Removal Device; and
- Infringements issued for failing to clean up after your dog

## **Summary**

Kingston currently uses Pathway to record complaints and infringements issued. Additional statistical data would assist Council to monitor compliance more effectively and to further develop Council programs to assist with improving the communities' compliance.

Our programs to date have resulted in a reduction of animals impounded each year reducing nuisances. There are still opportunities to address community concerns and target programs specific nuisances in our municipality such as reduction in dog droppings, barking dogs, dogs at large and stray cats management.

# 4. Nuisance

## Our plans

- Promote awareness of the nuisances caused by barking dogs
- Enforce compliance of Council's Orders – dogs on leash, under effective control, cat night curfew
- Improve complaint resolution techniques

### Objective 1:

Promote awareness and minimise cat nuisances in the community.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Maintain an electronic register (Pathway) to record all permits issued and ensure all animals registered	Ongoing	Maintain an electronic register (Pathway) to record all permits issued and ensure all animals registered
Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners in registration information packs each year.	Ongoing	Number of booklets distributed and information available on website
Assist residents with dealing with cat trespass / nuisance problems by purchasing additional replacement cat traps and provide them to local residents for trapping nuisance cats	June each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of traps purchased</li><li>• Number of cats impounded</li></ul>
Promote confinement of animals to owner's premises to prevent stray cats and dogs and possible euthanasia if the animal is not microchipped, not registered, diseased and or feral	December 2023	Promotes compliance and the importance of registration
Promote the benefits of and provide expanded subsidized desexing program	Ongoing	Subsidized desexing voucher program
Review Community Local Law section 50 relating to the keeping of cats in Waterways estate	December 2022	Community Local Law reviewed

## Objective 2:

Improve complaint resolution of reported animal nuisances and promote responsible pet ownership.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Encourage residents to report animal nuisances to assist in resolving the complaint, improve animal welfare and improve the general amenity. Recommend checking in with neighbours prior to reporting to Council	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of complaints received</li><li>• Information on website on how to report complaints</li></ul>
Review the barking dog complaint/ investigation procedure regularly and modify to facilitate timely resolutions, encourage civil resolution prior to Council involvement	Ongoing	Dog barking complaints reviewed each year
All owners of dogs to be requested to produce litter removal devices. Infringements to be issued in line with operational procedures.	Ongoing	Number of infringements issued – monitored to determine numbers reducing and compliance improving.
Review and identify opportunity to improve the quality and diversity of designated off-leash exercise areas where sites are available to promote dog training and socialisation including opportunity for additional dog exercise/training equipment	Ongoing	Number of off leash areas reviewed
Review and identify opportunity to increase designated fully fenced off-leash exercise areas where sites are available to promote dog training and socialisation	Ongoing	Number of off leash areas fully fenced
Include information regarding confinement, barking, dogs at large etc in new registration information packs	Ongoing	Packs available
Provide advice to pet owners on appropriate pet care during holidays, fireworks and thunderstorms	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information placed on web site</li><li>• Social media articles</li><li>• Included in new owners pack</li></ul>
Improve compliance signage and increase patrols to promote and enhanced dogs related compliance and reduce nuisances	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Signage installed and maintained</li><li>• Number of infringements issued and reduced number of offences</li></ul>
Develop engaging web content fact sheets regarding legislative requirements of pet owners	July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of factsheets developed and available on Council website</li></ul>
Develop a consistent approach to assess the suitability and design of designated off leash and prohibited areas for dogs on Council managed land.	July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liaised with internal Council stakeholders including recreational planners to develop and implement agreed assessment criterion.</li></ul>



# 5.

## Dog attacks

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(iii) outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

### Our current data

The following statistics are based on the 2019/2020 financial year.

- Number of reported dog attacks – 200 (includes alleged attack and rush offences)
- Number of serious dog attacks prosecuted – 7
- Number of infringements issued for minor dog attacks – 34

### Consultation

During consultation the following number of people advised that they had contacted Council in relation to dog attack related incidents.

- 9 had called about dogs threatening or rushing people
- 6 had called about dogs attacking or biting people
- 15 had called about dogs not under effective control

### Our Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

From 1 December 2010 the City of Kingston introduced an Order under the provisions of section 26(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requiring all dogs to be on leash except in designated off leash areas. This Order is detailed in full in this plan under the section titled Nuisances.

The City of Kingston introduced an Order designating reserves or parts of reserves to be off leash areas and placing restrictions on dog use on the foreshore. This Order is detailed in full in this plan under the section titled Nuisances.

### Local laws

- 2015 Community Local Law section 48 - Keeping of Animals
- 2015 Community Local Law section 52 - Animals and Amenity
- 2015 Community Local Law section 55 - Litters of Animals

### Council policies and procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Council Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of seized dog owners as required.

All reports of dog rush, dog attacks or dog bites fully investigated using Council's dog attack investigations procedure.

All Authorised Officers who seize dogs found at large or not secured to owner's premises must upload a photograph and details about the dog and where it was found on Council's Lost and Found Animals Facebook page.

When a registered animal is found at large the Authorised Officer must attempt to return the animal to its owner using contact details on the animal registration database. If none of the contacts are able to be contacted the animal must be transported to the animal pound facility.

All unregistered animals must be transported to the animal pound facility.

The animal information is then entered into a Lost / Found Register which is maintained by Council's pound contractor. This Register is utilised for the immediate notification of owners of lost and found animals. When an identified dog has been seized by an Authorised Officer, a notice of seizure is sent to the last known address of the owner of that animal within 4 days after the dog or cat is seized. Council currently has a contract with a pound facility where owners of impounded dogs and/or cats are notified and are able to collect the animal at the Pound facility.



## Our current education / promotion activities

- Promote Responsible Pet Ownership to new and existing dog owners to promote dog training and socialisation
- Promotion of the need for dogs to be under effective control, at all times, including the need to ensure dogs can be effectively contained and /or fenced on their own property to ensure they cannot escape
- Promote dog training and responsible pet ownership through Council's web site
- Raise awareness of risk of dog attacks in the home, in the street and in parks and how to reduce these risks through:
  - providing information to vets, pet shops, breeders, shelters, etc, to display and/or hand out
  - Council's social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Promote the importance of appropriate breed selection
- Promote de-sexing of dogs to reduce aggressive tendencies and wandering at large
- Promote early socialisation of dogs to other animals and humans
- Promote regular exercise of dogs
- Promote environmental enrichment for dogs at home
- More frequent use of Council's social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter)
- Promote the need for supervision of children, when dogs are present
- Promote Council's available services relating to dog attack investigations including the after-hours service and contact details; and
- Educate the public on managing situations when confronted with aggressive dogs

# 5.

## Dog attacks

### Our current compliance activities

- Utilise dog attack investigation procedures and Kingston Enforcement Protocols
- Respond to/attend dog attack reports immediately as the top priority for Animal Management Officers
- Provide an after-hours service to respond to reported dog attacks
- Record all dog attack details on an electronic customer request system for officer investigation
- Identify numbers of dog attacks in the community on a monthly basis, including information relating to the attacks: date, time, location, breed of dog, person attacked, animal attacked, category of injuries sustained, any information about owner/person in charge
- Utilise a Review Panel consisting of Senior Officers to review all dog attack investigations to ensure appropriate decisions are made in accordance with statutory requirements
- Local Laws Operations Coordinator supervises all dog attack investigations and refers case briefs to review panel for consideration (infringement, prosecution, proposed declaration, seizure, destruction etc)
- Conduct regular patrols at locations where there is a high incidence of attacks. Conduct patrols during periods of the day when there is a high incidence of attacks
- Conduct regular patrols to make sure dogs are securely confined to premises
- Ensure all reported dog attacks are recorded and investigated to meet all points of proof provided in the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*. Seize dogs and prosecute owners in accordance with Council's enforcement strategy
- Enforce on-leash requirements – if not in an off-leash area, dogs must be on leash
- Continue to educate and enforce to promote awareness of dog attack prevention
- Be proactive in declaring dogs dangerous or menacing
- Maintain database with details of each animal reported/found to have attacked people, pets, wildlife and livestock
- Ensure unclaimed dogs at the pound are temperament tested to determine whether they are suitable for re-homing

- DNA samples of dogs involved in serious dog attacks will be requested if required as part of Council investigation
- Seize dogs involved in serious dog attacks; and
- Actively prosecute owners of dogs involved in serious dog attacks

### Summary

It is recognised that unfortunately dog attacks continue to happen and Council needs to undertake further research of our data to understand where these attacks are more likely to occur and identify some corrective programs. Council takes every reported dog attacks seriously by conducting thorough investigation in accordance to Kingston Enforcement Protocols followed by carefully considered enforcement actions in line with statutory requirements and Council's enforcement strategy.







# 5.

## Dog attacks

### Our plans

- To continue to investigate the incidents of dog attacks to minimise and manage the risk or threat of dog attacks and harassment from dogs.
- Encourage the reporting of all incidences of dog attacks
- Raise public awareness of dog attacks and how to prevent them from occurring
- Undertake further research to improve our understanding of dog attacks in Kingston and subsequently develop improved enforcement education programs

#### Objective 1:

Encourage reporting of dog attacks in the community to assist Council to address attacking dogs, educate owners and improve community safety

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Encourage public reporting dog attacks - use media articles and website updates to raise awareness on how to report dog attacks whether on public or private property – if bitten or witness an attack on a person or animal.	Ongoing	Evaluate this activity (and overall objective) by comparing number of dog attacks reported to Council  Undertake a community survey to measure awareness of dog attacks and how to report them
Promote the State 'Dangerous Dogs Hotline' 1300 101 080	Ongoing	Information on Council website Information on Council social media
In instances deemed appropriate, letter drop following serious dog attacks to residents in area of attack	Ongoing	Officer delivering letters
Patrol reserves and foreshore and educate dog walkers	Ongoing	Officer patrols raise awareness of dog control legislation

## Objective 2:

Investigate all dog attacks and dog rush incidents in the community

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Review of data systems to ensure the accurate recording of appropriate statistics in relation to dog attack and harassment incidents to enable tailored education and enforcement activities.	Ongoing	Accurate information recorded and tailored education/enforcement activities undertaken
Promote dog training and responsible pet ownership through Council's web site	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare number of reported dog attack incidents pre and post campaign.</li><li>• Identify % increase in community awareness of legislation regarding confinement, local leash Order through annual animal management community consultation survey</li><li>• Record type and number of education materials distributed</li><li>• Number of media articles published</li></ul>
Review dog attack/rush enforcement and investigation procedure	Annually	Procedure reviewed and reflects current legislation
Investigate every report of dog attack and dog rush	Ongoing	All dog attacks and dog rush incidents reported to Council are investigated thoroughly
Undertake panel reviews for every serious dog attack investigated	Ongoing	Panel reviews consisting of senior officers undertaken for serious dog attack to determine action required
Provide residents with information on implications for their dog and themselves if their dog attacks a person or animal	Ongoing	Information produced and on website, incorporated into operation procedures
Ensure any Magistrates Orders to confine dogs are being adhered to by unannounced inspections	Ongoing	Number of audits/inspections undertaken
Issue infringements for dog rush offences that have been proven through an investigation but prosecutions not proceeding (considered intermediate level of education)	Ongoing	Number of infringements issued

## 6. Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

### Our current data

The following statistics are based on the 2019/2020 financial year.

- Number of declared dangerous dogs registered - 11
- Number of declared menacing dogs registered - 3
- Number of restricted breed dogs registered - 0
- Number of compliance inspections conducted (dangerous and restricted) - 18
- Number of seized restricted breed dogs (declared and suspected) - 0

Residents have a high expectation that Council will utilise all available legislation to monitor restricted breeds and manage dangerous dogs within our municipality.

Council is responsible for declaring dogs as either menacing or dangerous when required. Council does not prohibit the keeping of these dogs and provides information to owners to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and the actions that can be taken to minimise the likelihood of inappropriate behaviours.

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* defines dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs.

### Menacing dogs

A dog that has inflicted a non-serious bite to a person or animal; shown aggressive behaviours (snarling, growling, raised hackles) when rushing up to a person; or chased a person.

### Dangerous dogs

A dog that has caused serious injury or death to a person or animal by biting or attacking.

Dogs can also be declared as dangerous if the owner has received 2 or more infringement notices for the dog being menacing and hasn't complied with restraint requirements.

A dog can also be declared dangerous under corresponding legislation in another state or territory.

A dog that is kept for the purpose of guarding non-residential premises (Guard dog) is automatically a dangerous dog under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

### Restricted breed dogs

Dogs of the following breeds are defined by Victorian State Government legislation. These dogs have not necessarily shown any dangerous behaviours, but have been classified by the State Government as a higher risk to community safety than other breeds:

- American Pit Bull Terrier
- Perro de Presa Canario
- Dogo Argentino
- Japanese Tosa
- Fila Brasileiro

Due to a change in State Government legislation in 2017, these dogs can now be registered by Council provided certain conditions are met.

## Our Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

Council's animal registration form requires all owners of dogs to sign a declaration stating that the dog's breed has been correctly identified and if it is or is not a restricted breed, declared dangerous or declared menacing dog. Registration can be refused if this declaration is not signed.

All proposals to declare dogs to be menacing or dangerous are considered through the Review Panel consisting of senior Council officers.

Council follows the required steps in Restricted Breed Declaration Process in conjunction with Kingston's Restricted Breed Dog Identification and Declaration Process Form. This form includes the approved breed standard for any dog that falls within the standard of an American Pitbull Terrier.

Council's Excess Animals Permit does not allow for more than one declared dangerous dog or restricted breed to be kept at a property.

A nominated Administration Officer enters details of all declared dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry. This officer also updates the Victorian Dangerous Dog Register (VDDR) with details of declared dogs destroyed.

The VDDR is audited annually to ensure the details of all declared dogs in Kingston are up to date.

All notices to comply, infringement notices and filing of charges for prosecution regarding dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs is undertaken in accordance with the Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of declared dog owners when required.

## Our current education / promotion activities

Provide residents with information on:

- the types of declared dogs and how they are to be identified and kept in compliance with the act and regulations, including prescribed collars, signage at premises, housing requirements, muzzling, etc. ;
- how to report menacing dogs, suspected restricted breed dogs (see Registration and Identification Education/ Promotion Activities section for methods of providing information to residents – Council website, mail-outs, media articles, signage at parks, etc.)
- Provide extensive educational information on dangerous and menacing dogs/restricted breeds on Council website
- Ensure all owners of declared dogs are aware of their obligations under the Act regarding identification and keeping these dogs by providing them with relevant sections of the Act, brochures, fact sheets/develop information kit
- Provide all owners of registered declared dog with information on requirements and updates on any legislative changes, to improve compliance; and
- Promote the 'Dangerous Dogs Hotline' 1300 101 080



## 6.

# Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs

### Our current compliance activities

- Ensure that Council has effective declaration procedures to avoid declarations being overturned at VCAT (establish partnerships with other Councils that have success at VCAT for ideas and assistance). Ensure Council has specific declaration procedures for each of type of declaration:
  - dangerous dogs
  - menacing dogs
  - restricted breed dogs
- Ensure all declared dogs are accurately registered on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and that details regarding change of owner/change of address/death of dog are updated as soon as possible. This registry is not available to members of the public.
- Ensure declared dog registration information on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and Council's registration database match;
- Conduct unannounced audit inspections of declared Dangerous and Restricted Breed dogs annually to ensure they are identified and being kept in compliance with the *Act* and Regulations
- Follow-up non-compliance issues found during audits and ensure compliance with requirements
- Respond to complaints regarding menacing dogs/dangerous dogs
- Establish Council policies and procedures for non-compliance – notices to comply, infringements, prosecutions
- Patrol industrial and commercial areas/non-residential premises to check dogs guarding premises have been declared as dangerous dogs and are identified as required (collar of the kind prescribed), and are being kept in compliance with the *Act* and Regulations
- Ensure all declared dogs are implanted with a microchip by scanning
- Examine registrations on Council database to identify and follow-up on suspected (non-declared) restricted breed dogs
- Review all dog attack cases to determine if it is appropriate to declare a dog dangerous and commence the statutory declaration procedure

- Maintain a register of all declared dangerous/menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs registered and housed in Kingston to ensure officers are aware of these locations
- Actively prosecute owners of restricted breed and declared dogs involved in serious dog attacks

### Summary

The City of Kingston rarely receives reports of suspected undeclared restricted breed dogs and it is not often that our officers detect any within the Kingston municipality. Council believes there is a high level of compliance regarding the ownership and management of declared dogs within Kingston.

Notwithstanding this, current education and compliance activities need to be continued to ensure continued community safety.

## Our plans

Continue our current education and compliance activities and promote responsible pet ownership aimed at reducing over time the number of declared dangerous dogs within Kingston.

### Objective 1:

Identify and register all declared dogs in the municipality

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Undertake regular patrols to inspect all industrial/commercial properties in the municipality for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of patrols</li><li>• Number of detected animals investigated</li></ul>
Educate the community about what is a declared dangerous or menacing dog	Ongoing	Information available on website and social media articles distributed

### Objective 2:

Inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are following the keeping requirements.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Undertake annual program of audits of all properties that house declared dangerous dogs and restricted breeds using inspection templates to ensure all requirements are in place	June/July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documented evidence of inspections and Notices issued</li><li>• Full compliance with all the legislative requirements</li></ul>
Undertake unannounced audits of all properties that house declared dangerous dogs and restricted breeds using inspection templates to ensure all requirements are in place	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documented evidence of inspections and Notices issued</li><li>• Full compliance with all the legislative requirements</li></ul>
Direct mail to declared dog owners – fact sheet every year/regular newsletter re. housing/requirements	Annually - March	Number of fact sheets sent out to owners each year

### Objective 3:

Identify all suspected unregistered restricted breed dogs and enforce the provisions of the DAA

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Educate the community about what is a restricted breed dog	Ongoing	Information available on website and social media articles distributed
Encourage the reporting of suspected restricted breed dogs being housed in Kingston and promote reporting options available through our web site and educational material	Ongoing	Number of registered reports and investigations

# 7.

## Overpopulation and high euthanasia

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

### Our current data

Compulsory de-sexing of cats and dogs (with exemptions) has previously been considered by Council and Order adopted. There is high compliance with the Order and the number of entire animals registered with Kingston (excluding Domestic Animal Businesses (DAB) registered animals) is decreasing.

Our community has provided comment that they would encourage Council to improve the number of adoptions to new owners of unclaimed animals.

- 51% of residents surveyed support Council's Order on the compulsory de-sexing of cats and dogs
- 59% of residents surveyed had varied opinions on what age dogs and cats should be de-sexed.
- 40% of residents surveyed had no opinion on what age dogs and cats should be de-sexed

Several residents and veterinarians have raised concerns regarding compulsory de-sexing specifically the early age de-sexing.

The issue of employing a dedicated Cat Management Officer has been considered and not pursued. Additional cat management training has been provided

### Our Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Council introduced the following Order under *Domestic Animals Act 1994*:

As of 1 January 2009 all cats and dogs being registered for the first time (new registrations) must be de-sexed from the age of three months. Exemptions include any dog or cat registered with the City of Kingston before 1st January 2009 and animals exempt under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

This Order is detailed in full in this plan under the section titled Registration and Identification.

### Local laws

- *2015 Community Local Law section 48* - Keeping of Animals
- *2015 Community Local Law section 52* - Animals and Amenity
- *2015 Community Local Law section 55* - Litters of Animals

## Our current education / promotion activities

- Promote the benefits of de-sexing – no surprise litters, fewer unwanted animals in the community, fewer animals euthanized, reduced aggression, reduced wandering
- Actively promote Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) / Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) subsidised de-sexing vouchers for eligible residents
- Raise awareness about the contribution of the semi-owned cat population by participating in the 'Who's for Cats?' campaign ("Are you feeding a bigger problem?") which aims to raise awareness in the community about the cat overpopulation problem and the consequences of feeding unowned cats. Council can implement a range of resources and actions. These include:
  - "Are you feeding a bigger problem?" (Who's for Cats? campaign fact sheet) - distribution throughout the municipality, placement on website
  - Radio ad - used for Council 'on hold' phone messages, and also airing on local community radio stations (note translated versions are also available in Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin and Vietnamese)
  - Media release for publication in local newspapers
  - Print advertisements for publication in local newspapers
  - The Who's for cats?  
Website is [www.whosforcats.com.au](http://www.whosforcats.com.au)
- Distribute de-sexing, overpopulation and high euthanasia rate brochures, fact-sheets and other material developed by Animal Welfare Victoria and/or Council by providing to vets, pet shops, breeders, shelters, etc, to display and/or hand out
- Continue registration and micro-chipping programs to ensure pet cats and dogs can be returned to their owners (see 'Registration and Identification' section for activities), to help reduce euthanasia rates
- Promote appropriate pet selection to avoid animals being surrendered or dumped; <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/choosing-a-pet>
- Promote confinement of animal to owner's premises to prevent straying and possible euthanasia, if not registered (see Nuisance section for activities related to confinement)
- Distribute fact sheets regarding changes to the definition of domestic animal businesses – i.e. 3 or more fertile female cats, or 3 or more fertile female dogs, 'for profit' has been removed from Act, etc. Animal Welfare Victoria has fact sheets to distribute and/or put on your website. Obedience clubs/kennel clubs may be one way to distribute this information
- Provide information for pet owners on how to find lost or stray pets on Council's website, and other material distributed by Council
- Promote the benefits of early age de-sexing
- Involve breed clubs to assist in the re-homing of breeds of cats and dogs
- Ensure that Council's animal pound contractor has in place a dog and cat re-homing/adoption program to assist in the reduction of euthanasia rates
- Promote other benefits of adopting animal from pound or shelter – e.g. usually cheaper than buying from a pet shop, breeder or on-line (especially when taking micro-chipping, registration and de-sexing costs into account); and
- Encourage people to surrender unwanted pets to Council or animal welfare shelters rather than abandoning them







# 7.

## Overpopulation and high euthanasia

### Our current compliance activities

- Investigate reports of animal hoarding – work with owner to reduce numbers housed and facilitate the de-sexing of the remaining permitted number of animals
- Investigate reports of unauthorised 'backyard breeders' to ascertain whether they should be registered as a domestic animal business
- Provide cat cages at no charge to local residents for trapping nuisance cats trespassing on their property
- Analyse animal impound statistics and other information to determine whether municipality has an overpopulation of cats and/or dogs by:
  - numbers of cats and dogs surrendered to Council
  - numbers of unidentified cats and dogs impounded by Council and number entire
  - number of excess animal cat and dog permits by Council and total number of cats and dogs per excess animal permit issued by Council - if animals are not de-sexed, Officer will investigate the need to have owner registered as a domestic animal business otherwise all animals must be de-sexed
  - numbers of cat and dog hoarding cases and number of animals housed, numbers of owned and un-owned dogs seized within the municipality
  - numbers of dogs recovered by owners, rehoused and/or euthanised by Service Provider in accord with the Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds
  - numbers of owned, semi-owned, un-owned and wild cats impounded within the municipality
  - numbers of owned and semi-owned cats recovered by owners
- Review service agreement with Pound Services provider for impounded animals to establish if they can provide more 84Y agreements or more foster care to increase options for adoptions
- Conduct patrols to impound wandering dogs and trap wild and stray cats to reduce breeding opportunities
- Introduced cat night curfew to reduce incidence of breeding, to decrease the number of unwanted cat litters in the community; and
- the pound services provider has a formal program of assessment for euthanasia or suitability for re-homing of dogs and cats

### Summary

Kingston continues to actively promote de-sexing and remove unwanted/un-owned animals from the community. Our current programs aim to reduce the number of animals bred then subsequently euthanized where homes are not available. Although Council has the support of the community for our compulsory de-sexing Order, the Order can be reviewed with respect of the age that animals are to be de-sexed. There is an opportunity to continue to identify un-owned cat colonies, identify feeders and work to promote formal adoption and de-sexing or removal to reduce unwanted reproduction.

# 7.

## Overpopulation and high euthanasia

### Our plans

- Continue to promote responsible pet selection, ownership, de-sexing and responsible breeding through our current education and compliance activities
- Identify animal hoarders to work collaboratively with them to reduce the number housed and reduce unwanted numbers being bred
- Promote unclaimed shelter animals for adoption

#### Objective 1:

Continue to reduce the percentage of registered dogs and cats that are currently entire and not part of a Domestic Animal Breeding Business each year.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Continue to support and provide eligible AVA/ MAV subsidised de-sexing for pets.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of animals de-sexed as part of the scheme</li><li>• Cost to run scheme</li><li>• Any changes in the longer term re proportion of impounded pets that are de-sexed</li></ul>
Consider Section 10A Order regarding the age of compulsory de-sexing for cats and dogs	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consultation undertaken</li><li>• Information provided to Council for consideration</li></ul>
Development and implementation of free cat de-sexing program	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of cats desexed</li><li>• Reduced unwanted litters</li></ul>

#### Objective 2:

Raise awareness about semi-owned cat population to minimise the number of wild cats in Kingston

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Are you feeding a bigger problem?" campaign fact sheet distribution throughout the municipality</li><li>• Using Council social media to promote cat ownership</li><li>• Promotions to encourage people to take full ownership of cats - free product</li></ul>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measure number and type of education materials distributed</li><li>• Record number of semi owned cats handed into pound</li><li>• Community survey to measure knowledge about semi owned cat problem before and after campaign</li><li>• Number of media stories published</li></ul>
Identify any cat colonies in Kingston, try to identify "feeder" and coordinate a trapping program.	Ongoing	Number of cats trapped in public places

### Objective 3:

Identify illegally operating Domestic Animal Breeding establishments in the municipality, ensuring statutory compliance or take enforcement action to close establishment.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Undertake education campaign to promote awareness about definition of breeding DABs and COP requirements for businesses: Advertisements in local classifieds  Website information  Follow up people advertising pets for sale (eg in local papers or on local noticeboards), to determine if they are a DAB and are registered with council	Ongoing	Compare number of Council registered breeding establishments annually
Audit every DAB each year prior to re-registration period for compliance. Enforce compliance with minimum requirements	Annually -Feb/ March	Number of audits conducted, and documented summary of outcomes (including any DABs closed due to non-compliance)

### Objective 4:

Promote awareness of reclaimed and re-homing rates of impounded dogs and cats

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Post images and information of impounded animal via Kingston Lost and Found Animals Facebook page	Ongoing	Monitor the number of animals claimed and adopted from pound services provider
Promote Online adoption program of dogs and cats in animal shelters – provide links on Council web site to shelters to promote adoption of unclaimed animals to prospective new owners	Ongoing	Links on website
Investigation of the suitability of entering into section 84Y agreements with animal welfare, re-housing and adoption groups. A section 84Y agreement can allow for a person or body to seize, retain or dispose of cats or dogs.	December 2024	Number of agreements entered into



# 8.

## Domestic animal businesses

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)

### Our current data

- 21 Registered domestic animal businesses which include:
  - 6 pet shops
  - 10 boarding establishments
  - 5 dog training establishments

### Our Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

- *2015 Community Local Law section 48* - Keeping of Animals
- *2015 Community Local Law section 52* - Animals and Amenity

### Council policies and procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of proprietors of domestic animal businesses when required. All notices to comply, infringement notices and filing of charges for prosecution regarding proprietors of domestic animal businesses is undertaken in accordance with the Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy.

### Our current educationn / promotion activities

- Provide relevant mandatory Code of Practice to proprietors/ staff of existing and proposed domestic animal businesses
- Ensure all relevant domestic animal businesses are advised and involved in any review of the mandatory Code of Practice for their type of business; and
- Invite DABs to be involved in Council's animal related community events

## Our current compliance activities

- Register and audit all identified domestic animal businesses within the municipality:
  - Breeding and rearing establishments
  - Pet shops
  - Shelters and pounds
  - Boarding establishments
  - Dog training establishments
- Conduct annual unannounced inspections/audits of each domestic animal business premises in Kingston to ensure that the conditions of registration are in compliance with the *DAA*, and that all relevant mandatory Codes of Practice are being followed
- Annual re-registration audits conducted prior to the 10 April annually to allow any non-compliance to be addressed
- Ensure that any non-compliance with permit conditions is rectified using notices to comply, information sheets etc
- In cases of serious non-compliance, permits may be suspended or cancelled
- Non-complying DABs will not receive re-registration until legislative requirements are met
- Procedures in place for domestic animal businesses to notify Council of any animals sold or given away, as required under S13 of the Act
- Investigate all reported complaints about domestic animal businesses within operational response timeframes
- Review weekly planning applications report to identify proposed domestic animal businesses to ensure appropriate conditions are placed on construction, operation and DAB application received
- Inspect all proposed identified DABs to educate proprietor to assist with legislation requirements to meet the registration requirements
- Provide educational information to people making queries about setting up a domestic animal business, to let them know of all the requirements involved, before they start making too many plans

- DAB registration fees are set to reflect the cost of annual audits and inspections; and
- Investigate reports of unauthorised 'backyard breeders' to ascertain whether they should be registered as a domestic animal business

## Summary

All Domestic Animal Businesses are audited annually to ensure compliance. Officers check all new planning applications to ensure that all new DABs are followed up and obtain relevant permits, codes of practice and aware of their responsibilities under the legislation.

## 8.

# Domestic animal businesses

### Our plans

- Continue to promote responsible pet selection, ownership, de-sexing and responsible breeding through our current education and compliance activities
- Identify animal hoarders to work collaboratively with them to reduce the number housed and reduce unwanted numbers being bred
- Promote unclaimed shelter animals for adoption

#### Objective 1:

Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Identify all businesses that should be registered DABs in the municipality, using yellow pages, local newspapers (or similar, including online sites) identify businesses selling pets / pet products / services in the municipality. Follow up to determine whether they are and should be registered with Council.	Ongoing	Compare number of registered DABs before and after activity
Distribute Animal Welfare Victoria fact sheets regarding changes to the definition of domestic animal businesses	Ongoing	Number of Animal Welfare Victoria fact sheets provided to registered DABs  Animal Welfare Victoria fact sheets placed on Council's website.
Educate the public on the legislative compliance requirements pertaining to DABs and the registration process	Ongoing	Information available on website

**Objective 2:**

Annually inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Check local newspapers and online platforms to ensure domestic animal business registration	Ongoing	Non-compliance detected and investigated

**Objective 3:**

Ensure 100% compliance with registration and mandatory codes of practice for all domestic animal businesses each year.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Investigate and act upon public complaints about DABs	Ongoing	Number of complaints received  All complaints investigated, required notices issued and DAB compliant



## 9. Other matters

DAA Section 68A(2)(e) Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary.

### Our current data

- 60% of residents surveyed are aware of Council's animal management service;

#### ***Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (POCTA) Legislation***

*The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA)* allows for the authorisation of local government officers, who are employees of Council and authorised under Section 72 of the Act.

Council officers who are authorised under *POCTA* have the powers to investigate cruelty, seize and dispose of animals, destroy suffering animals, deal with abandoned or distressed animals and prosecute cruelty offences.

Kingston AMOs are all authorised under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and actively investigate all reported animal cruelty matters. Assistance is also provided to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) in their investigations of alleged cruelty.

Animals in emergencies – heat wave, other – AMOs provide assistance to our community during emergencies and periods of community need. Provide AMO assistance to State when required during emergencies such as bushfire recovery.

Community consultation – liaise with key stakeholders regarding animal management issues including access to open spaces, control of domestic animals, canvassing on proposed Council Orders.

In-house Prosecutions team dedicated to ensuring statutory obligations met, quality investigation briefs and cases managed efficiently and actively prosecuted in the relevant courts.

### Animal emergency after hours service

Council provides an after-hours animal emergency service. This is currently contracted to Melbourne Pet Ambulance. This service will attend any after-hours calls for collection of contained dogs, serious dog attacks and other animal emergencies such as injured animals in public places.

The transport vehicle is equipped with air conditioning, heating, ICU oxygen cage for cardiac patients, oxygen, monitoring equipment, a stretcher for large immobile pets or carriers for smaller pets.

The Melbourne Pet Ambulance service can be contacted for after-hours animal emergencies. The ambulance operates Monday to Friday 5pm to 6am as well as 24 hours on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.

### Animal pound service

The Lost Dogs' Home Cranbourne is currently Council's animal pound service provider.

They are responsible for the holding and release of all impounded animals and are required to be compliant with all relevant DAA legislation and the Code of Practice for the Operation of Shelters and Pounds.

The pound is open to the public during the following times:

- Monday – Friday 10:00am – 6:00pm
- Saturday 9:00am – 12:30pm
- Sunday 9:00am – 12:30pm

Closed on public holidays

## Our current Council policies and procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Kingston Heatwave Policy – Animals in Heat Waves

Kingston Municipal Emergency Management Plan

## Our current educationn / promotion activities

- Promote RPO and animal welfare
- Promote services provided by Council animal management service and officers
- Continue to seek opportunities to incorporate animal management into emergency planning;
- Provide advice/brochures/media releases on what to consider for pets in an emergency – include their needs as part of your emergency planning, e.g. food, water, bowls, bedding, cage, medication, registration and microchipping to help reunite pets with their owners after emergencies, external identification – e.g. collar with registration tag;
- Use Council's social media to advise residents of fireworks approved in the municipality to minimise risk to animals
- Place information on Council's social media to advise residents about keeping pets in cars on hot days
- Liaise with local media to report outcome of Council prosecution of cruelty offences
- Support community programs to educate the future generation of dog owners and children, in responsible pet ownership; and
- Educational information is available on Council's web site promoting responsible pet ownership and prevention of cruelty to animals.

For further information about animals in emergencies and the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan, see:

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/pets-and-emergencies>

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-action-plan>

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## 9. Other matters

### Our current compliance activities

- Adopt a pro-active approach to urban animal management and implement the Kingston Enforcement Protocols
- Integrate a broad range of environmental, social and economic considerations when making decisions about urban animal management
- Support different management strategies including education, incentives and enforcement
- Involve community groups in relevant review processes regarding animal management
- Work closely with neighbouring councils, other levels of government, key stakeholders and all sectors of the local community for urban animal management
- Commit to monitoring, review and continual improvement
- Collect data and report on actions for urban animal management
- Commit to short-term and long-term actions for the benefit of generations now and in the future
- When necessary take appropriate legal action by prosecuting offenders to encourage compliance within the community for serious offences and where other means of education have not achieved compliance
- Administration of briefs of evidence to ensure statutory compliance and minimise identified risks
- Established review panel of senior officers reviews all major case investigations to formally determine appropriate education and enforcement action
- Develop a contact list regarding animal emergency planning – Council contacts, shelters, animal welfare organisations and have arrangements with those contacts in the event of emergencies
- Annual inspection of excess animal permit properties, particularly those with permit for large number of animals to ensure welfare needs are being met
- All animal management officers are authorised under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA)*

- Investigate alleged reported animal cruelty matters and enforce provisions under the *POCTA*, Regulations and Codes of Practice; and
- Liaise and work with RSPCA and other authorised *POCTA* Officers in implementing and enforcing *POCTA*, Regulations and Codes of Practice

### Summary

Kingston takes a holistic approach to animal management which is demonstrated in the breadth of services provided. Council regularly consults with the community on animal management issues to clarify their expectations and identify trends.

Not only does Council provide all required services in the education and enforcement of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* we also promote animal welfare (prevention of cruelty), and operate an in-house prosecutions team. Council's aim is to build upon our current expertise and services to ensure continued improved statutory compliance, reduced nuisances and promote the benefits of animal ownership.

## Our plans

- Improved investigation procedures leading to successful resolutions and/or prosecutions
- Maintain community satisfaction and respond to expectations raised by the community
- Continue to seek opportunities to incorporate animals in emergency planning and management

### Objective 1:

Continue to educate the community on responsible pet ownership and benefits of pet ownership, aimed at community harmony and reduced nuisances.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Provide web links to <i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA)</i> information, codes (dog and cat private keeping, etc), brochures, etc, via Council's website	Ongoing	Links available on website
Promote the role of Council Animal Management Officers (Authorised Officers) through web site, education programs, pet expo and media	Ongoing	Information on website articles on social media Number of media articles

### Objective 2:

Improve procedures for investigations and prosecutions to ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and community expectations.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Undertake consultation with our key stakeholders to capture the communities needs and expectations	Ongoing	Results analysed and actions identified and considered and incorporated into business plans (i.e. Council Report)

### Objective 3:

Promote emergency planning to ensure the welfare of animals in emergencies.

ACTIVITY	WHEN	EVALUATION
Undertake consultation with our key stakeholders to capture the community's needs and expectations	Ongoing	Item considered by Kingston MEMPC (Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee)
Discuss emergency animal welfare plans and Council policy for evacuation/relief centres with MEMO (Municipal Emergency Management Officer) and MRM (Municipal Recovery Manager)	Ongoing	Item considered by Kingston MEMPC
Assist with providing shelter/housing for animals involved in an emergency incident where accommodation cannot be provided by family/friends	Annually	Number of requests and successful placement

# 10.

## Annual review of plan and annual reporting

DAA Section 68A(3) Every Council must -

- a. review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan
- b. provide the Secretary Agriculture Victoria with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan
- c. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

From a local perspective this plan calls for outcome based performance measurement to be incorporated routinely into all activities so information is readily available for future decision making.

### Review cycle / date for this plan

The Domestic Animal Management Action Plan adopts the adaptive management cycle of Plan - Do - Monitor - Evaluate, as shown diagrammatically below.

All activities contained in the Domestic Animal Management Plan contribute to strategies and outcomes in Council's Strategic Plan.

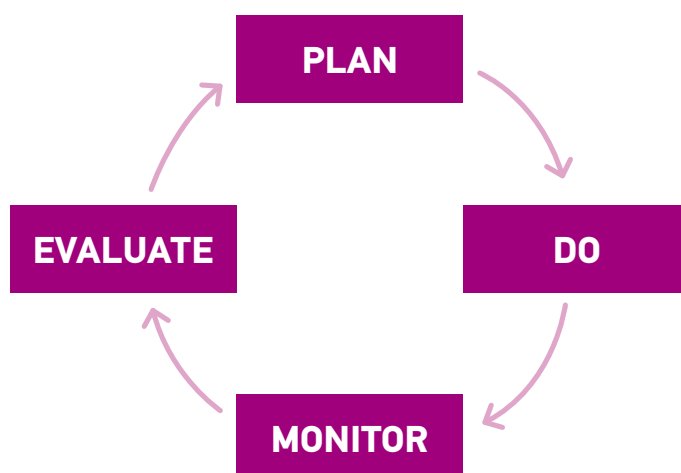
Actions contained in this Plan cover a four year period. Minor periodical reviews of the plan and actions will be undertaken in June/July each year and documented. A comprehensive review of this Plan will be undertaken in 2025. This timeline will ensure evaluation has occurred prior to Council's business planning sessions and reporting timeframes.

For each objective, there are two levels of evaluation that will be considered:

- 1) Each activity will be evaluated to determine if the KPI was achieved
- 2) If the KPI was achieved was it achieved by carrying out the planned activities or by other means

Council will consider if activities will be continued or modified to ensure effective animal management services and the needs of the community are being met. Discussions will be held internally as part of the annual business planning process.

***The evaluation template to be used can be found in Attachment 2.***











# Attachment 1

## 1.1 Authorised officer training register

The below lists training and qualifications undertaken by the Local Law Officers

- Advanced Diploma of Justice
- Local Government Regulatory Officer Training
- Identify and Respond to Animal Behaviour (4 day course)
- Cert IV Animal Control & Regulation
- Cert IV Local Government Compliance
- Cert IV Government Investigations
- Veterinary Nursing Certificate
- Cert IV in Animal Handling
- Privacy information session
- Conflict Resolution
- Statement Taking Course
- Prosecutions Course
- Investigations & Case Management Course
- Working With Children Check
- Childrens Crossing Course
- Investigation & Enforcement Workshop
- Time Management
- PEACE Training (Client Interaction and Defensive Tactics)
- Provide First Aid
- Small Animal First Aid
- MFPO Training
- Project Management
- OHS Manual Lifting/Handling
- Hazard Assessment
- OHS 5 day training
- Defensive Driver training
- Enforcement Officer Safety Workshop
- Advanced Safe Dog Handling, Apprehension and Bite Prevention
- Canine Anatomy and Identification Training
- Asbestos Awareness Training
- White Card (Work Safely in the Construction Industry)



# Attachment 2

## 2.1 Example of evaluation template of objective

ACTIVITY (TASKS USED TO REACH OBJECTIVE)	RESPONSIBLE PERSON:	EVALUATION / ACTIVITY TO BE COMPLETED 2022	EVALUATION / ACTIVITY TO BE COMPLETED 2024	EVALUATION / ACTIVITY TO BE COMPLETED 2021 - 2025





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