



RURAL CITY OF
Wangaratta



Domestic Animal Management Plan 2016-2017



Version Control

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RURAL CITY OF WANGARATTA DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Domestic Animal Management Plan

Councils in Victoria are required under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (“the Act”) to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan (the Plan) at four year intervals with the objective of outlining Council's plans for animal management.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- document current processes and practices under the Rural City of Wangaratta’s animal management responsibilities.
- increase compliance with the Act and increase pet owners’ knowledge of the principles of responsible pet ownership to enhance community safety and awareness.
- assist the Bureau of Animal Welfare (BAW), a branch of the Department of Environment and Department of Primary Industries (DEPI), to achieve its stated objectives of reducing the numbers of dogs and cats being euthanased.
- maximise the numbers of dogs and cats that are registered in the Wangaratta.
- minimise the harmful effect of domestic pets on the population of native birds, mammals and reptiles.
- take into account community views on animal management matters.
- comply with the relevant provisions of the Act.

2 Domestic Animal Management Plans

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

- (1) every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary DEPI, 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 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;

- (iv) to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
 - (v) to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
 - (vi) to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
 - (vii) to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
- (d) provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
 - (e) provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
 - (f) provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.
- (3) every Council must—
- (a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
 - (b) provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
 - (c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

3 Rural City of Wangaratta

3.1 Demographic and Council Profile

The Rural City of Wangaratta is located in north east Victoria, with a total population of approximately 27,000 residents, of whom 18,000 live in urban Wangaratta. The Rural City covers an area of 3,644 sq. km.

The municipality has experienced continuing growth in retail and tourism sectors, and is widely recognised as one of Victoria's most progressive provincial centres. The region is famous for world class wine and gourmet food and is the gateway to Victoria's major ski fields. With its spectacular scenery, the region is viewed by tourists as the 'hub' from which to explore North East Victoria and Southern New South Wales.

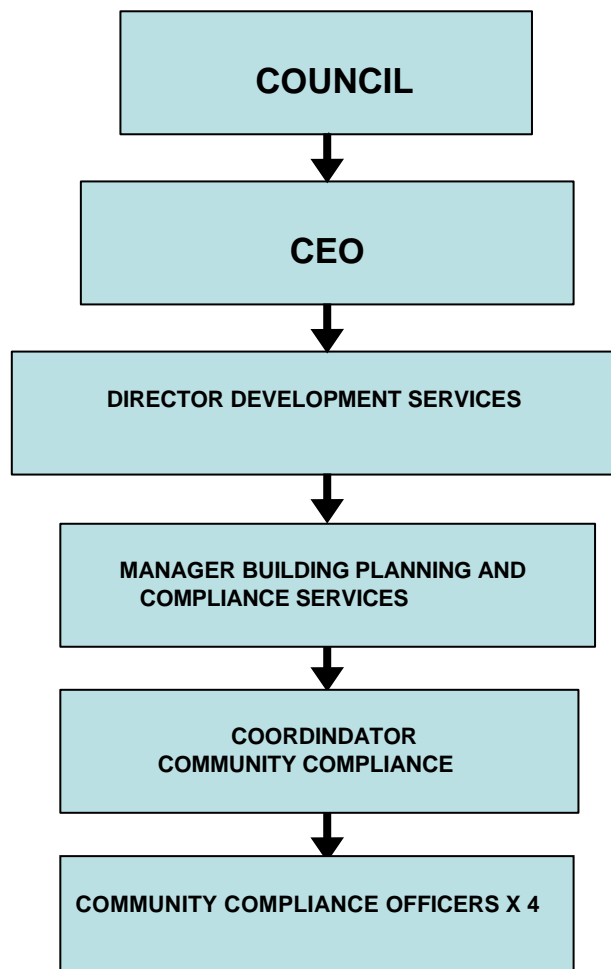
Wangaratta is a leading regional centre providing a range of services for all age groups. The Rural City of Wangaratta provides strong recreational, commercial, educational, tourism and health facilities, including regional private and public hospitals. It has diverse industry and economic stability and is the regional headquarters for several state government agencies. The main employment sectors are in the manufacturing, trades, retail, agriculture and health and community service industries.

4 Domestic Animal Statistics and Data

Category	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Dogs			
Number Registered	5,643	5,327	5,350
Cats			
Number Registered	1,913	1,774	1,788

As per the above table, the municipality is currently in a good position in relation to animal registrations. The rate of animals registered has varied every year since 2013/14 to 2015/16.

5 Animal Management Staffing and Operational Structure



6 Community Compliance Team Overview

The Community Compliance Team consists of one full time Coordinator, three full time Community Compliance Officers and one permanent part time Community Compliance Officer who performs both parking compliance and animal management activities. Administration support is provided by the Support Officer - Compliance who supports both the Community Compliance team and the broader Building, Planning and Compliance Services Unit

In addition to animal management, the team also oversee Litter Enforcement and compliance with Council's Local Laws.

6.1 Services provided to the community relating to Animal Management

The Community Compliance team is responsible for the animal management function provided by council. Key activities include:

- impounding of domestic animals and livestock;
- managing of complaints relating to domestic animals and livestock;
- promoting responsible pet ownership in the community;
- investigating dog attacks;
- ensuring compliance with legislation and the various codes of practice relevant to domestic animals and livestock;
- domestic animal registration process;
- investigating animal welfare issues;
- management of domestic animal businesses;
- providing advice to owners and the general community in relation to domestic animals;
- after hours animal emergencies; and
- prosecute breaches of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, Impounding of Livestock Act 1994 and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986.

6.2 Wangaratta Rural City Council's Local Laws relating to Animal Management (Refer attachments)

6.2.1 Local Law No. 1 of 2014– Community Amenity (Amendment)

Under Local Law No. 1 of 2014 – Community Amenity (Amendment):

- animals must be housed appropriately;
- permits must be obtained for the housing of animals in excess of the allowed number; and
- animal litter must be removed by the owner.

6.2.2 Local Law No. 1 of 2014 – Community Amenity (Local Laws Policies)

The local law policy specifies the type and number of animals that are allowed on a residential property as well as provisions for appropriate siting of animal housing on a property.

7 Training of Authorised Officers

7.1 Current and Planned Training

A variety of training is offered and provided for all Authorised Officers. Training options are annually reviewed to ensure relevant and up to date material is provided.

The training options include animal handling courses, investigation and statement taking courses, prosecution courses, information technology courses and industry related seminars, conferences and briefings from the DEPI, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM) and other relevant associations.

7.2 Our Plans

7.2.1 Objective 1:

Develop and maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training to maintain skills and knowledge.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Record each officer's name, completed training, along with proposed additional training opportunities in the HR training database.	By August 2017	Annually review, to ensure accuracy and to determine whether proposed training goals have been met for each Officer. This is achieved through Council's annual review process.
Staff attendance at industry related seminars and training, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Breed Identification▪ DEPI/BAW Seminars	As offered	Review attendance against individual officer's training record.

8 Registration and Identification

All dogs and cats over the age of 3 months must be registered with the municipality as per Section 10 (1) of the Act. Newly registered animals must also be micro-chipped before registration can be accepted by Council.

New animal registrations for cats and dogs can be made in person at the Council's Customer Service Centre between 8.30am – 5pm Monday – Friday or by mail with the appropriate payment and copies of relevant proof required to: Rural City of Wangaratta, PO Box 238, Wangaratta, Vic 3677.

Registration forms can be downloaded online from Council's website <http://www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au> or collected from the Council's Customer Service Centre. If an animal has been impounded and is not registered with Council, the registration process must be completed at the pound prior to release of the animal.

Animals that are not registered and not micro-chipped must be micro-chipped at the RSPCA prior to registration and release of the animal when the appropriate fee has been paid by the owner.

Under Section 11 of the Act animal registration periods expire on 10 April each year. Animal renewal notices are sent out every year in late February or early March, allowing pet owners to renew their animals registration via the internet or in person. The Council audits the registration renewal process every year to ensure animal registration is renewed. The RSPCA also take registrations from members of the public on an ad hoc basis (walk in off the street).

Animals found unsecured or 'at large' from their property that are identifiable by means of an allocated Council identification tag have a higher chance of being reunited with their owners and therefore may not be impounded. When dogs and cats are outside of the owner's premises, Council identification tags must be worn as required under Section 20 of the Act.

The registration of animals provides the Rural City of Wangaratta with an understanding of the level of pet ownership in the community and in turn this helps Council plan for services, information and programs associated with pets in particular areas of the community.

Registration fees help fund the services provided by the Council in relation to animal management and the Bureau of Animal Welfare's responsible pet ownership campaigns and programs that are available within the municipality.

8.1 Current Education Activities

Current education/promotion of registration and identification activities include:

- publicising the requirement to register pets over the age of three months in the Wangaratta Chronicle, Wangaratta Rural City Community Connect and the Council's on hold phone messages;
- animal registration renewal notices are mailed out in late February or early March each year for currently registered animals;
- Council life time identification tags are obtained by pet owners on payment of the relevant registration fee; and
- brochures included in newly registered animal notices to provide information regarding the importance and requirements of registration.

8.2 Current Compliance Activities

Current compliance activities for registration and identification include:

- a door knock audit conducted each year for animal registrations that have lapsed;
- prosecution of cases where animals are not registered;
- ensuring impounded and unregistered animals are micro-chipped and registered prior to release;
- issuing notices and /or infringements for animals found unregistered.
- prosecuting owners of unregistered animals where infringements remain unpaid and animals remain unregistered;
- investigating Domestic Animal Business (DAB) notifications of animals being sold or given away to residents in the municipality;
- monitoring advertisements relating to animals for sale to ensure microchip numbers or DAB numbers are provided;
- proactive and reactive park and street patrols to follow up registration and ensure identification is being worn; and
- after hours emergency animal service.

8.3 Summary

The number of unregistered animals that enter the pound is still of a high rate, which suggests a large number of unregistered animals exist within the municipality.

The Council is currently collecting data from the RSPCA to determine the percentage of unregistered animals impounded and from where the owner resides. Such data will allow the Council to focus on education and compliance activities in the locations where higher rates of unregistered animals are found. These activities could include a street wide door knock.

8.4 Our Plans

8.4.1 Objective 1:

To decrease / minimise the total number of properties required for the annual door knock audit.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Educate residents of the animal registration renewal period by means of advertising/media releases, mailing of renewal notices and by placing A Frame signs in areas where high levels of un-registered animals are kept.	March-May Annually	Review media release types available each year to determine most effective advertising.
Ensure each property is audited and issued infringements where animals found to be unregistered.	July – August Annually	Record total number of properties visited and infringements issued and compare to previous results.
Ensure animal registrations have been renewed and infringements paid. Lodge unpaid infringements with Infringements Court or Magistrates Court.	Sept – Oct Annually	Record total number of infringements unpaid and animal registrations still unregistered and compare to previous results.
Seize animals still found to be unregistered where matter found proven in Court or infringement paid.	Month after date	Provide media releases to send the strong message for responsible pet ownership and compliance.

8.4.2 Objective 2:

Maintain or increase dog and cat registrations.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release.	Prior to every release.	Review annual registration numbers. Review number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded who are not registered to their owner.
Proactive door knocking in areas believed to have high number of unregistered animals via impound stats, to check for unregistered and un-identified dogs and cats. Effective advertising prior audit commencing.	Annually	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Review number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded who are not registered to their owner. Records of number of unregistered and un-identified animals picked up during door knocks.

9 Nuisance

9.1 Current Situation

Type of Nuisance	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of barking dog complaints received	240	283	289	176
No. of cat traps hired	165	186	234	145

Note: Additional cat traps were added to the 'pool' in early 2015 to reduce waiting list times for the community.

9.2 Legislation/Local Law overview

The Act regulates the dog and cat nuisance issues relating to noise, trespassing and wandering animals. In addition to the Act, the Community Amenity Local Law (No. 1) helps to minimise nuisances occurring as outlined below.

9.3 Local Laws relating to nuisance

9.3.1 Local Law No. 1 of 2014 – Community Amenity (Amendment) & Local Laws Policies – Animal Housing

Local Law No. 1 of 2014 – Community Amenity (Amendment) (and the supporting Local Laws Policies) outlines the requirements for the keeping of animals in residential areas and restricts both the number and type of animals that a resident can keep on a residential property without a permit. (Refer Attachment 1).

This includes requirements regarding animal accommodation and the need for an owner or occupier of land must ensure that all animals on that land are housed in a clean, inoffensive and sanitary condition.

9.4 Council Policies for nuisance complaints

9.4.1 Barking Dogs

The Council has a standard operating procedure for barking dog complaints to ensure all complaints received are handled in the same consistent manner by all Authorised Officers. The procedure steps out the required processes involved to investigate the complaint, liaise with the dog owner and surrounding neighbours.

Where nuisances are found to be proven pursuant to section 32 of the Act, the Council can issue notices to the dog owner to abate the nuisance, issue infringements and/or have the matter heard in the Magistrate's Court to seek an order from the Court for the owner to abate the nuisance.

9.4.2 Cats and Dogs at large

The Community Compliance Team have developed a Domestic Animal Procedure for dealing with domestic animals found at large (Refer to attachment 2). In circumstances where repeat offences for roaming/trespassing cats/dogs are found and the issuing of infringements and relevant impound release fees have not encouraged the pet owner to adequately secure the cat or dog to its property, Council will consider withdrawing Infringements to instead pursue the matter in the Magistrates' Court. This can then result in a Court Order to require the owner to carry out works to ensure the animal is not able to escape from the owner's premises.

9.5 Current Education/Promotion Activities relating to nuisance animals

- Providing barking dog information kits.
- Providing information relating to building cat enclosures.
- Information provided on the Council's website.
- Promoting the state government's 'Who's for Cat's campaign?.'
- Providing information brochures from DEDJTR to the public.
- Articles in the Wangaratta Chronicle and Council website.

- Encouraging the de-sexing of cats and dogs to reduce wandering and creating a nuisance.
- Encouraging dog owners to seek advice from professional dog trainers and trial barking dog citronella collars.
- Investigate the pros and cons for the location and construction of exercise runs or dogs to exercise of leash.

9.6 Current Compliance Activities relating to nuisance animals

- Investigating nuisance complaints in a timely manner to ensure minimal timeframes.
- Sending out barking dog formal complaint statements and barking dog log sheets with Statutory Declarations attached.
- Report outcomes of prosecutions when appropriate regarding each area of nuisance to local media to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of preventing dog and cat nuisance.
- Issuing notices to comply, notices of objection, infringements where necessary and taking the matter to the Magistrates' Court.
- Providing cat traps to residents.

9.7 Summary

In order to reduce animal nuisance problems in the community, the Council will continue promoting and providing education and compliance activities while striving to improve the activities and identify/trial new initiatives.

Council will continue the cat trapping program to ensure the program is promoted efficiently and provides assistance to residents and continue media releases relating to the Council's stance on compliance with nuisance type complaints.

9.8 Our Plans

9.8.1 Objective 1:

Investigate the feasibility of providing a formal, fenced off leash areas for residents and visitors to the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake feasibility activity (with community & stakeholders) to scope initiative	2015	Scoping/feasibility completed
Shape formal project submission for inclusion in council's 2016/2017 annual budget	2016	Project submission complete
If approved, complete construction of dog park/off leash park	2017	Dog park established

Monitor usage and ongoing community needs	Ongoing from 2017	Record usage data and monitor compliance (e.g. animal litter removal).
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9.8.2 Objective 2:

Decrease the timeframe of barking dog investigations from point of lodgement to resolution.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Set key performance indicators for Officers to complete barking dog complaints within a 10 week timeframe.	2016	Review complaints annually to evaluate percentage completed within timeframe.
Use barking dog standard operating procedure and revise annually.	Ongoing	Review complaints to ensure sops were followed.

10 Dog Attacks

10.1 Current data

Authorised Council Officers investigate dog attack reports thoroughly. Evidence pertaining to the incident is collated to formulate a prosecution brief. This includes taking statements from all parties involved, vet/medical reports, photographs and providing a summary with recommendations.

The brief is then reviewed by the Compliance Coordinator who makes further recommendations to the Manager Building, Planning and Compliance Services in order for the Council to decide on an appropriate course of action.

Possible courses of action Council can choose include:

- infringements (where non-serious injuries sustained);
- menacing/Dangerous Dog Declaration;
- prosecution in Magistrates' Court;
- seek destruction/compensation orders by Magistrates;
- seek mediation between parties; and
- obtain a letter of no complaint from the complainant to allow Officers to take no further action.

Where injuries have occurred to a person or another animal by a dog that is of a serious injury (as defined by the Act), the Council will strive to have the matter heard in the Magistrate's Court, where enough evidence is sufficient to form a prosecution.

Currently the Community Compliance Officers are prosecuting dog attack matters in the Magistrates Court with successful results and outcomes.

Media releases of such results are also used to educate the community and promote responsible pet ownership. Animal registration fees include a subsidy to the State Government's BAW, which help funds programs such as responsible pet ownership in schools, pre-schools, maternal health centres, hospitals and the 'We Are Family' programs.

10.2 Current Education/Promotion Activities

- Reporting outcomes of all dog attack prosecutions to local media to raise awareness in the community of the need to report dog attacks and the Council's action in relation to attacks to promote responsible pet ownership.
- Media releases relating to livestock attacks.
- Providing new residents with animal registration information.
- Promoting the effective confinement and control of dogs.
- Promoting the Bureau of Animal Welfare Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) Schools Programs.
- Promoting puppy socialisation and obedience training.

10.3 Current Compliance Activities

- Investigating dog attacks thoroughly.
- Seizing and holding attacking dogs pending investigation/prosecution outcome.
- Providing an after hours service to respond to reports of aggressive or attacking dogs.
- Prosecuting matters pursuant to the Act.
- Issuing infringements for wandering dogs.
- Issuing infringements for minor attacks where non serious injury sustained.
- Proactive declarations for Menacing or Dangerous Dogs.
- Seeking destruction Orders from Magistrates' Court where necessary.
- Seeking confinement Orders from Magistrates' Court for dogs continually found wandering or not confined to property.
- Proactive patrols of parks and streets for wandering dogs.
- Proactive patrols for guard dogs on non-residential premises.
- Recording data of reported dog attacks in the municipality.
- Seizing impounded dogs in circumstances where owners properties are believed to be unsecure, ensure dog can be secured prior release of the dog back to the owner.

10.4 Summary

The Rural City of Wangaratta will continue administering the Act and ensure compliance is met where any breach is detected. In addition, planned changes to Local Law No. 1 of 2014 - Community Amenity – (Amendment) should enable the requirement for dogs on leashes in public areas to come into effect.

10.5 Our Plans

10.5.1 Objective 1:

Provide targeted education and compliance campaigns in areas where data reporting shows higher numbers of dog attack incidents.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Collate and record data for dog attacks reported including, date/time, suburb, animal type, dog attacked animal/person, dog unsecured/off lead, dog unregistered, sex, entire/de-sexed.	Ongoing	Evaluate data annually to determine areas requiring specific education/compliance activities.
Initiate Education/Compliance Activities in the targeted areas to aim to reduce future incidents and to report roaming dogs etc. to prevent attacks occurring.	Annually	Evaluate this activity (and overall objective) by comparing number of dog attacks reported to council pre and post campaign.

10.5.2 Objective 2:

To minimise the incidence of dog attacks in the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Providing proactive Education/Compliance Activities in the targeted areas of higher dog attack incidents. Educating key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, leash laws) through media articles, mail outs, website information. Actively patrol areas for roaming, unsecure and/or unregistered dogs.	Ongoing	Compare number of reported dog attack incidents pre and post campaign. Consider a community survey pre and post campaign, to measure any changes in knowledge about dog attack prevention. Record type and number of education materials distributed. Numbers of campaign patrols conducted. Number of media articles published.
Inform the community of outcomes of dog attacks prosecuted in Court.	Ongoing	As occurs.
Set key performance indicators for Officers to complete dog attack investigations within a 6 week timeframe.	Ongoing	Review complaints annually to evaluate percentage completed within timeframe.

10.5.3 Objective 3:

Implement the requirement to have all dogs on leash in public areas through amendments to Local Law No. 1.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Complete proposed changes to Local Law No. 1 of 2014 – Community Amenity (Amendment)	September 2016	Proposed changes completed and provided to Corporate Management Team/CEO for approval.
Provide updated local law to Council for review/feedback.	October 2016	Sent to Council for feedback
Proposed final draft to Council for public display/comment	November 2016- January 2017	Document on display for 28 days and submissions received
Amend document as required following feedback and send back to Council for final approval	February 2017	Changes approved as part of new local law.

11 Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

11.1 Current Situation - Declared Dogs currently registered within the municipality

The Rural City of Wangaratta has the following declared dogs currently registered within the municipality as at 17/08/2016:

Registered restricted breed dogs	0
Registered declared dangerous dogs	0
Registered declared menacing dogs	2

The Act defines restricted breed dogs as any one of the following breeds:

- Japanese Tosa
- Fila Brasileiro
- Dogo Argentino
- Perro de Prasa Canario (or Presa Canario)
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)

Owners of restricted breed dogs are required to abide by specific regulations, in particular; secure enclosures, warning signs on premises, having the dog muzzled in public and on a lead at all times, as defined by the Act and the Domestic Animals Regulations 2005 (the Regulations).

Section 34A (a) of the Act states:

A dog is a dangerous dog if—

The dog is kept as a guard dog for the purpose of guarding non-residential premises.

There are no declared dangerous dogs in the municipality. As per Section 41A (1) of the Act, a dog may be declared menacing if:

- (a) the dog has rushed at or chased a person; or
- (b) the dog bites any person or animal causing injury to that person or animal that is not in the nature of a serious injury.

The Council must register all dangerous/menacing/restricted breed dogs with the Victorian Dangerous Dog Register (VDDR). This is a database that records all declared dogs for all relevant parties to see. Any dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dog entered into the VDDR is declared for the life of the animal and cannot be revoked by the Council. Microchip registries are also updated.

11.2 Current Education/Promotion Activities

- Promoting the 'Dangerous Dog Hotline' (1300-101-080)
- Media releases relating to legislation/changes/updates
- Media releases relating to differences between Restricted Breed Dogs and Dangerous Dogs
- Providing information relating to declared dogs.

11.3 Current Compliance Activities

- Ensuring all declared dogs are registered on the VDDR
- Regularly conducting inspections on premises housing declared dogs to ensure compliance
- Seizing dogs suspected of being Restricted Breed Dogs
- Dog declarations made where applicable
- Prosecution/Infringements issued for any determined breach
- Assessing suspected restricted breed dogs via the gazetted standard
- Flagging certain breeds from registration database for assessment.
- Conduct proactive patrols after hours for unregistered guard dogs (dangerous dogs)

11.4 Our Plans

11.4.1 Objective 1:

Ensure declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Random property inspections of declared dogs to ensure compliance	Ongoing	Review checklists as occurs
Prosecute repeat offenders or serious breaches detected	As occurs	As occurs
After hours patrols for unregistered guard dogs in industrial areas	As occurs	As occurs
Educate the community about what is a declared dog	Ongoing	Review complaints received

11.4.2 Objective 2:

Flag certain breeds on registration database for restricted breed assessment.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Assess certain breeds with the gazetted standard for potential restricted breed dogs	Ongoing	Number of Restricted Breeds Declared from registration database
Cross reference microchip database information for potential restricted breed dogs requiring assessment	2016	Number of declarations compared to number of assessments

12 Overpopulation and High Euthanasia

12.1 Current Situation

Council only hold data from July 2012 onwards since the move to a new contract with Council's pound services provider - RSPCA. Although the RSPCA managed the pound prior to this point, this data is unavailable due to a change of system.

Category	2014/2015	2015/2016
Dogs		
Brought in by Council	217	292
Brought in by public	96	98
Adopted for the year	67	93
Euthanised for the year	56	41
Reclaimed for the year	210	294

Category	2014/2015	2015/2016
Cats		
Brought in by council	228	155
Brought in by public	175	192
Adopted for the year	130	136
Euthanised for the year	237	184
Reclaimed for the year	59	64

As per the above table, Council is currently in a positive position in relation to euthanasia rates of animals when compared to other large provincial councils, especially dogs. While cat euthanasia rates are slightly lower than the average, the percentage of cats euthanised will continue to be relatively high due to the amount of stray and/or feral cat population which breed out of human control.

Dog euthanasia rates are particularly low due to high rates of dogs being returned to owners and successful re-homing rates. Over the last 3 years there has been a significant rise in the rate of dogs being returned to owners due to more identifiable dogs being impounded such as being micro-chipped and/or wearing Council identification. The increased rate of micro-chipped dogs is mainly due to the amendment to the Domestic Animals Act 1994 in 2007, which required all newly registered cats and dogs to be micro-chipped. In addition, the RSPCA (who manage Council's pound) has a successful re-homing program with cats and dogs

12.2 Current Education/Promotion Activities

- Promoting benefits of de-sexing to decrease wandering animals
- Promoting 'Who's for cats?' campaign
- Promoting appropriate pet selection for the owner and accommodation
- Promoting cat enclosures and build your own cat enclosures.

12.3 Current Compliance Activities

- Cat trapping program - traps are available to all residents within the Municipality and are delivered and collected by the Council staff free of charge
- Enforcement of current Legislation in relation to Cats found trespassing
- Investigating unregistered breeding establishments
- Micro-chipping all unregistered impounded animals prior to release to the owner
- Enforcing the Local Laws relating to prescribed number of animals on a property.

12.4 Our Plans

12.4.1 Objective 1:

Continue encouraging de-sexing of animals. The below activities are expected to commence in the 2015/16 pet registration cycle.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Discount registration fees for cats and dogs that are de-sexed to encourage registration of animals over 6 months of age.	Ongoing	Number of new animals registered in category yearly
A report will be put to the Council in relation to conducting a cost/benefit analysis regarding; free registration fees for cats that participate in the RSPCA free de-sexing voucher scheme (AVA will provide further information if required).	2017	

12.4.2 Objective 2:

Identify illegally operated Domestic Animal Breeding Establishments in the municipality and ensure compliance and/or close down.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Media campaigns to raise awareness of DAB definition and code of practices that must be adhered too.	Ongoing	Evaluate number of complaints received and properties identified during inspection or otherwise.
Investigate advertisements of pets for sale	Ongoing	Mandatory micro chipping of animals from breeding establishments
Audit DAB randomly to ensure compliance	Ongoing	Number of audits compared to number of follow ups required

13 Domestic Animal Businesses

13.1 Current data

Domestic Animal Businesses are defined by the Act as:

Domestic animal business means-

- a) *An animal shelter, Council pound or pet shop; or*
- b) *An enterprise which carries out the breeding of dogs or cats to seek, where-*
 - I. In the case of an enterprise whose proprietor is a member of an applicable organisation, the enterprise has 10 or more fertile female dogs or 10 or more fertile female cats; or*
 - II. In the case of an enterprise whose proprietor is not a member of an applicable organisation, the enterprise has 3 or more fertile female dogs or 3 or more fertile female cats; or*
- c) *An enterprise that is run for profit which carries out the rearing, training or boarding of dogs or cats;*

There are 9 registered domestic animal businesses within the municipality as at 17/08/2016, these include 2 pet shop/s, 4 boarding establishments, 2 breeding establishments and Council's contracted animal pound/shelter, namely the RSPCA Wangaratta.

The RSPCA manage the Council pound in Wangaratta, this contract has recently been reviewed and the relevant specifications and the terms revised and amended.

Registered domestic animal businesses are audited both randomly and on receipt of complaints.

The Council actively investigates the presence of animal businesses to ensure compliance with the relevant codes of practice and legislation.

13.2 Current Education/Promotion Activities

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

13.3 Current Compliance Activities

- Annual audits
- Random audits during peak seasons for particular businesses
- Investigating reports
- Monitoring advertising sites
- Renewal / Registration process
- Inspecting suspected unregistered domestic animal businesses
- Liaising with planning department to ensure planning conditions are adhered too.
- RSPCA Inspector

13.3.1 Objective 1:

Revise specifications and conditions required for the Council's animal pound/shelter for the contracted organisation.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all relevant specifications and conditions for public tender/quotes to renew a contract.	2016	Activity complete
Advertise interests for public tenders/quotes and secure a contract with appropriate organisation to operate the Council's pound/shelter.	2016	Activity complete

13.3.2 Objective 2:

Ensure domestic animal businesses are compliant with relevant legislation and codes of practice.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Monitor the Council's registration database for owners with more than 3 fertile females.	Ongoing	Compliance with local laws and related legislation.
Encourage de-sexing of animals by reducing registration fees for de-sexed animals.	Ongoing	Relevant registration accepted.
Conduct searches for unregistered domestic animal businesses via internet/media/newspapers.	Ongoing	Relevant action taken.

14 Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

As per 68A(3) of the Act, the Council will review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually to assess whether any amendments are necessary in order to ensure the plan is relevant and can be completed within the required timeframes.

In the final year of the plan, the Council will undertake a major review and prepare the next domestic animal management plan for the 2017 – 2020 period.

15 Attachments

15.1 Attachment 1: Local Law No. 1 – Community Amenity (Local Laws Policies)

PART 7 – KEEPING OF ANIMALS

This part applies to the keeping of animals.

53. The requirements relating to the keeping of animals apply to properties in a residential and commercial area.

54. No more than 2 quadrupeds shall be allowed per property.

55. No more than 5 reptiles shall be allowed per property.

56. No more than 20 birds shall be allowed per property.

57. No more than 1 horse shall be allowed per property

58. No more than 10 poultry shall be allowed per property

59. Exemptions to these requirements apply to:

(a) any Pound conducted by the Council;

(b) any Animal Hospital or Veterinary Surgeon Practice; and

(c) any stables or Horse Training Complex.

Community Amenity Local Law No. 1 - Local Laws Policies 11

PART 8 – HOUSING OF ANIMALS

This part applies to the housing of animals.

60. The requirements relating to the housing of animals apply to properties in a residential and commercial area.

61. Animals must not be housed:

(a) closer than 12 metres from the frontage of a property; and

(b) closer than 2 metres of the side, rear or other boundary of a property.

62. All animal housing must be kept in a clean and inoffensive condition.

63. Any wash down or run off from such animal housing must be retained on the property.

64. An occupier of a property must not allow any animal to make unreasonable noise or allow the presence of nuisance conditions including offensive odours to the detriment of people living adjacent or nearby.

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