<table>
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<tr>
<th>DOCUMENT HISTORY</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft DAMP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 June 2017</td>
<td>Anne-Louise Lindner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft DAMP</td>
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1 Introduction

1.1 What is a Domestic Animal Management Plan?

All Victorian Councils are required by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* to prepare and implement a four year Domestic Animal Management Plan (The Plan) to guide decision making in relation to animal management for dogs and cats. The scope of ‘The Plan’ does not include activities for the management of wildlife, horses, livestock, or pest animals.

This four year plan builds on the 2012-2016 plan and provides the framework for the planning, development, and evaluation of animal management services and programs delivered by Macedon Ranges Shire Council and complies with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

The plan must address the following:

- Set out a method for evaluating whether animal control services provided by council are adequate to give effect to the requirements of the Act and regulations
- Outline programs for the training of authorised officers
- Outline programs, services and strategies to:
  - Promote and encourage responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats
    - Ensure that people comply with the Act, regulations and legislation
    - Minimise risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals
    - Address over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats.
    - Encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.
    - Minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
    - Effectively identify all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs and ensure these dogs are kept in compliance with the Act and regulations
- Provide for review of existing orders and Local Laws made under the Act
- Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats.
- Provide for periodic evaluation of the plan
1.2 Why have a plan?
Council recognises that pets play an important role in the day to day lives of many people, and strives to support pet owners and promote the health and social benefits of responsible pet ownership. This is done in conjunction with making sure that our environment and lifestyle is protected from any potential negative impacts of domestic animals.

The aim of the Macedon Ranges Domestic Animal Management Plan is to ensure that people and pets can live harmoniously in our community. The plan recognises and carefully balances the needs of pets, pet owners and those who don’t own pets. The plan is designed to respond strategically to the needs of the community as a whole.

1.3 How does the plan fit with the Council Plan?
Council in consultation with the community, recently developed and adopted the 2017-2027 Council Plan. The Council Plan outlines the key priorities for the next four to ten years and sets out how the council will invest in services and facilities. The plan identifies the following five priorities:

- Promote Health and Wellbeing
- Protect the natural environment
- Improve the built environment
- Enhance the social and economic environment
- Deliver strong and reliable government

The Domestic Animal Management Plan aligns with the broader strategic directions of the council. In particular it seeks to promote health and wellbeing and protect the natural environment.

1.4 Other relevant legislation that guides animal management

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Prevention of Cruelty towards Animals Act
- Domestic Animals Act 1994
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No.10 - 2013
1.5 How does the plan fit with State Policy objectives?

In the development of this plan, careful consideration has been given to strategic priorities and policy objectives of the Victorian State Government. This includes:

- The Domestic Animals (Puppy Farms & Pet Shops) Amendment Bill expected to be re-introduced to Parliament in 2017
- The Victorian Draft Action Plan “Improving the Welfare of Animals in Victoria 2016-2021” including anticipated legislative amendments to animal cruelty and welfare legislation
- Victoria’s 10-year plan “Ending Family Violence and Victoria’s Plan for Change”
2 Our Framework

2.1 Vision for the next four years

In partnership with the community, promote and encourage responsible pet ownership in the Macedon Ranges.

The following Principles will guide our work:

- Recognising the physical, mental and social benefits that pets bring.
  We will develop activities that recognise the importance of pets in our community and support and encourage residents to enjoy the companionship of their pets.

- Balancing the needs of pets, pet owners and those who don’t own pets
  We will consider the different needs of those who own pets and those who don’t and strike a fair balance in activities and actions relating to animal management.

- Protecting the environment from any negative impacts from domestic pets
  We will work to protect our native fauna and flora by reducing the impacts of pets on the natural environment.

- Promoting a high standard of animal welfare
  We will educate and raise awareness in our community about pet owners’ responsibility to ensure a high standard of animal welfare for all animals in their care.

- Working in partnership with the community, including agencies and organisations to enhance and promote responsible pet ownership.
  We will partner with a range of agencies and organisations who want to work with pet owners or deliver services in our community to promote responsible pet ownership.
2.2 Framework diagram

Vision – what we want to see

Guiding Principles – what guides our work

Strategic Directions – pathways we are taking to get to our vision (set by Domestic Animals Act)

Plans – next 4 years

Objectives – what we are trying to achieve

Activities – how we will meet our objectives
3 Our Shire

Macedon Ranges Shire is approximately 60km north-west of Melbourne and covers an area of 1,747 square kilometres. Macedon Ranges Shire is on the land of three traditional owners, the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri peoples.

The Macedon Ranges population is spread across nine towns and a number of smaller settlements. The largest towns are Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey and Woodend. About 35% of people in Macedon Ranges live outside a town boundary in a rural setting. Over the next 20 years, the Macedon Ranges population is expected to increase by approximately 36% to reach 64,654 by 2036. Most of this population growth is projected to occur in the south and south-east of the shire.

The Macedon Ranges Shire is renowned for its rural character, semi-rural lifestyle, landscapes and forests, and unique natural features such as Hanging Rock and Mount Macedon.

As the shire grows and urban areas spread into rural areas, and more people move here to enjoy the beautiful environment, challenges arise for animal management. Community expectation for services and facilities is changing as the population grows. Residents moving into rural areas are not always aware of the impacts that domestic animals can have on wildlife and livestock and those living closer to town want to see more facilities that support residents with pets such as designated dog off lead areas or parks.
4 How we developed this plan

4.1 Review of the previous plan

In developing this plan we started by looking at what had been achieved in the previous plan and what activities had been successful. We also reviewed the types of activities that were included in the previous plan and the objectives that had been set. Of the activities listed in the previous plan, only four activities were not started. Below are some of the activities that were deemed as being successful and assisted in improving responsible pet ownership in the shire.

- Introduction of an initial $10 registration fee for animals adopted from registered animal shelters
- Follow up phone calls of unregistered animals after animal renewal reminder notices were sent led to increased compliance.
- Partnership with wildlife network to educate community on the negative impacts of dogs and cats on wildlife.
- Reduction in number of dog attacks over the four year period.
- Regular articles in Shire Life, community newsletters and local media about responsible pet ownership.
- Additional cat traps purchased to meet demand.
- Emergency Animal Welfare plan and procedures developed and additional equipment purchased to enable support of companion animals at Emergency Relief Centres.

An internal Council reference group has helped to guide the review of the previous plan and develop the new plan.

4.2 Community Consultation

Central to the development of this plan is input from the community. A consultation plan was developed to guide how we would consult with the community on this plan. A range of consultation methods were used including the development of a community survey, an industry survey targeting groups, organisations and businesses with a role in responsible pet ownership, focus groups and one on one meetings were also held with key groups and organisations. The input gathered from
these consultations, along with the requirement to address the strategic directions set by the Domestic Animals Act have informed the development of our objectives and activities. A petition was also presented at the May Ordinary Council meeting from the Friends of Mount Gisborne Nature Reserve requesting that the reserve be designated a “no dogs” reserve. This petition has been considered in the development of activities in the plan.

4.3 What you told us

Throughout the consultation a range of themes emerged and these have been summarised below:

- Protecting wildlife and the environment from the negative impacts of cats
- Desire for dog on and off lead areas
- Desire for Mount Gisborne Reserve to be declared a “no dogs” reserve
- Education – the key to responsible pet ownership
- Concern about dog poo in public places
- Importance of health and wellbeing – benefits of companion animals
- Enforcement – increasing patrols, enforcing existing laws
- Provision of incentives or rewarding responsible pet ownership
- Wandering dogs – dogs not being adequately confined
- Promoting council services more
- Partnering with agencies, groups, organisations

These themes have been incorporated into objectives and activities in the relevant strategic direction, with some themes crossing over into more than one strategic direction.
4.4 The current status – 1 July 2016 – 30 April 2017

Note: full year statistics will be incorporated in the final Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>No. of Registered Dogs</th>
<th>10,807</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of Registered Cats</td>
<td>3118</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of Registered Declared Dangerous and Menacing Dogs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of dogs returned to owner or reclaimed</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of dogs rehoused</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of dogs euthanised</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of cats returned to owner or reclaimed</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of cats rehoused</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of cats euthanised</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>No. of registered Domestic Animal Businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>• Breeding and rearing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>• Pet shops</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>• Training establishment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>• Shelters and pounds</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>• Boarding and establishments</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Animal Management Staffing and Structure

Animal Management is undertaken by the Local Laws Unit at Council as part of the Community Safety Department. Animal Management makes up about 70% of the work undertaken by the unit. There are three Local Laws Officers (Ranger), a Team Leader and a Coordinator in the Unit. All these positions are fulltime. Each Local Laws officer/Ranger is allocated an area or zone in the shire and each officer undertakes jobs associated with animal management in that area.

Council provides an Emergency After hours service where officers will respond to emergency after hours animal issues including lost and found animals and attend to serious safety issues such as threatening dogs and dog attacks.
5 Training of Authorised Officers

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, Section 68A(2)(b) - Outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of Domestic Animals Act 1994 in the Council’s municipal district.

5.1 Current Situation

Due to the size of the shire, each officer is allocated an area which incorporates both rural and urban areas. Officers are required to have sound understanding and knowledge of a range of Acts and laws including Council’s General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No.10 and apply this knowledge to various situations. Apart from being able to administer and enforce these regulations, officers need to be able to communicate with all members of the community, diffuse difficult situations, safely handle animals, assess animal welfare and perform numerous other tasks. A variety of training is offered and provided to all officers to ensure they are equipped to respond to the demands of their roles.

5.2 Current and Ongoing Training Activities

Macedon Ranges Shire Council’s current officer training and future development activities are developed in consultation with staff and designed to ensure all officers have the necessary training and qualifications to undertake their role.

Training is provided in a variety of formats and is identified in each officer’s Annual Staff Development Plan. Training covers various areas including industry based training such as attending DEDJTR/Agriculture Victoria forums and workshops, Occupational Health and Safety training such as First Aid and CPR and corporate training including conflict of interest training and bullying and harassment.

Council is committed to providing training for officers for new and emerging areas such as family violence.
5.3 Our Plans

**Objective:** Ensure Local Laws officers have the skills necessary to support the community and effectively perform their regulatory role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide updated training to Local Laws officers in application of the <em>Domestic Animals Act 1994</em> and the <em>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986.</em></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Ongoing training for continuous improvement in line with legislative changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate animal related webinar training into development plans for Local Laws officers to continually update their industry knowledge</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>A requirement for officers to complete an agreed animal related webinar will be included in annual development plans as they are drafted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure all Local Laws staff attend Mental Health First Aid Training or undertake a refresher course.</td>
<td>2018 and ongoing</td>
<td>Training completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF) Training or similar for all Local Laws staff to create awareness about family violence.</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Training completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure all Local Laws staff complete Elder Abuse Prevention training to create awareness of this issue</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Training completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 Registration and Identification

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, Section 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)(ii),(d),(f)

6.1 Current Situation

Council’s priority is to ensure any lost or wandering dog or cat is able to be returned quickly to their owner and registration and microchipping is essential in enabling this to occur. A quick return of a pet reduces the stress on the owner, the pet and also prevents the animal from becoming a nuisance. Generally there is a high compliance rate of pet owners registering their dogs in the shire. This is not the case for cat owners, with owners not being aware of the requirement to register their cat or believing they do not need to register their cat as it stays indoors. Feedback from both the community and external stakeholders supports the identified need for incentives and improved accessibility to increase registration.

6.2 Registration History

Data for the number of dog and cat registrations for the last four years.
Council has a 24/48hr holding facility within the municipality for any dogs who are not immediately able to be re-united with their owner and uses the Lost Dogs Home for any dogs who are not claimed within this timeframe. Council aims to return as many dogs as possible in the field without these animals becoming impounded. Council uses the Woodend Veterinary Centre as its cat pound and shelter.

Council provides an after-hours service for lost and found animals and works with community members to re-unite animals with their owners after hours.
6.3 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

6.3.1 Local Law:

General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No. 10 of 2013 – Division 3 Animal Control – Clause 42 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.

6.3.2 Council Policies and Procedures

- Annual registration renewal and reminder notices including the setting of fees.
- Legislative requirement for registration of dogs and cats at age of three months.

6.4 Current Education and Promotion Activities

- Promotion of registration requirements through various communication methods including Shire Life newsletter, local papers, community newsletters, council’s website and social media channels
- Mailing out of animal registration renewal and reminder notices each year to currently registered animals, follow up phone calls and property visits.
- Involvement in community events such as Paws in the Park – providing registration information and advice.
- Reduced registration incentive for owners who purchase dogs and cats from registered animal shelters.
- Information in new resident’s kits
- Animal renewal of registrations and payments available on line

6.5 Current Compliance Activities

- Requiring unregistered impounded animals to be microchipped and registered prior to release.
- Investigating complaints
- Issuing notices and/or infringements for animals found unregistered.
- Prosecuting owners of unregistered animals where infringements remain unpaid and/or animals remain unregistered.
- After hours animal emergency service.
6.6 Summary
Macedon Ranges Shire Council’s priority is to be able to return lost pets to their owners as quickly as possible. Council aims to increase the number of animals registered across the shire, with a particular emphasis on increasing the number of cats registered. Council will be working with key partners to make registration of dogs and cats as easy as possible and considering incentives to encourage registration.

6.7 Our Plans

Objective: Develop strategies in partnership with other agencies and organisations to increase dog and cat registration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand Council’s online capabilities for pet owners to obtain new dog and cat registration without the need to visit Council offices</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Digital systems are implemented allowing owners to purchase new animal registrations and renew existing animal registrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an education campaign about the benefits of pet registration and identification</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Campaign developed and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop 84Y agreements with partner agencies to expand community accessibility to animal registration services (An 84Y agreement is an agreement between council and a service provider to provide registration, care and re-homing for animals on council’s behalf)</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Agreed partnerships implemented and promoted to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce a first year free registration initiative for de-sexed cats</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>New registration fee structure introduced in FY2018/19 budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>When</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand the reduced registration fee initiative for adopted animals to</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>New registration fee structure introduced in FY2019/20 budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>include those adopted from a community foster care network (e.g. rescue)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore incentive based registration initiatives with dog training</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Develop and implement a registration linked initiative to encourage dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partner agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td>obedience training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7 Nuisance

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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)

7.1 Current situation

The Domestic Animals Act 1994, regulates both dog and cat nuisances relating to noise, trespassing and wandering animals. The Macedon Ranges Shire’s Local Law also has provisions that control animal nuisances such as limiting the number of cats and dogs that can reside on any one property, how any additional animals must be housed and the requirement for dog walkers to pick up their dog’s litter when in public places.

Nuisance issues from dogs and cats are increasing more as the shire grows and urban areas spread into rural areas. Through the community consultation for this plan it was evident that issues related to wandering dogs and cats are high on the list for residents with significant concern raised about the impacts of wandering domestic pets on wildlife and the environment. The two highest priority issues regarding cats were issues with cats injuring wildlife and unwanted cats on private property. The two highest priority issues regarding dogs were dogs off lead in public places and dog poo not being picked up in public places. There is a strong desire for council to introduce designated on and off lead areas through the introduction of an Order. There is also interest in the community for dogs to be prohibited from key environmental areas such as bushland reserves.

With an emphasis on recognising the physical, mental and social benefits that pets bring it is important to find the right balance in resolving nuisance issues. Education needs to be provided to pet owners to encourage them to be responsible owners and to ensure their pet does not create a nuisance. Education also needs to be provided to those people without pets so they have the tools and information available to help resolve issues.
7.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

7.2.1 Local Law:

General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No. 10 of 2013 – Division 3 Animal Control –

Clause 41 regulates how animals are kept to ensure amenity and prevent nuisance issues from occurring.

Clause 42 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.

Clause 43 Animal Excrement – requires a dog owner to carry a litter device and collect and dispose of any animal excrement when on a road or council land.

7.3 Current Education and Promotion Activities

- Education about dealing with nuisance issues through various communication methods including Shire Life newsletter, local papers, community newsletters, council’s website and social media channels
- Promoting the cat trapping program
- Providing information relating to building cat enclosures;
- Providing advice to owners and recommending they seek advice from professional dog trainers and animal behaviourists about dealing with nuisance issues such as barking.
- Encouraging the de-sexing of cats and dogs to reduce wandering;

### 7.4 Current Compliance Activities

- Investigating nuisance complaints and ensuring minimal timeframes;
- Sending out barking dog formal complaint statements and barking dog logs;
- Issuing notices to comply, notices of objection and infringements where necessary;
- Signage at bushland reserves and some walking paths and recreation reserves requesting dogs be kept on lead.
- Providing cat trapping programs to residents;
- Impounding of wandering dogs.
- Providing dog poo bags in key parks and reserves

### 7.5 Summary

Council aims to reduce nuisance issues in the shire by developing a range of programs, services and initiatives that support those who have pets enjoy the benefits they bring but also support the safety and amenity of all residents.
7.6 Our Plans

**Objective 1:** Reduce the impact of cats on wildlife and the environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase public awareness about the impact of outdoor cats on native wildlife and the environment</td>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>Education campaign developed and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase awareness about Council's cat trap hire program and ensure the trapping program meets community needs</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Education campaign developed and implemented. Hire statistics increased and program implementation reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate opportunities to encourage the community to keep pet cats contained and reduce cats wandering</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Implement two joint initiatives promoting cat containment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate the feasibility of introducing a cat curfew</td>
<td>2020/21</td>
<td>Feasibility study undertaken – consideration will be given to a night curfew, a 24 hours curfew, a broad approach curfew, and area specific curfew</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Objective 2:** Balancing the needs of dog owners and the community to ensure community wellbeing, amenity and safety are enhanced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop an education campaign to reduce the number of wandering dogs and their impacts on livestock, wildlife, and the environment.</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Education campaign developed and implemented. Wandering dog statistics reduced. Patrols increased in selected areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In partnership with the Friends of Mount Gisborne Nature Reserve, introduce a trial of dogs being prohibited within the Mount Gisborne Reserve and evaluate its effectiveness</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Implementation of the trial with evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate the feasibility of introducing an Order that identifies dog on and off lead areas in the Shire.</td>
<td>2019/2020</td>
<td>Feasibility conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the location and number of dog faeces bag dispensers in the shire and develop a process for prioritising future locations.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Dispensers mapped and process developed for future locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop toolkits for dog owners and community members to aid in addressing key nuisance issues such as barking, escaping, and wandering dogs</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>The materials on Council’s website will be reviewed and updated to include information and tools to enable resolution of common nuisance issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 Dog Attacks

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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)

8.1 Current Situation

Minimising the risk of dog attacks is a key priority for council as the safety of all members of the community is paramount. Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the safety of the community in relation to aggressive and inappropriately behaved dogs.

Officers respond to reports relating to dog attacks/rushes and aggressive wandering dogs as a matter of urgency 24 hours a day. Dog attacks are investigated thoroughly and officers are trained to collate all evidence relating to an attack to formulate a brief, which includes obtaining statements, photographs/video evidence, DNA evidence (where required) and vet/medical reports.

Through the active promotion of responsible pet ownership and the reporting of serious dog attacks, especially those that proceed through to prosecution, council has seen a reduction in the number of dog attacks over the last four years. There is growing concern from rural landholders about dog attacks on livestock as well as concern for dog attacks on wildlife.

There is a clear link between dogs that are not adequately secured to the owner’s property and allowed to wander and dog attacks. The majority of attacks occur when a dog is outside its property. Responsible pet ownership is an imperative component when it comes to minimising dog attack related incidents.
8.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

8.2.1 Local Law:

General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No. 10 of 2013 – Division 3 Animal Control – Clause 42 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size

Council Policy in relation to officer response times in the instance of a dog attack

8.3 Current Education and Promotion Activities

- Education about minimising dog attacks through various communication methods including Shire Life newsletter, local papers, community newsletters, council’s website and social media channels
- Providing information at Council offices and to new residents;
- Promoting the effective confinement and control of dogs;
- Promoting puppy/dog socialisation and obedience training;

8.4 Current compliance activities

- Responding to all stray/wandering/unsecure dog reports throughout the Shire;
- After hours response to all reports of dogs attacking or showing aggression;
- Investigating all alleged dog attacks and rushes;
- Ensuring suspected attacking dog/s are effectively secured or seized pending investigation/prosecution outcome;
- Impounding of wandering/unsecure dogs;
- Issuing warnings/infringements for wandering or unsecure dogs
- Recording data of reported dog attacks in the municipality

8.5 Summary

Minimising the risk of dog attacks on people and animals in the shire is a key community safety program.

8.6 Our Plans

Objective: To minimise the incidence of dog attacks in the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actively promote prosecution outcomes for dog attacks to act as a general deterrent</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Implement a reporting mechanism to Council’s communications team to ensure timely and broad communication of prosecution outcomes to the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to pursue formal declarations and/or court prosecutions for dogs involved in serious or repeated instances of rushes or attacks</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Review and revise policies and procedures for determining enforcement action to be taken in cases involving dog rushes and attacks incorporating a risk based approach for declaring dogs as dangerous or menacing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop partnerships with local trainers and behaviourists for early intervention in correcting risky dog</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Develop and implement strategies for referral to appropriate training providers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>When</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>which Local Laws Officers can utilise to support dog owners in addressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>behavioural issues that can lead to attacks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9 Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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)

9.1 Current situation

Council has four declared menacing dogs and six declared dangerous dogs currently registered within the Shire. There are no restricted breed dogs registered.

Declared menacing dogs refers to a dog that has either, inflicted a non-serious bite to a person or animal; or rushed up to a person or chased a person in an aggressive manner.

Owners of menacing dogs must abide by conditions specified by Council, being the dog is muzzled and leashed when outside the premises of its owner at all times.

Declared dangerous dogs refers to a dog that is kept for guarding non-residential premises, a dog that has attacked causing serious injury to an animal or person, or a dog that was declared menacing and its owner did not comply with the imposed requirements on two or more occasions.

Owners of dangerous dogs must abide by specific regulations in particular; secure enclosures, secure perimeter fencing for guarding dogs, warning signs on premises, wearing its prescribed dangerous dog collar at all times and being muzzled and on leash in public.

Council carefully considers whether or not to declare a dog menacing or dangerous depending on the incident/s that it has been involved in and the risk that dog poses to the community. Fees for menacing and dangerous dogs are set considerably higher than other dog registration fees.
9.2 **Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures**

Owners of dogs which are proposed to be declared menacing or dangerous are entitled to provide a written submission or appear in person to be heard by an independent panel of council officers.

9.3 **Current Education and Promotion Activities**

- Information provided at Council offices and website.
- Liaise with dog owner relating to legislation requirements and any changes/updates.

9.4 **Current compliance activities**

- Investigate and respond promptly to complaints about menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Ensuring all declared dogs are registered on the Victorian Dangerous Dog Registry
- Conducting annual inspections on premises housing declared dogs to ensure compliance
- Dog declarations made where applicable
- Prosecution/Infringements issued for any determined breach
9.5 Summary

Council’s priority is to protect the community from menacing and dangerous dogs.

9.6 Our Plans

**Objective:** Ensure declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-active engagement approach with owners of declared dogs to support them in meeting their legal obligations</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Review and revise audit procedures for declared dogs ensuring owners understand compliance requirements, non-compliance issues are detected, and offences are pursued legally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 Overpopulation and high euthanasia

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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)

10.1 Current Situation

Council is committed to re-homing dogs and cats that are not claimed by their owners and works with a range of partners to provide these animals with a second chance. Council's initial priority is to return all animals to their owner so they don't have to go to the pound. We have had great success in returning dogs home, while cats have relatively low owner return rates. When it is not possible to return the animal and it is not reclaimed from the pound then all attempts are made to re-home the animal.

Providing information about the benefits of de-sexing, microchipping, registration and containing dogs and cats are key components in reducing the numbers of unwanted cats and dogs.

Overpopulation of cats and unowned community cats continue to be issues in the shire and are priority areas for council to address. Feedback from the consultation process confirms this with strong support from the community and industry partners for council to consider introducing a low cost de-sexing program for cats. There is less concern regarding the over population of dogs and this is not considered an issue that council needs to prioritise, except for where there are compliance/welfare issues.

![Year on Year Comparison - Dogs euthanased and rehomed](image)
10.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No. 10 of 2013 – Division 3 Animal Control – Clause 42 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.

10.3 Current Education and Promotion Activities

- Promoting benefits of de-sexing;
- Promoting adoptions;
- Promoting appropriate pet selection;
- Promoting cat enclosures and build your own cat enclosures;
- Promote and encourage the Council’s cat trapping program.

10.4 Current compliance activities

- Cat trapping program;
- Investigating unregistered breeding establishments and animal hoarding issues;
- Enforcing the Local Law relating to number of cats/dogs on a property;
- Assessing excess animal permit applications, factoring in number of entire/de-sexed animals;
10.5 Summary

Council is committed to reducing the number of unwanted cats and dogs in the community by reducing incoming numbers and improving reclaim and adoption outcomes.

10.6 Our Plans

**Objective:** Reduce the number of unwanted cats and dogs in the community by reducing incoming numbers and improving reclaim and adoption outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand partnerships to increase rehoming rates for dogs and cats in partnership with community foster care networks / rescues, veterinary clinics, and shelters.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Establish additional 84Y agreements to expand rehoming partnerships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore strategies to improve cat welfare and re-homing opportunities in partnership with Council’s cat shelter provider</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Continuously improve cat shelter, care and rehoming practices to reduce stress and length of stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in partnership with industry stakeholders to introduce a low cost cat de-sexing and microchipping program.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Program introduced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11 Domestic Animal Businesses

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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)

11.1 Current situation

Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) are establishments such as animal shelters, pet shops, animal breeding and/or rearing establishments, boarding and/or training facilities. There are 15 registered Domestic Animal Businesses in the Shire. Registered domestic animal businesses are audited annually as well as on receipt of complaints.

Council is committed to a high standard of animal welfare and aims to ensure that all Domestic Animal Businesses are compliant with relevant standards and codes. Council is also committed to identifying unregistered Domestic Animal Businesses operating within the shire and taking appropriate regulatory action to ensure compliance is achieved.

Council is aware of likely legislative changes for breeding and rearing businesses and is preparing to implement new regulatory strategies in this area, should it be required.

11.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Enforcement of the legislative requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and relevant Codes of Practice.

General Purposes and Amenity Local Law No. 10 of 2013 – Division 3 Animal Control –

Clause 42 regulates the numbers of dogs and cats that can be kept at a property without a permit depending on the land size.
11.3 **Current Education and Promotion Activities**

- Providing information to registered domestic animal businesses;
- Promoting DEDJTR information and codes of practices;
- Advertising new legislation amendments.

11.4 **Current compliance activities**

- Annual registration of Domestic Animal Businesses;
- Annual and random auditing of Domestic Animal Businesses both scheduled and unscheduled;
- Investigating suspected or reported unregistered domestic animal businesses;
- Liaison with planning department to ensure planning conditions are adhered too;
- Issuing/enforcing of infringement notices/notice to comply

11.5 **Summary**

Council is committed to protecting the welfare of animals through working with Domestic Animal Businesses to comply with the relevant standards and effective enforcement for non-compliant businesses.
### 11.6 Our Plans

**Objective:** Ensure all domestic animal businesses are compliant with relevant legislation and codes of practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-active engagement approach with owners / proprietors of registered Domestic Animal Businesses to support them in meeting their legal obligations</td>
<td>2018/2019</td>
<td>Review and revise audit procedures ensuring proprietors understand compliance requirements, non-compliance issues are resolved, and offences are pursued legally. Pursue engagement with applicable organisation members in partnership membership bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a new regulatory strategy to improve compliance and enforcement activities for unregistered and non-compliant Domestic Animal Breeding and Rearing Businesses</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Development and implementation of new processes for interdepartmental and interagency collaboration in permit processing, investigation, and compliance activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand partnership arrangements to aid in detection of unregistered and non-compliant Domestic Animal Breeding and Rearing Businesses</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Implement agreements with relevant agencies and industry stakeholders that enhance sharing of information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12 Other Matters

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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 is necessary

12.1 Supporting Community members to keep pets in times of need

12.2 Current Situation

Council recognises the physical, mental and social benefits that pets bring and the link between enabling pet owners to keep their pets close to them or know that they are safe when confronted with a crisis situation. These situations include emergency incidents such as a house fire or bushfire, family violence or health issues. Council is committed to supporting community members through these situations by thorough emergency management planning, partnering with relevant agencies to prevent family violence and working with established networks to enable community members to remain living independently in their homes.

Council is able to support community members in times of crisis by working with our partners to coordinate transport of animals, temporary boarding of animals and veterinary care if required. We know that by doing this residents are able to focus on other important issues knowing that their pet is safe.

Council has an Emergency Management Animal Welfare Plan that is enacted in larger emergencies that helps residents and emergency personnel manage pets and livestock.

Pets can be accommodated at Emergency Relief Centres and Local Laws officers are trained to assist residents and their pets at these centres. Assisting residents in single incidents is done on an ad-hoc basis and Council is looking to develop protocols and procedures to ensure this assistance is provided in a timely and appropriate manner.

Pet ownership can provide older people with a sense of purpose, improve their ability to tolerate social isolation and avoid depression, and encourage them to be more active in day-to-day activities. Council recognises that lack of mobility or poor health can mean an unwanted and premature end to pet ownership for an older person and is committed to finding ways to assist older pet owners manage and care for their beloved companions.
12.3 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Emergency Management Animal Welfare Plan is a sub-plan of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan

12.4 Current Education and Promotion Activities

Education and promotion about including pets in personal fire plans through various communication methods including Shire Life newsletter, local papers, community newsletters, council’s website and social media channels

12.5 Summary

Council is committed to providing support to community members in times of need so that their pets are safe and well cared for.

12.6 Our Plans

Objective: Support community members who in times of need require assistance in providing care for their pets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop protocols and partnership arrangements for single incident</td>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>Implementation of new temporary animal boarding and care protocols to facilitate temporary boarding for animals to assist pet owners experiencing an emergency, personal crisis, or family violence situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary animal boarding and care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in partnership with Council's Healthy Ageing Engagement Team to</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Resource developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce and disseminate a resource that provides information and assistance to residents in caring for pets, preparing for emergencies, and planning for end of life.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in “Dying to Talk” sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>When</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in partnership with Council's Healthy Ageing Engagement Team to identify pet owners who have mobility or health limitations to connect them to the volunteer ‘Social Connections Project’ - whereby volunteers are paired with locals in need for social outings and activities like pet walking.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Number of referrals to Healthy Ageing Team and number of clients and volunteers paired up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13 Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

Legislative Context – Domestic Animals Act 1994, Section 68A(3)  Every Council must—

(a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan

(b) provide the Department of Primary Industries’ Secretary 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.

13.1 Our Plans

Objective: Review the Domestic Animal Management Plan to ensure it is current and meets the needs of the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review the plan annually and amend where necessary</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Annual review conducted and amendments made where necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include information in the council annual report about activities implemented</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Information included in annual report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14 Appendix 1 – General Purpose and Amenity Local Law No. 10

Division 3 – Animal Control

41. Keeping Animals

(1) A person keeping animals on land must not allow any animal to:

(a) cause a nuisance to any other person because of noise, smell or any other condition;
(b) damage any flora or fauna on the land;
(c) pollute any drain, gutter, watercourse or water catchment on or through that land; or
(d) cause the invasion or spread of noxious or environmental weeds on or from that land.

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

(2) A person providing housing for animals kept on land must ensure that a nuisance or offensive condition is not caused to adjoining land and that:

(a) animal housing is:

(i) constructed and maintained to the satisfaction of the Authorised Officer;
(ii) kept clean and sanitary at all times;
(iii) located at a distance from dwellings on other land to the satisfaction of the Authorised Officer;
(iv) located at a distance from any property boundary to the satisfaction of the Authorised Officer;
(b) food is kept in fly and vermin proof buildings or containers other than baled, rolled, sheaf hay or silage; and
(c) the land is kept free of materials, refuse and vegetation that may harbour or attract rats, mice or other vermin.

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

(3) A person must not feed or encourage the presence of feral, stray or pest animals or allow such animals access to food on the land on which animals are kept.

Penalty: 5 Penalty Units
42. Limits on Numbers of Animals

(4) A person must obtain a permit to keep animals in excess of the numbers permitted or to keep animals on land less than the area prescribed as follows:

**Dogs and cats**

- On land up to 4,000 square metres (1 acre) - 2 dogs and 2 cats
- On land greater than 4,000 square metres (1 acre) - 4 dogs and 4 cats.

**Roosters**

- Less than 4,000 square metres (1 acre) - 0.

**Pigs or piglets**

- Less than 10,000 square metres (2.5 acres) – 0.

**Farm animals**

- Less than 2,000 square metres (0.5 acre) – 0 unless sub-clause (2)(c) applies.

**Penalty:** 20 Penalty Units

(5) The requirement to obtain a permit under sub-clause (1) does not apply if:

(a) the number of animals to be kept on land is because of a commercial undertaking on the land and the use is authorised under the Planning Scheme or a permit has been obtained under the Planning Scheme;
(b) the dogs are kept for working stock on farm land which is greater than 40 hectares; or
(c) farm animals are on the land for not more than 1 month and are being used for fire prevention or weed management purposes.

---

1 For the purposes of calculating the maximum limit of numbers of animals kept, the progeny of any animal lawfully kept will be exempt for a period of three months after their birth.
43. Animal Excrement

(6) A person in charge of an animal must not allow any part of that animal’s excrement to remain on any road or Council land and must immediately collect and dispose of the excrement.

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

(7) A person in charge of an animal on any road or Council land must carry sufficient litter devices to collect and dispose of animal excrement and must produce them on request to an Authorised Officer.

Penalty: 5 Penalty Units

44. Effective fencing and confinement of farm animals

(8) An owner or occupier of land must ensure that the land on which a farm animal is kept is adequately fenced or confined in a satisfactory condition to ensure that the type of farm animal kept on the land cannot escape from it.

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

(9) If a farm animal is found at large outside the land of the owner or not securely confined to the owner’s land between sunrise and sunset, the owner is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: between sunrise and sunset - 10 Penalty Units

(10) If a farm animal is found at large outside the land of the owner or not securely confined to the owner’s land between sunset and sunrise, the owner is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: between sunset and sunrise - 20 Penalty Units