



Domestic Animal Management Plan

2013 - 2017



Adopted 18 September 2013

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1. Introduction and Purpose of the Plan

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act* (1994), every Council in Victoria must prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Environmental and Primary Industries.

The purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (the Plan) is to provide the Hindmarsh Shire Council with a strategic framework that delivers policy direction and action plans for animal management over the next four years.

The preparation of the Plan follows a recent amendment to the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994 (DAA)* which now requires all Victorian councils to have a four year plan in place for the management of dogs and cats within their area.

The Plan integrates the developing expertise in domestic animal management with Council's own investigations to produce a program of action to be undertaken over the next four years (2013 – 2017). Relevant issues include those prescribed under relevant legislation and local laws as well as the generally understood notion of responsible pet ownership.

The Plan is confined to Council's management of dogs and cats under the DAA.



1.1 Requirements for the Domestic Animal Management Plan

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

68A Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

- (1) Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare at 4 year intervals a domestic animal management plan.
- (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 cat; 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 amendment to the plan; and
 - (c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report

1.2 Structure of the Plan

The overarching objectives of this Plan will be to:

1. Increase the enjoyment people receive from their pets
2. Reduce the incidence of problems within the community related to pets being a nuisance or causing injury to people or other animals
3. Contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of pets

These objectives will be achieved through this Plan by:

1. Providing the community, with a clear understanding of Council's expectations of pet owners
2. Reinforcing to the community Council's commitment to improving standards associated with pet ownership and
3. Clearly describing to the community the role and actions Council will take to improve the level of responsible pet ownership throughout Hindmarsh Shire Council

Outcomes that will contribute to achieving the above objectives include:

1. Increasing the skills and resources available to Council officers
2. Increasing dog and cat registration levels
3. Decreasing the incidence of dogs at large and nuisance behaviour
4. Actively managing dangerous, restricted breed and menacing dogs
5. Decreasing the incidence of dog attacks
6. Decreasing euthanasia rates and impacts associated with overpopulation in cats
7. Ensuring the operation of Domestic Animal Businesses dealing with domestic animals are in accordance with the applicable laws and Codes of Practice



1.3 Development of the Plan

In September 2007, a group of 10 Councils engaged Harlock Jackson Pty Ltd (animal management consultants) to prepare a single Domestic Animal Management Plan that could then be customised by each Council in the group. The group have many common issues that justified a regional approach. The Councils were:

- Buloke Shire Council
- Gannawarra Council
- Hepburn Shire Council
- Hindmarsh Shire Council
- Horsham Rural City Council
- Pyrenees Shire Council
- Mount Alexander Shire Council
- Northern Grampians Shire Council
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Yarriambiack Shire Council

The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013 – 2017 has been developed following the initial work in 2007 and updates the objectives Council considers more relevant for the period of the Plan.

Local Laws Officers of the Councils listed above have formed the Animal Liaison Group which will provide a forum to discuss animal management issues and encourage networking to improve the transfer of information and knowledge

1.4 Statement of the Plan

1.4.1 Our GOALS for animal management are:

- To protect people and animals (pets, livestock, wildlife) from attack by dogs and cats;
- To create an environment where people and pets can peacefully co-exist within the community;
- To promote the welfare of companion animals;
- To inform and educate the community about the needs of companion animals and promote responsible pet ownership.

1.4.2 KEY ISSUES for the delivery of animal management services in the Shire of Hindmarsh are:

- High number of unregistered dogs and cats
- Dogs wandering at large and attacks on livestock
- Cats – both feral and nuisance cats
- Limited resources compared to metropolitan councils.
- The large size of the Shire compared to more populated councils.

1.4.3 The Plan is based on the following priorities or STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS for the delivery of Council's animal management services:

- Animal Management Officer training and development
- Responsible pet ownership
- Compliance and enforcement
- Registration and Identification
- Confinement of dogs and cats
- Prevention of animal attacks and risk to the community
- Animal welfare
- Domestic animal businesses e.g. commercial seller/breeder



2. Animal Management at the Hindmarsh Shire Council

2.1 A Snapshot

Hindmarsh Shire is located in the Wimmera and covers an area of 7,527 square kilometres. The shire shares its boundaries with West Wimmera Shire Council, Yarriambiack Shire Council, Horsham Rural City Council and Mildura Rural City Council.

Some key features of the Shire are Lake Hindmarsh, Lake Albacutya, Little Desert National Park, Big Desert National Park and the Wimmera River.

The Shire comprises 7,500 square kilometres, a population of 5,800 with 80% living in the towns of Dimboola, Jeparit, Nhill and Rainbow. There are 5,050 rateable properties for 2013/14.

In 2011/12 2,032 animals were registered – 1,455 dogs and 577 cats
In 2012/13 1,770 animals were registered – 1,289 dogs and 481 cats

2.2 The Domestic Animals Act 1994

Council is responsible for implementing the Act, which has been in operation now for well over a decade. It replaced the former Dog Act. Its introduction heralded a new era in animal control with cats included for the first time in animal control, tougher penalties for dangerous dogs, clearer nuisance provisions and a greater emphasis on prevention.

The purpose of the DAA is to promote animal welfare, the responsible ownership of dogs and cats and the protection of the environment by providing for:

- A scheme to protect the community and the environment from feral and nuisance dogs and cats;
- A registration and identification scheme for dogs and cats which recognises and promotes responsible ownership;
- The identification and control of dangerous dogs;
- A registration scheme for domestic animal businesses which promotes the maintenance of standards of those businesses;
- Matters related to the boarding of dogs and cats;
- Payments to the Treasurer from fees received by Councils under this Act; and
- Other related matters.

A recent amendment to the Act saw the introduction of a requirement for all councils to develop and implement four year animal management plans for dealing with all matters relating to dog and cat management issues.

3. Local Laws Structure

3.1 Staffing and Organisational Structure

Council currently has one (full time equivalent) animal management officer.
Council operates its own out of hours and animal management facility.

3.2 Training of Authorised Officers

Local Laws Officers undertake training to ensure they comply with all requirements as per their position description.

Council also ensures that staff involved in animal management has the knowledge and skills necessary to safely and effectively carry out their work.

3.3 Role of Other Stakeholders

The **Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI)** has a range of responsibilities associated with the administration and enforcement of provisions of the Act. It also undertakes or facilitates research and educational programs relating to dog and cat management.

Veterinarians are an important point of contact especially in a pet's early years. They have an important role to play in maintaining the health of pets and educating pet owners. The Shire has one veterinarian visit in Nhill on Friday each week from Warracknabeal.

Domestic Animal Businesses including breeders, veterinary behaviourists, private dog trainers, dog walkers, kennels and catteries and pet shops are important stakeholders in providing services to dog owners that may assist them to be responsible pet owners. Council has one registered Domestic Animal Business (the shire pound).

The **local media** can assist Council with media coverage to promote responsible pet ownership.

Neighbouring councils have common animal management interests and issues. Council will consider ways of extending the responsible pet ownership message more efficiently and effectively through increased dialogue and collaboration.

Pet owners themselves have a role to play in

- choosing an appropriate pet to suit their lifestyle
- training and socialising their dog, and
- adhering to Council requirements.

4. Strategic Directions

4.1 Training and Development

Objective

Ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work.

Discussion

All Local Laws Officers to receive ongoing on the job training.

All Local Laws Officers will be encouraged to have or attain the Certificate IV in Animal Control and Welfare.

Council will encourage officers to undergo further study to obtain higher qualifications in animal management and welfare.

Officers will attend seminars and information sessions arranged by the Bureau of Animal Welfare.

Officers will attend training courses in handling dangerous animals, safe handling of firearms and if possible to be accredited to microchip animals.

The annual review of this Plan will include a skills audit to identify any gaps in the skills available within the animal management team.

Council will ensure that annual performance reviews include a review of the staff members' skills and training undertaken in the last year.

Council will encourage the Animal Liaison Group to operate as an information sharing network.

4.2 Administration

Objective

To provide the necessary administrative arrangements to implement actions identified in the Action Plan.

Discussion

Information is readily available on responsible pet ownership on Council's website and at Customer Service Offices.

4.3 Registration and Identification

Objective

Endeavour to have all dogs and cats, identified and registered

Discussion

Estimates suggest that in 2012/2013 between 40% - 60% of dogs in Hindmarsh Shire Council are not registered and in the order of 50% - 70% of cats are not registered.

Cat registration rates are well below that of dog registrations and feral cats are frequently seized and euthanised.

Registration and identification are considered to be a core task for animal management. It is the basis for distinguishing between owned and unowned animals, returning lost pets to their owners, identifying offending animals etc.

From 1st May 2007, all newly registered dogs and cats now need to be microchipped before they can be registered. Council recognises that this is difficult in isolated areas with few veterinarians.

Hindmarsh Shire Council's current identification and registration activities include:

1. Publishing regular articles in Council's community newsletter promoting the need for residents to register their pet(s) and to keep pet(s) contained to their property.



2. Increased application of Penalty Infringement Notices to owners of unregistered dogs and cats.
3. Providing a 'free ride home' for registered dogs found wandering and not causing a nuisance provided it is not a repeat offence or an ongoing concern.
4. Conducting inspection audits to identify where unregistered pets are located
5. Issue 'Pet registration warning notices' to residents identified as owning unregistered pets as a result of routine operations.

Registration and identification of pets are fundamental elements of responsible pet ownership and central to Council services. The ability to accurately identify a pet contributes to the prompt return of lost or wandering pets and ensures owners are held accountable for damage or offences involving their pets.

Registration remains a priority and Council will continue to reward owners of registered pets, via the free ride strategy, while applying various other strategies to encourage the registration of unregistered pets.

4.4 Encouraging responsible pet ownership

Objective

Implement appropriate community education programs in responsible pet ownership.

Discussion

The DEPI operates education programs and activities on a state-wide basis

Each primary school in Victoria is entitled to a free annual visit from a trained Pet Educator. They educate the children on issues such as choosing an appropriate pet for the family, pet health and welfare and the importance of registration. Particular attention is also given to recognizing the warning signs given by dogs, the correct way to approach a dog and what to do if approached by an aggressive dog.

Council will encourage all schools in the Shire to take up this opportunity annually.

Council's community education programs via the supply of information on Council's website, brochures and DVDs in responsible pet ownership will focus on the following priorities:

- Registration and microchipping of dogs and cats;
- Desexing of dogs and cats; and
- Confinement of dogs and cats

Council will continue to undertake regular doorknocks to identify unregistered dogs and cats.

Council will hold quarterly microchipping days on a rotational basis throughout the Shire and seek to obtain as much publicity as possible both before and after the event as a way to extend the message.

Council will ensure the DEPI's brochures on responsible pet ownership are appropriately distributed.

The Animal Management Liaison Group will consider regional approaches to education in responsible pet ownership.

4.5 Confinement of dogs and cats

Objective

Ensure dogs are confined to their property
Encourage cats to be confined to their property

Discussion

Confinement of dogs and cats is a strategic priority of the Plan. Animals wandering at large consume significant resources and places at risk the safety of the pet, humans and other animals.

For dogs, this is easier in towns than rural areas where properties generally have boundary fences. Confinement of cats means confinement indoors or confinement to an external cat run.

Currently Council Local Law requires the confinement of cats between 9pm and 6am. This is considered to need a change to confinement between dawn and dusk. This will require a formal change to Local Laws. Confinement means that cats are suitably locked up inside the house or housed in a suitable cat run during these times of the curfew.

Council will ensure there is information available on the importance of animal confinement at Council Customer Centres and other key locations.



Desexed animals are less likely to wander, so Council will continue to encourage people to have their pet desexed.

Council will be more firm with owners of wandering animals

4.6 The welfare of pets

Objectives

Reduce the number of unwanted litters.

Reduce the number of stray, lost and abandoned animals

Increase the number of returned animals

Increase the number of rehomed animals

Ensure wounded and lost animals are treated humanely

Encourage pet owners to attend to their pet's basic needs and provide them with a quality home environment

Discussion

The number of animals impounded every year remains high. Key strategies to reduce the number of animals being impounded are:

- Desexing
- Identification and registration
- Confinement
- Obedience training (an obedient dog is less likely to be abandoned)
- Rehoming of lost and unwanted animals

Pet owners also need to ensure they meet their pet's basic needs and welfare.

Council will encourage and educate the community in responsible pet ownership and animal welfare.

4.7 Nuisance Animals

Objective

1. Reduce documented cat nuisance complaints by 10% per year.
2. Reduce documented dog nuisance complaints by 10% per year.

Discussion

Council's response to barking complaints is to encourage the complainant to discuss the problem with their neighbour. If this course of action fails, Council will inform the dog owner of the problem and provide them an opportunity to rectify it. Council employs investigation, negotiation, communication and education strategies to resolve most nuisance issues. If legal action is identified as being required, it is necessary for the complainant to become involved and provide much of the evidence.

Council provides a dog seizure and impoundment service to help prevent dogs found at large from being harmed or becoming a nuisance. Registered dogs found at large are returned to their owners who are informed of their obligation to keep their dog contained. Unregistered dogs at large are delivered to the pound and penalties applied.

Council has for many years made up to ten cat traps available for hire by residents. These traps are continually out for hire with on-going demand reflected in a waiting list of residents seeking to access the cat trapping program in order to alleviate their cat related problem.

Nuisance complaints received by Council are generally related to barking, dogs at large, dog attacks and feral cats.

The need to expand the cat trap program has been identified by Council. Education and information programs will be expanded to encourage residents to become more responsible pet owners. Penalty infringement notices will continue to be utilised where appropriate to discourage irresponsible pet ownership.

4.8 Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Objective

1. Identify and register any declared dogs in the municipality.
2. Inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are complying with legislated requirements.

Discussion

Two menacing dogs are registered in the Hindmarsh Shire Council.

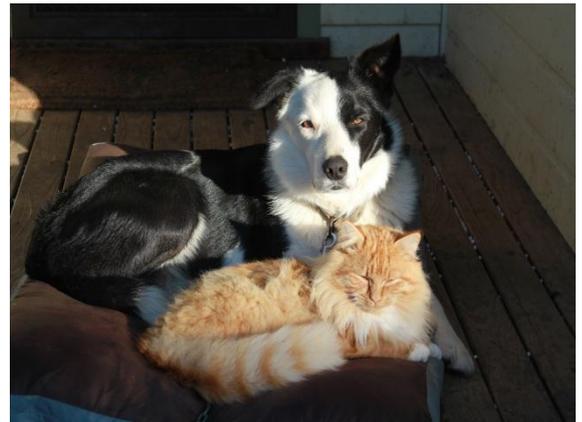
Very few dogs are declared in Hindmarsh Shire Council as owners of dogs that are involved in serious attacks are encouraged to surrender their dog to council to be euthanised if the attack is proven.

Council's approach will continue to involve removing dangerous or restricted breed dogs with consent of owners from within the community. In any situation where an owner refuses to surrender their dog, Council will investigate the matter with a view to prosecute.

Council will continue to respond to reports of Restricted Breed Dogs and ensure those that are not currently registered are euthanised in accordance with legislation.

Minimal causes of Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs have been experienced in Hindmarsh Shire Council. This is due in part to Council's approach to serious dog attack incidents and the preference to have 'dogs that attack', euthanised rather than declared dangerous.

Council's strategy in this regard will continue to limit the declaration of dangerous dogs by pursuing the euthanasiation of dogs involved in serious attacks or prosecution in the event that the dog is not surrendered for euthanasiation.



4.9 Prevention of Animal Attacks and Risk to the Community

Objective

Reduce the incidence and severity of attacks by dogs and cats on people, livestock, pets and wildlife

Discussion

Whilst the number of dog attacks is not high in the Hindmarsh Shire, managing them is a critical animal management role.

There is also increasing concern about the impact of cats on wildlife.

All dogs are required to be confined to their property. This is a requirement under the Act and Council will continue to place importance on the need for dogs to be confined.

Council will also continue to place importance on the need for cats to be confined.

Council will encourage people to have their dogs and cats de-sexed. This can help to reduce aggressive tendencies.

Council believes the State Government's state-wide schools visitation program is an excellent means for educating children in how to behave around dogs.

Council currently investigates reported dog attacks and where a serious attack has been substantiated, endeavours to have the dog(s) responsibly euthanised. If an owner refuses to surrender a dog for euthanasiation, Council will investigate the matter with intention of prosecuting, provided there is adequate evidence to support a successful prosecution. Infringements are issued for minor attacks and articles are routinely published in local media alerting residents to the potential consequences of allowing their dog to wander at large.

Dog attacks on livestock and pets occur frequently in Hindmarsh Shire Council. Attacks on animals dominate Council dog attack statistics and consequently, preventing attacks on livestock and pets is the primary focus on Council's dog attack prevention program. Core to preventing dog attacks in Hindmarsh Shire Council is the necessity for residents to keep their dogs securely confined to their premises. Subsequently, Council's dog attack prevention program will involve education about the need to confine dogs, issuing infringements for 'dogs at large' and minor attack, euthanising dogs found to have committed a serious attack and publicising the frequency of attacks, the number of dogs euthanised and reporting successful prosecutions.

4.10 Overpopulation and High Euthanasia

Objective

1. Achieve a 10% reduction annually in the number of cats euthanized.
2. Increase reclaim and rehoming rates for cats by 10% annually.
3. Reduce euthanasia rates for dogs to less than 10% annually.

Discussion

2011 data indicates there are problems related to overpopulation of cats in Hindmarsh Shire Council with 75% of cats delivered to the pound being euthanised.

By contrast, euthanasia rates amongst dogs delivered to the pound is 10%. While there is still room for improvement in dog euthanasia rates, the most significant issue remains unacceptable high cat euthanasia rates.

1. Cats that are registered are rarely impounded
2. 99% of cats impounded are not registered
3. There is a significant number of cats that are either:
 - (i) Feral or;
 - (ii) Semi domesticated and not being collected by those who feed the local stray cat

Council continues to make cat traps available to the community in an effort to alleviate problems associated with stray and feral cats.

There is no data to indicate cats that are owned and registered with Council are causing nuisance problems, nor are they contributing significantly to the cat overpopulation problem as nearly all registered cats are de-sexed. The data on registered dogs also indicates there is no discernible dog overpopulation problem in Hindmarsh Shire Council. However there is a view that there may be a high number of unregistered dogs in the shire.

Overpopulation problems lie squarely with an abundance of stray/semi owned cats and feral cats.

Council will endeavour to apply a three pronged strategy aimed at alleviating this problem.

1. Introduce a trial Desexing scheme by connecting residents to third parties offering reduced costs, which will assist residents to take responsibility for their cat.
2. Enhanced cat trapping program to assist residents to remove stray and feral cats from the breeding pool.
3. Encourage pet owners through community education to microchip, register and de-sex their cats.
4. Increase the number of cat traps available for hire

4.11 Domestic Animal Businesses

Objective

Work in partnership with domestic animal businesses to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice.

Discussion

There are approved Codes of Practice for the operation of breeding and rearing establishments, boarding establishments, and shelters and pounds.

Council should ensure each establishment complies with the relevant Code Practice by conducting regular audits.

4.12 Annual Review and Reporting

Objective

To capture and manage data to better support reporting of outcomes resulting from the implementation of this Plan.

To capture data that will improve the Capacity for Council to plan for domestic animal management in future.



Discussion

Performance against the objectives and targets specified in this Plan will be monitored and evaluated by keeping records to measure the success of the Plan.

The outcomes of this Plan will be measured and evaluated annually in order to be reported in the Hindmarsh Shire Council Annual Report to the Auditor General. The Plan itself is scheduled to be reviewed every four years in accordance with the provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act (1994)*.

Current data capture and reporting processes need improvement. While a significant amount of animal management related work is being undertaken in Hindmarsh Shire Council, there are problems capturing data relevant to these activities.

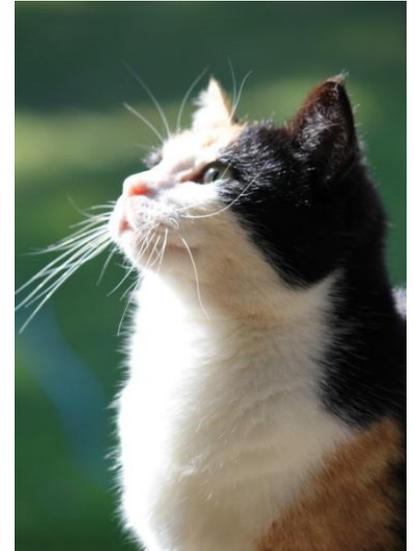
Improved data management is an integral component of this Domestic Animal Management Plan and one measurable will be to demonstrate an improvement in the amount of data collected, how it is captured and how and where it is reported.

4.13 Performance Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring the Plan is the process established to ensure the Plan is implemented in accordance with the action plans and recommended timeframes.

Reviewing the Plan is an opportunity to consider performance in implementation of the plans and whether the goals, objectives and action plans are still relevant or whether they need to be updated.



Responsible Officer

The Local Laws Officer will be assigned with responsibility for the successful implementation of the Plan.

Develop a Sound Basis for Recording Data

The current development of Council's procedures for recording animal control data will provide an ongoing accurate and comprehensive basis to assess Council's performance in animal management.

Animal Management Liaison Group

The ten Councils will establish an Animal Management Liaison Group. The group will meet as required to report on and discuss the implementation of each Council's Plan including the sharing of resources. This is a key element in monitoring the implementation of the Plan.

Annual Review

The Plan will be reviewed and amended each year as appropriate. The review will evaluate progress against an agreed set of key performance indicators for the Plan. If the indicators do not show that the strategies of the Plan are being successful, then changes will be considered in light of the latest information available, both for the local context and by way of benchmarking with the success (or otherwise) of similar efforts by other Councils.

If the Plan is amended, Council must provide the Bureau of Animal Welfare with a copy of the amended Plan.

Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators have been identified so Council's performance can be measured and judged. It is recommended that the ten Councils adopt the following KPIs and establish procedures for collecting and collating the data on an on-going basis to enable comparisons and trend analysis:

- Increase in the rate of dog and cat registration
- Increase in the rate of microchipping of dogs and cats
- Increase in the rate of de-sexing of dogs and cats
- Reduction in the number of incidents of dogs and cats found wandering at large.
- Increase in the number of houses doorknocked to identify unregistered dogs and cats
- Reduction in the number of semi-owned and unowned cats
- Reduction in numbers of animal related complaints divided into complaint sub-groups
- Reduction in the number of animals entering Council's pound;
- Increase in return rate of impounded animals



5 Action Plan 2013-2017

Council will implement the following Action Plan over the next 4 years to achieve its goals and objectives. The Action Plan is based on the objectives developed in Section 4.

1. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT			
OBJECTIVE:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work. 			
ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
1.1 Review staff qualifications and	Staff position descriptions include minimum qualifications Cert IV in Animal Control and Welfare	Local Laws HR	June 2014
1.2 Minimum training requirements for Council's animal management staff	Training Plan developed	HR	June 2014
1.3 Conduct an annual skills audit	Audit complete	HR	Annual
1.4 Encourage AMOs to undergo further training and study	Annual performance reviews include review of skills	Management HR	December 2013



ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
1.5 Continue to update and extend officers' skills in dealing with animal management services e.g. diagnosis and treatment of excessive barking, bite avoidance etc.	Staff Performance Reviews include development of staff training plan	Local Laws HR	Ongoing
1.6 Active involvement with Animal Liaison Group	Attendance and contribution to meetings of ALG	Local Laws	Ongoing
2. ADMINISTRATION			
OBJECTIVE: <ul style="list-style-type: none">To provide the necessary administrative arrangements to implement actions.			
2.1 Development of information sheets for residents on what to do with their animals in event of an emergency Responsible pet ownership	Info sheets published and available on website	Local Laws Customer Service	June 2014
2.2 Provide web link to RSPCA website	Web link on Council website	Executive Assistant	June 2014
2.3 Provide web link to Bureau of Animal Welfare website	Web link on Council website	Executive Assistant	June 2014



3. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

OBJECTIVES:

- Endeavour to have all dogs and cats identified and registered.

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
3.1 Prepare and implement an annual plan for doorknocking the community to identify unregistered dogs and cats	Plan prepared Door knock completed	Local Laws	Annual
3.2 Plan one or more annual microchipping days	Plan prepared	Local Laws	Annual
3.3 Hold microchipping days in accordance with annual plan	Microchipping day/s held	Local Laws	Quarterly
3.4 Review Council's microchipping day within 1 month of the last event (appropriateness of publicity, date, venue, results, cost and community satisfaction)	Review completed	Local Laws	6 Monthly
3.5 Consider the merits of having an officer able to microchip animals	Cost/benefit analysis	Local Laws	June 2014
3.6 Use local and community newspapers to promote and advertise registration requirements prior to the renewal period	Newspaper articles published Reduction in non-registered cats and dogs located in municipality	Local Laws	March – April each year



ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
3.7 Continue to publish regular articles locally promoting the need for residents to register their pets and ensure they wear identification tags	Rise in registration of cats and dogs	Local Laws	1 Article per quarter
3.8 Include registration, identification and renewal information on Councils “on hold” messages	On hold messages include information	Customer Service	Review regularly
3.9 Include pet registration forms and fact sheets in “new resident” kits.	Information included in kits	Customer Service	June 2014
3.10 Enable owners to transfer existing registrations from other municipalities to Hindmarsh Shire Council without charge	Dog or cat transfer registrations compared to population increases in Shire	Local Laws	Ongoing
3.11 Provide “free ride home” for registered dogs found wandering and not causing a nuisance	Data collected	Local Laws	Ongoing
3.12 Alert residents to registration date on Twitter, Facebook and Web site	Information provided	Customer Service	April each year
3.13 Provide for a range of registration payment methods including in person by cheque, money or credit card	Take up of range of payments offered Data collected	Customer Service	Ongoing



4. RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

OBJECTIVE:

- Implement appropriate community education programs in responsible pet ownership

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
4.1 Ensure prospective pet owners have access to information on appropriate breed selection and animal management responsibilities	Information provided on Council's website and other promotional material available at Customer Service Offices	Customer Service	June 2015
4.2 Encourage the community to provide their dog with appropriate etiquette/obedience training. Provide links on Council's website and other promotional material	Information provided on Council's website and other promotional material	Customer Service	June 2015
4.3 Prepare material on how to minimise excessive barking problems from developing. Include in website and other promotional material. Prepare a press release for rotational inclusion in local media	Material prepared on minimising excessive barking problems from developing and incorporated into Council provided information	Local Laws	Ongoing
4.4 Encourage all schools in the Shire to participate in the State Government's schools visitation program	Letter to each school in the Shire School Participation	Local Laws	Annual
4.5 Identify any locally provided dog training and puppy preschool programs and include links on Council's website	Information provided on web	Local Laws Customer Service	June 2014



5. CONFINEMENT OF DOGS AND CATS

OBJECTIVE:

- Ensure dogs are confined to their property
- Encourage cats to be confined to their property

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
5.1 Continue to treat incidents of dogs wandering at large as an issue demanding priority attention	Reduction in statistics of dogs wandering at large	Local Laws	Ongoing
5.2 Review the procedure for dealing with dogs that are wandering at large	Review completed	Local Laws	June 2015
5.3 Ensure information is available on the importance of animal confinement and how Desexing animals can help to reduce wandering	Information available	Local Laws Customer Service	June 2014



6. PROMOTING ANIMAL WELFARE

OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce the number of unwanted litters
- Reduce the number of stray, lost and abandoned animals
- Increase the number of returned animals
- Increase the number of rehomed animals
- Ensure wounded and lost animals are treated humanely
- Encourage pet owners to attend to their pet's basic needs and provide them with a quality home environment

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
6.1 Investigate and prepare a report for Council on the issue of mandatory cat and dog Desexing for all current registered animals and new registrations	Report presented to Council	Local Laws	June 2015
6.2 Investigate procedures for dealing with feral or stray cat colonies with a view to reducing unwanted cat populations	Investigation completed Recommendations implemented	Local Laws	June 2016
6.3 Review Council's procedures for dealing with lost and impounded animals	Review completed	Local Laws	June 2015
6.4 Review procedures for dealing with animals entering Council's pound with a view to reducing the numbers of animals that are euthanized. Ensure pets entering shelters are treated humanely	Review completed	Local Laws	June 2015



ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
6.5 Review euthanasia procedures	Operational procedures developed	Local Laws	December 2014
6.6 Develop procedures for the investigation of stray, lost and un-owned or feral cats and implement as necessary	Operational procedures developed	Local Laws	December 2015
6.7 Promote cat cages for hire for property owners to humanely trap cats on their property for handing over to Council or another approved animal shelter	Review completed of Council provided promotional material to ensure this information is provided	Local Laws Customer Service	Ongoing
6.8 Provide information to encourage prospective pet owners to consider obtaining a pet from an approved animal shelter	Review Information Include free initial registration for any animal re-homed by local residents from Council's pound	Local Laws	December 2014



7. NUISANCE ANIMALS			
OBJECTIVE: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduce documented cat and dog nuisance complaints by 10% per year			
ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
7.1 Review all procedures for dealing with complaints made and incidents occurring under the DAA	Review completed Recommendations implemented	Local Laws	December 2015
7.2 Review all animal management laws and orders made under the DAA	Review completed	Local Laws	Ongoing
7.3 Provide information to assist residents using cat traps to do so humanely and to look after the cats welfare	Information available	Local Laws Customer Service	July 2013
7.4 Provide a fact sheet to assist owners to respond to excessive barking by their dog	Factsheet available	Local Laws Customer Service	December 2013
7.5 Maintain a register of all nuisance complaints	Register created Data reported	Local Laws	September 2013
7.6 Ensure council local laws retain the requirements for owners of more than 2 dogs and/or cats to obtain a permit	Increase in permits	- Local Laws	- Ongoing



ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
7.7 Impound all unregistered dogs and cats seized while at large Not to be released until registered	Implement	Local Laws	Ongoing
7.8 Provide a fact sheet to support residents experiencing a nuisance and explain the process for responding to barking complaints	Factsheet available	Local Laws Customer Service	December 2013
7.9 Provide a process for responding to barking noise, at large and trespassing related nuisance complaints	Process developed and available for distribution	Local Laws	June 2014



8. DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

OBJECTIVE:

- Identifying and register any declared dogs in the municipality
- Inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are complying with legislation requirements

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
8.1 Continue to declare dogs as Restricted Breed, Menacing or Dangerous in accordance with legislation	All declared dogs in municipality identified and reported annually	Local Laws	Annually
8.2 Ensure all declared Dangerous dogs are accurately registered on the Victorian Dangerous Dog Registry	All dangerous dogs registered	Local Laws	As required
8.3 Respond to complaints about Menacing, Dangerous dogs or Restricted Breed dogs	Immediate response	Local Laws	Immediately
8.4 Ensure all dangerous dogs are microchipped and registered	All dangerous dogs in municipality microchipped and registered	Local Laws	Ongoing



9. PREVENTION OF ANIMAL ATTACKS AND RISK TO THE COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE:

- Reduce the incidence and severity of attacks by dogs and cats on people, livestock, pets and wildlife

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
9.1 Review procedures for dealing with dogs attacks and harassment complaints	Review completed	Local Laws	December 2014
9.2 Develop a media release on the implications for your dog if it attacks or bites an animal or human	Media release once a year	Local Laws	June 2014
9.3 Ensure Council has one or more officers trained in an appropriate Dog Safe Program	Review completed Recommendations implemented Staff trained	Local Laws	December 2013
9.4 Ensure any dangerous and restricted breed dogs are properly identified and managed by their owners	Conduct annual audit of properties containing dangerous and restricted breed dogs	Local Laws	Annual
9.5 Ensure all dogs declared dangerous by Council are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Register	Annual audit completed	Local Laws	As require
9.6 Raise awareness of the risk of dog attacks in the neighbourhood on other pets, livestock and people by use of published articles	2 Articles Annually in local papers and in each council newsletter	Local Laws	Ongoing



ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
9.7 Distribute fact sheets on dog attacks prevention in “new residents” kit and via Councils Website	Factsheet available	Customer Service	December 2013
9.8 Distribute “We are Family” DVD pack which includes information for family pet ownership to childcare centres and Childcare Nursing Providers services	DVD provided	Local Laws	Ongoing
9.9 Provide residents with information on implications for their dog and themselves if their dog attacks a person or animal	2 Articles Annually in local papers and in each council newsletter	Local Laws	Ongoing
9.10 Maintain a register of dog attacks including breed of dog, details of victim, nature of injuries, date and outcome of council action	Register created	Local Laws	December 2013



10. OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

OBJECTIVE:

- Achieve a 10% reduction annually in the number of cats euthanized
- Increase reclaim and rehoming rates for cats by 10% annually
- Reduce euthanasia rates for dogs to less than 10% annually

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATOR	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
10.1 Promote the benefits of Desexing in local media, in fact sheets and on councils web site	Promotion material available	Customer Service	June 2014
10.2 Provide a subsidised Desexing program for cats	Initiate subsidised Desexing Program Review cost/benefit	Local Laws	June 2014 June 2015
10.3 Investigate reports of backyard breeders to ascertain whether they should be registered as a Domestic Animal Business	Collate data collected	Local Laws	Annually
10.4 Increase number of cat traps available	Ten cat traps available Collect data on numbers of cats trapped	Local Laws	June 2015



11. DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

OBJECTIVE:

- Work in partnership with the Domestic Animal Businesses to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
11.1 Audit all domestic animal businesses	Audit completed	Local Laws	Annual

12. ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORTING

OBJECTIVE:

- To capture and manage data to better support reporting of outcomes resulting from the implementation of this Plan.
- To capture data that will improve the capacity for Council to plan for domestic animal management in future.

ACTION	TASK COMPLETION INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
12.1 Assign responsibility for implementation of the Plan	Local Laws Position description amended	HR	June 2013
12.2 Review and update all data collection methods and procedures	Review conducted Data collected reported	Local Laws	June 2016
12.4 Review the Plan each year and make adjustments as appropriate	Review completed and Plan amended as appropriate	Local Laws	Annual
12.5 Review all Council local laws and orders relating to animal management.	Review completed	Local Laws	June 2016