



**ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN RELATING
TO
DOGS AND CATS
2018 - 2023**

lifestyle location of choice

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Executive Summary

The Copper Coast Council is situated approximately 150km north west of the Adelaide CBD and has a population base of 13,000 residents. During the 2015/16 registration period the Council registered 2,669 dogs, impounded 49 dogs and returned 35 dogs to their owners. In addition the Council investigated 13 dog attacks/harassments and 18 noise complaints.

This Animal Management Plan has been prepared by the Copper Coast Council (the Council) in response to the Council adopting a planned approach to undertake its responsibilities under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, and will guide domestic animal management by the Council over the next 5 years. The Plan identifies strategies and actions to implement the mission, aims and objectives for domestic animal management, and relates these back to the wider policy context. The Strategy has been prepared by Council's Regulatory Services Section, drawing information from a broad range of stakeholders, with the community being asked to comment on the draft prior to its adoption by the Council.

Animal control has widened into a greater array of contexts following the introduction of the Act. Knowledge of both animal and human behaviours is now a requirement for those working in this field. There is growing recognition that enforcement of laws will not, on its own, result in lasting, voluntary changes in behaviour. It needs to be supplemented by a range of non-regulatory approaches such as public education and improved signage.

The core purpose of the Animal Management Services of the Council is to:-

- Recognise that pets are integral to the lives of many people and recognise the health and social benefits associated with pet ownership.
- Inform and educate the community about the needs of companion animals and promote responsible pet ownership.
- Ensure that the sentiment of the wider community is reflected through Council's Animal Management Directions Plan and,
- Secure the safety and well-being of members of our community including the animals.

On a day to day basis Council is required to provide an Animal Management Service to ensure that animals do not denigrate the amenity and community safety of the Council area. Council is required to respond to public queries, provide advice to residents and provide enforcement of relevant Act, regulations and by-laws.

Introduction

BACKGROUND

The Dog and Cat Management Miscellaneous Amendment Act came into effect on 1 July 2004. This amended the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 in many ways, including introducing a requirement that councils develop animal management plans. (Section 26A).

Section 26A states:-

26A—Plans of management relating to dogs and cats

- (1) *Each council must, in accordance with this section, prepare a plan relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area.*
- (2) *A plan of management must include provisions for parks where dogs may be exercised off-leash and for parks where dogs must be under effective control by means of physical restraint, and may include provisions for parks where dogs are prohibited.*
- (3) *A plan of management must cover 5 year periods and each plan must be prepared and presented to the Board at least 6 months before it is to take effect.*
- (4) *A plan of management must be approved by the Board before it takes effect.*
- (5) *A council may, with the approval of the Board, amend a plan of management at any time during the course of the 5 year period covered by the plan.*

MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTLINE

The Council's management of urban animal issues impacts on the health, well-being and lives of the whole community and the welfare of animals in the Council area. The 2012-2016 Animal Management Plan is designed for everyone in the Council area, both animal owners and non-owners. Dogs and cats represent by far the most significant number and type of animals and have the most significant impact on our community, environment, health and well-being.

As a result of a review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 several changes have come into effect from 1 July 2004. The Council is required to administer and enforce the provisions of this Act. The objectives of the Act are to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats, and
- Promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including encouragement for the de-sexing of dogs and cats).

The plan's mission is to create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Copper Coast community.

This Plan also contains recommendations for a wide range of actions to be undertaken by the Council to achieve these objectives. It provides a sound basis and direction from which it can plan and make future decisions over the next five years, and relates back to the wider Council policy context. It identifies strategies and actions to implement the mission, aims and objectives, including:-

- Educating and promoting responsible pet ownership
- Highlighting the importance of de-sexing of dogs and cats

- Obtaining the right pet and “pet friendly” housing
- Reducing dog attacks and bite avoidance
- Managing dog faeces in public places
- Reducing the numbers of dogs wandering at large
- Promoting the importance of dog socialisation and training
- Reducing dog barking and nuisance
- Reviewing officer image and staff training
- Meeting our Corporate Responsibilities
 - Risk Management
 - Service Levels.

EDUCATION, PREVENTION, ENCOURAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

This Plan emphasises the proactive combination of education, prevention, encouragement and enforcement to achieve Council’s objectives. Education and promotion are key priorities in changing attitudes to result in an increase in responsible pet ownership in the future. At the same time Council must be proactive in investigating and implementing preventative measures where possible and by providing encouragement to members of our community to comply with our policies and regulations which is ongoing.

Although it is expected that there will be a progressive decline in complaints and less reliance on enforcement, this will occur over the longer term. At the same time there may be a counter balancing effect due to increasing community expectation, increased profile on the Regulatory Services section and its services and encouragement of reporting (eg. All dog attacks and variables such as impacts from proposed legislative amendments to the Act).

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN RELATING TO DOGS AND CATS [2018-2023]

While some long term planning (5 years) is appropriate, it is anticipated that there will be significant amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 in the next 12 months. The Plan will be routinely reviewed to ensure its alignment with the applicable legislation over the life of the Plan.

THE LAW AND GUIDELINES

The responsibilities for dog and cat management in South Australia are prescribed in the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. Under the Act, councils are required to administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs within its area. Prescribed responsibilities include the appointment of a Registrar, maintenance of a Dog Register, the appointment of Authorised Officers and to make arrangements for dogs seized. A council is also able to make By-Laws relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area.

The Act also provides for the appointment of the Dog and Cat Management Board, which has responsibilities to plan, promote, and advise on effective management of dogs and cats in the State, to monitor councils’ management of their responsibilities, to issue Guidelines for councils and to advise and assist councils to undertake their responsibilities. The Board also has a role to provide advice to the Minister to keep the Act under review, to undertake research into companion animal management and to provide education programs for Authorised Officers and community awareness information.

The Act also provides that a council may appoint a cat management officer for its area of responsibility.

Substantial changes to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 were passed in Parliament during July 2016. The main changes relate to:

- Microchipping – introducing a requirement for all dogs and cats to be microchipped by the age of three months from 1 July 2018.
- Desexing – introducing a requirement to desex all dogs and cats born after the proposed date of 1 July 2018 and by the age of six months unless exemptions apply.
- Breeders – introducing a requirement that a person must not sell a dog or cat they have bred unless they are registered as a breeder with the Dog and Cat Management Board from 1 July 2018
- Sellers – introducing a requirement for certain information to be provided to the buyer from 1 July 2018
- Council powers – providing councils, which are responsible for dog and cat management in their local areas, with greater powers to administer and enforce the Act and introducing increased expiation fees and fines from 1 July 2017.
- Assistance Dogs – changing who can accredit animals.

While these provisions provide the legal framework for the council’s responsibilities and the penalties that can be imposed on dog owners for non-compliance, this Plan seeks to implement a balanced approach that caters to everyone’s needs that will not only benefit dogs/cats and their owners as a group with legitimate needs but also the wider community as well as those charged with the responsibility of animal management By-Laws.

COPPER COAST COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2022

The Objective, Goal and Strategy of Council’s Strategic Plan which relates to the strategies and actions are:

Objective: *Social Objective - Wellbeing*

Goal: *To enhance the quality of life of our community by encouraging health, wellbeing and safety.*

Strategy: *1.4 Public Order & Safety:
To play a lead role in the development of a safe and orderly community for all residents*

MISSION STATEMENT

“To create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Copper Coast community. To recognise that companion animals are part of the community, contributing to its quality of life, and to ensure that the needs of animals and their owners are accommodated while recognising the differing needs of all members of the community such as non-pet owners”.

AIMS

- To provide effective management and a suitable environment for dogs within the community.
- To encourage responsible dog and cat ownership.
- To increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.
- To provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.
- To acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.
- To encourage the enjoyment of and benefits from dogs and cats by people.
- To ensure public safety and amenity in relation to dogs and cats.
- To protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats.
- To ensure the expenditure of registration fees addresses the needs of dog and cat owners.

Objective

The objectives of the Copper Coast Council's Animal Management Directions Plan in conjunction with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and the Local Government Act 1999 are as follows, consistent with Council's Strategic Plan:

OBJECTIVE: *Social Objective - Wellbeing*

GOAL: *To enhance the quality of life of our community by encouraging health, wellbeing and safety.*

STRATEGY: **1.4 Public Order & Safety:**
To play a lead role in the development of a safe and orderly community for all residents

Council has a responsibility to safeguard community safety and health. To do this, it is necessary to manage the activities of dogs and the numbers of dogs and cats in accordance with Council bylaws. This involves avoiding potential conflict, preventing danger and minimising distress that may be caused to the community.

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 requires Council to develop an Animal Management Plan and to ensure that adequate community consultation takes place. Council is committed to the viability of this process and produced this Plan in partnership with the community and all interested parties to ensure quality of life for dog owners, cat owners, and non dog and cat owners.

The Plan aims to:

- promote responsible dog and cat ownership;
- provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats;
- ensure public safety and enhance the amenity and environment;
- harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership; and
- ensure that the expenditure of registration fees addresses domestic animal issues.

Strategies, Actions & Implementation

1. LEGISLATION & IMAGE

Council Staff cannot operate consistently without clear direction and guidelines, as individuals will often interpret Legislation in differing ways. Council Staff rely on the following instruments for direction: The Dog and Cat Management Act (primary legislation); By-laws introduced by Council (subordinate legislation) and Procedures (mechanisms to implement the Act and by-laws.

Generally speaking most dog and cat owners want to do the right thing. Registration of dogs and general compliance with the Act is relatively high throughout the community. Council must do everything in its power to ensure that residents and visitors understand their obligations to act responsibly with their pets.

1.1 Strategies

- a) Ensure that Authorised Officers of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
- b) Ensure that Officers operate within predetermined guidelines in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
- c) Encourage education of dog and cat owners.

1.2 Actions

- a) Ongoing review of Staff training and development to ensure that all staff has a clear understanding of animal management issues.
- b) Annual performance reviews for all Staff involved in animal management.
- c) Introduce procedural guidelines for all Staff to follow.
- d) Update a brochure for all residents and visitors to the Copper Coast. The brochure should be distributed through as many outlets as possible including Council buildings, Associations and Interest Groups.
- e) Promote Council's website - www.coppercoast.sa.gov.au

1.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

1.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

1.5 Other Resource Implications

Nil

1.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Ensure all staff dealing with dog and cat management matters have appropriate training.

2. DOG REGISTRATIONS

Legislation in SA requires all dogs of or over 3 months of age must be registered. Councils cannot expect to obtain an acceptable level of dog management without obtaining maximum registration. This can therefore be seen to be the most important issue at hand and is the key factor controlling all other effective and successful dog management strategies.

It is anticipated that the implementation of DACO (a state wide online registration system) by the State Government will take effect from 1 July 2018. In terms of this new system dog registration will be managed by the State Government and not by councils, although councils will still be responsible for the enforcement of dog registrations.

Dog registration ensures that:

- a) *Owners are recorded on Council's database.*
- b) *Funding is made available for councils to carry out responsibilities under the Act.*
- c) *Responsible dog owners and the rest of the community do not have to financially support irresponsible and unthinking dog owners.*

2.1 Strategies

- a) Maximise dog registrations.

2.2 Actions

- a) Conduct random checks for unregistered dogs as required.
- b) Use the media to inform the public of dog registrations.

2.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

2.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

2.5 Other Resource Implications

Nil

2.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Increase annual dog registrations by 1%.

3. WANDERING DOGS

A dog wandering at large can be a threat to members of the public, particularly children and older people and Council is aware that serious attacks can arise in these circumstances. Council will therefore implement strategies to minimize its occurrence in the community.

Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act it is an offence to allow a dog to wander at large. A dog will be taken to be wandering at large if it is in a public place, other than a park (unless exercised or verbally restrained by a person), or a private place without the consent of the occupier and no person is exercising effective control by way of a physical restraint.

There are two important elements to preventing dogs from wandering:

- a) Owners are encouraged to have adequate fencing and control over their dog; and*
- b) Actions carried out by Council when dogs are wandering at large.*

3.1 Strategies

- a) Minimise dogs wandering at large.

3.2 Actions

- a) Make owners aware of their responsibilities including:-
 - Register their dog,
 - Adequately fence their property to control their dog,
 - Train their dog so as to not leave their premises,
 - Keep their dog under effective control when in a public place.
- b) Other Key Issues to be aware of:-
 - That an Authorised Officer conducts random patrols of all public areas and detain dogs wandering at large.
 - That Council responds to calls from the general public that a dog is wandering at large. The priority of the Council will be to return the dog to the owner.
 - Unidentified dogs will be impounded in accordance with the Act.
 - Unclaimed dogs that are suitable as pets will be eligible for distribution to persons seeking a pet. Dogs being re-homed under this program will be required to be registered.
 - Unclaimed dogs, which are unsuitable as pets, will be euthanised.

To encourage compliance, dog management officers are encouraged to reinforce complying behaviour, particularly in children, to give warnings to first offences that are of a minor nature where no harm to a person or property has occurred. Penalties prescribed by the Act will be applied in certain circumstances.

3.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

3.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

3.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

3.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduction in dogs wandering at large by 5%.

4. ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

Identification of dogs is imperative to provide sound animal management practices. Residents and visitors to the area must identify their dogs at all times. Generally speaking pet owners do not allow their pets to wander at large. As from 1 July 2018 mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats will come into effect in accordance with the Dog and Cat management Act 1995 (as amended).

Accidental escape accounts for approximately 90% of dogs wandering at large. Often these dogs are not identified and therefore cannot be returned to the owner. The costs associated with impounding unidentified dogs and cats and the stress placed on the animal and their owners can be avoided.

4.1 Strategies

- a) Enforce identification of dogs.
- b) Promote mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats.

4.2 Actions

- a) Educate the public regarding the correct identification of dogs and cats.
- b) Promote micro-chipping of dogs and cats.
- c) Enforce mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats as from 1 July 2018

4.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

4.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

4.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

4.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

- a) Increase number of dogs and cats micro-chipped by 50%.
- b) Increase number of dogs and cats returned to owners by 1%.

5. COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

Knowledge is the Council's best tool to reduce the number of dog attacks that occur in the community. Due to the high number of visitors to the area it is difficult for Council to implement a strategy to reduce dog attacks and harassment. The collection of data will enable Council to understand the situations that lead to such attacks and therefore the community must be encouraged to provide information regarding all attacks regardless of their severity.

5.1 Strategies

- a) Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council.

5.2 Actions

- a) Encourage reporting of dog attacks and harassments by using local media and Council newsletter.

5.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

5.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

5.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

5.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

- a) Monitor trends with dog attacks.
- b) Regular reporting to Council.

6. ANIMAL EXERCISE AREAS

Providing suitable on and off leash activity areas is vital to the success of animal management in the area. Dog owners must have suitable areas to exercise their dogs safely.

Equally, other members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs. In areas such as streets, roads, and places the public congregate such as shopping areas, dogs must be restrained effectively. In parks assessed by Council for their suitability, dog owners should be able to exercise their dogs without restraint providing the owner exercises effective control.

On beaches and foreshores many councils have considered restricting dog activities to on-leash only. In all foreshore areas designated times for off-leash activities are considered during daylight saving and unrestricted off-leash activities allowed during the rest of the year.

Maximise the public's understanding of the Dog Management Officers and the Council's role in the community.

6.1 Strategies

- a) Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas. (Appendix 1)
- b) Educate the public to understand the role of Authorised Officers and the Council's role relating to Dog and Cat Management.

6.2 Actions

- a) Do not restrict off-leash activities in parks and reserves unless it is deemed unsuitable for the activities.
- b) Provide public information to inform the public of their role and current animal management issues.
- c) Explain the role of Authorised Officers and Council's role in Dog and Cat Management in local media and Council's newsletter.
- d) Identify and develop one dog park in Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta.

6.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

6.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

6.5 Other Resource Implications

Nil

6.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

- a) Monitor trends from the public.
- b) Regular reporting to Council.

7. RESTRICTIONS ON ANIMAL NUMBERS

It is expected that the proposal to amend the Regulations as proposed to make desexing of dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018 mandatory will be accepted.

The maximum number of dogs and cats per dwelling are limited to 2 dogs and 2 cats in terms of Council By Laws 5 and 6 respectively.

It is possible under certain circumstances to obtain permission to keep more than the prescribed number of dogs with the written consent of Council.

In accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (as amended) the registration of dog breeders will become mandatory.

7.1 Strategies

- a) Limit the number of dogs and cats per dwelling.

7.2 Actions

- a) Assess applications to have more than number of dogs and cats as per council By-laws per dwelling on merit.
- b) Ensure compliance with relevant Dog and Cat legislation to ensure dog breeders are registered as from 1 July 2018 and the possible mandatory requirement of the desexing of all dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018.
- c) Ensure compliance with relevant bylaws and Development legislation that control dog and cat numbers that may be kept on a premises.

7.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

7.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

7.5 Other Resource Implications

Nil

7.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

- a) Reduction in number of households with more than 2 dogs and/or 2 cats.
- b) *Registration of all dog breeders after 1 July 2018*

8. RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP

The following three factors contribute to successful pet ownership:

- a) *THE OWNER, who needs to be aware of responsibilities of pet ownership and ensures that the dog is: registered, immunized, de-sexed (if desirable) and trained. The owner must be aware of the dog's behaviour at all times (including when the owner is away from the home). The owner is also responsible to ensure that the dog has adequate food, water and shelter and that the dog is regularly exercised.*
- b) *THE BREED determines the size, and often the temperament of the dog and its susceptibility to genetic defects. When selecting a pet it is important to seek appropriate advice on their suitability as pet and family dog.*
- c) *THE HOME ENVIRONMENT is made up of the part of the home that the dog will have access to (an enclosed yard and possibly part of the house). Important factors are adequacy of fencing, whether the dog can see out of the yard through a gate, adequacy of shelter, food/water and whether there are children, closeness of neighbours and other dogs and access to on-leash and off-leash exercise areas are all important factors.*

Successful pet ownership has both financial and time commitments. It is therefore important that people contemplating pet ownership endeavour to match their choice of pet to their particular home and family circumstances. As from 1 July 2018 mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats will come into effect in accordance with the Dog and Cat management Act 1995 (as amended).

8.1 Strategies

- a) Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- b) Promote mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats.

8.2 Actions

- a) Encourage people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat to consider the factors affecting the suitability of successful pet ownership in their particular circumstances. Sources of this information include:
 - Advice being available from the General Inspector.
 - Advice available on the internet
- b) Discourage people from obtaining dogs or a cat from other than registered breeders, rescues and shelters and encourage them to ensure that the dog or cat is sound from defects, immunised and de-sexed.
- c) Encourage people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat to become familiar with the responsibilities of dog or cat ownership prior to obtaining a dog or a cat.
- d) Encourage people when obtaining a new dog to ensure that it is trained.
- e) Encourage prospective pet owners to ensure that the home environment is suited for the pet.
- f) Enforce mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats as from 1 July 2018.

8.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

8.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

8.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

8.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

- a) Encouragement by Authorised Officers on daily basis.

9. ENFORCEMENT

Consistent enforcement of the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act is an important factor in educating the public to act responsibly with their pets. Responsible pet owners expect irresponsible pet owners to be dealt with through the provisions of the Act. Effectively there cannot be an incentive to act responsibly with our pets unless there is a disincentive for those who are not responsible.

9.1 Strategies

- a) Enforce the provision of the Dog and Cat Management Act.

9.2 Actions

- a) Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.

9.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

9.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

9.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

9.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Conduct daily inspections for dogs at large and inspect public parks to ensure dogs are on-leash where required while on patrol in community.

10. NOISE

Barking dog complaints are one of the most difficult and time consuming areas of Council responsibility. Barking dog complaints are subjective depending on an individual's tolerance for dog noise. Council must investigate and resolve these types of complaints. In order for Council to resolve the complaint they require full cooperation from the complainant to collect meaningful evidence suitable to a Court of law. In order to do this Council has set up a standard operating procedure for all dog noise nuisance complaints.

The complainant must follow Council's standard operating procedure, as failure to do so will result in the matter being set aside by Council. On receipt of a complaint Council will provide information to the dog owner and diaries to the complainant. If and when the diaries are returned, an investigation will follow. Upon substantiation of a complaint the Council will take the appropriate course of action.

10.1 Strategies

- a) Control of Barking Dogs.

10.2 Actions

- a) Step 1: General Inspector liaises with complainant to ascertain nature of problem.
- b) Step 2: General Inspector liaises with owner of dog alleged to cause problem.
- c) Step 3: Issue the dog owner with a Barking Problems solved publication.
- d) Step 4: Complainant plus at least two other persons not living at the same premises are required to fill out Dog Barking Diary for 14 consecutive days.
- e) Step 5: If the Dog Barking Diaries are consistent and owner of dog causing problem refuses to remedy situation an expiation notice is issued.

10.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

10.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

10.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

10.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduction in number of proven problem dogs vs expiation notices issued per year.

11. DOG ATTACKS / HARRASSMENT

As previously stated all dog attacks/harassment must be recorded and investigated. In order to reduce the incidence of dog attacks, Council must educate the public to act responsibly. The issue of dog attacks and harassment is of great concern to the general community, particularly in relation to children and the elderly.

Also of great concern is the number of unreported attacks and the fact that the majority of attacks occur on private property.

Although only a minority of dogs is involved in attacks and harassment, all dogs have the potential to bite, regardless of size, age, breed or temperament, particularly in situations where they are frightened, dominant, protective or possessive. How to avoid being bitten or how to read a dog's body language are important issues on which to educate the public.

11.1 Strategies

- a) Minimise dog attacks/harassments

11.2 Actions

- a) Collate statistics related to dog attacks, liaise with local vets to ensure all attacks are reported to council.
- b) Promote the level of risk relating to litigation and public safety.

11.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

11.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

11.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

11.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduction in number of dog attacks per year.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL

The management of dog faeces is an important environmental and health issue. Anecdotally, large amounts of dog faeces pollute our waterways and public places each year and it is an issue on which the community has strong feelings. In addition, the Copper Coast relies heavily on tourism and animal faeces littering our public places have a detrimental effect on visitors. Although the responsibility lies with dog owners, an increasing number of councils are providing leadership in this area by providing dog tidy bags to promote the picking up of dog faeces. It is widely acknowledged that councils that provide faeces removal dispensers dramatically reduce the incidence of discarded faeces in the community. Problems associated with vandalism have been overcome by placing the bag dispensers in areas of high visibility such as Council buildings.

Council By Law 5 requires dog owners to carry a bag for the picking -up of dog faeces.

12.1 Strategies

- a) Reduce dog faeces in public places to minimise environmental harm.

12.2 Actions

- a) *Implement strategically placed signs to encourage responsible dog ownership in the area of faeces removal.*
- b) *Continue providing dispensers and dog tidy bags.*
- c) *Enforce the by-law for dog owners to carry a bag for picking-up dog faeces.*

12.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

12.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

12.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

12.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduce the number of complaints received per year.

13. ANIMAL SAFETY

All reported dogs wandering at large are picked up by Council Authorised Officers and if the owner is known, returned to them as soon as possible. If the owner cannot be located the animal is taken to the local pound for safe keeping until claimed.

13.1 Strategies

- a) Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.

13.2 Actions

- a) Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practical.
- b) An expiation notice may be issued where a registered dog is found wandering at large for a second time.
- c) Ensure that all impounded dogs have clean safe facilities while impounded.
- d) Contact made with owner (if known) of deceased dog found on Council Land.

13.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

13.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

13.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

13.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduction in the number of dogs reported to be wandering at large.

14. WELFARE OF ANIMALS

Evidence of a link between pet ownership and better health has been demonstrated by a range of different studies. More work needs to be done to determine whether this link is causal or merely correlational (i.e. do pet owners share some other factor which yields health benefits?), and not all studies demonstrate a link between pet ownership and better health outcomes. However, as the evidence mounts, the public health profession is starting to take note. The National Health and Medical Research Council's Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Overweight and Obesity is considering dog walking as one key to getting overweight and obese people moving. It has been found that:

"Dogs encourage people to enjoy the outdoors. They have been shown to stimulate conversation between strangers in public places and they improve people's sense of security - both in the home and with their owner in public places. Pets are also wonderful companions. In some cases helping combat loneliness and social alienation. These benefits are as important for the elderly and single person households as they are for households with children."

Local government has a role to play in harnessing these benefits - not to encourage people to buy a pet but to even up the balance in the consideration of domestic animals issues and by removing unnecessary barriers to pet ownership.

14.1 Strategies

- a) Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.

14.2 Actions

- a) Provide new residents and visitors with up to date information regarding the benefits of responsible dog and cat ownership.
- b) Promote the benefits to the community of responsible pet ownership with the Dog and Cat Management Boards publication "Dog Owners Handbook", "Cat Owners Handbook" and "Good Cats play at home".
- c) Promote through council website the benefits of Dog and Cat ownership, eg Health benefits
- d) Encourage local activities to the Copper Coast area, eg Paws to Walk.

14.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

14.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

14.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

14.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduction in complaints relating to mistreatment of dogs.

15. PUBLIC SAFETY

Council has one full time General Inspector who is, among other things, responsible for Dog and Cat Management. The General Inspector from time to time relies on assistance from other staff and on a daily basis on assistance from administration support staff. Most staff are trained in all areas of animal management, and are the public face of animal management in the area. The officers educate, mediate and enforce the provision of the Act and have a good understanding of the issues affecting public safety and amenities in relation to dogs and cats. Council is providing adequate patrols for non-compliance with the Act.

15.1 Strategies

- a) Ensure public safety and amenity in relation to dogs and cats.

15.2 Actions

- a) Continue to conduct regular patrols of the area to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
- b) Invite input from interest groups throughout the community into dog and cat management.

15.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

15.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

15.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

15.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Reduction in number of dog attacks per year.

16. FEE STRUCTURES

Under the provisions of the Act Council must utilise money generated from dog and cat management in the area of dog and cat management. The implementation of this plan is a clear demonstration of Councils desire to fulfil this obligation. In addition Council's Finance Manager is responsible for ensuring that an independent ledger of funds is kept and is available for scrutiny by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

16.1 Strategies

- a) Ensure that revenue generated from registration fees is allocated to activities that address the needs of dog and cat owners.

16.2 Actions

- a) Conduct regular reviews of income and expenditure to ensure that Council is using best practice with available funds in a cost effective way.

16.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

16.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

16.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

16.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Overall improvement of facilities on an annual basis.

17. CAT MANAGEMENT

Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 a cat must be identified by wearing a collar or tag with owners' details or by micro-chipping. There is community support for greater control of cats and accountability of cat owners for their pets. Reasons commonly raised to better manage cats include: protection of birds, lizards and native fauna; to minimise disturbance to neighbours from defecation and spraying; to reduce disruption caused by the interaction between dogs and cats; and to manage territorial and other disputes between cats.

Council By Law 6 limits the number of cats allowed per dwelling and regulates the management of cats with the Council area.

17.1 Strategies

- a) Promote the contents of council's Cat By-law.

17.2 Actions

- a) Promote Council's Cat By-law and Cat Policy, which outlines the requirements for keeping a cat within the Copper Coast.
- b) Advise property owners where animal traps can be purchased to humanely trap on their property, homeless, feral or stray cats in accordance with RSPCA Guidelines.
- c) Liaise with Local Vets on re-homing cats and kittens.
- (d) Ensure compliance with Council By-law No 6 and with legislative Development requirements for intensive keeping of cats.

17.3 Responsibility

Director Development Services

17.4 Budget Implications

Ongoing

17.5. Other Resource Implications

Nil

17.6 Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

- a) Reduction in number of cages hired out on an annual basis.
- b) Reduction in complaints received per year relating to stray cats.

APPENDIX 1 – ON-LEASH & OFF-LEASH PARKS

ON-LEASH PARKS	
Location/Address	Comments
All CBD areas	Dogs must be on leash from 8.00am to 8.00pm Off leash all other times
Victoria Square, Kadina	Dogs must be on-leash at all times
Queen Square, Moonta	Dogs must be on-leash at all times
John Terrace, Wallaroo	Dogs must be on-leash at all times
All sporting grounds in Copper Coast	Dogs must be on-leash when sporting events are being played.
Any reserve on which a children's playground is located	Dogs must be on-leash at all times

OFF-LEASH PARKS	
Location/Address	Comments
Dog Parks to be investigated for Kadina, Moonta & Wallaroo	
All CBD areas	Dogs may be off leash from 8.00pm to 8.00am. On leash all other times
All sporting grounds in Copper Coast	Dogs may be off-leash when there are no sporting events taking place.

DOG PROHIBITED PARKS	
Location/Address	Comments
All playgrounds within Copper Coast	As per council by-law no 5

Notes

Note 1: The Animal Management Directions Plan will be reviewed every 5 years.

Note 2: Responsibility of Key Actions – Director Development Services