



**GREATER  
SHEPPARTON**

# **Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013-2017**



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# 1. Executive Summary

Council plays an important leadership role in supporting and promoting responsible pet ownership, community safety and healthy living through a well-informed community.

Council first adopted a Domestic Animal Management Plan in 2008, in accordance with the Domestic Animal Act 1994, which has provided a formal approach to service delivery and animal management initiatives for the past 4 years.

This new plan will build on the initial plan and will guide service delivery and actions through to the year 2017. This plan addresses responsible pet ownership and animal welfare by focussing on the following strategic directions and objectives for animal management.

<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Objective</b>
Training of authorised officers	Community Rangers can properly administer and enforce the Act.
Minimise potential for animals to create nuisance	Encourage people to manage their pets in a way that minimises the potential for nuisance to others.
Identification and registration of animals	Increase the percentage of registered domestic animals in the municipality.
Compliance and enforcement	Maximise compliance with state and local domestic animal laws, orders and regulations.
Audit of domestic animal businesses	Ensure all domestic animal businesses are registered with Council and comply with the requirements of the Act.
Identification of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs	Ensure all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are identified and kept in compliance with the Act.
Prevention of dog attacks	Minimise dog attacks on people and animals.
Overpopulation and euthanasia of animals	Decrease euthanasia rates of impounded and unclaimed animals.
Adequacy of local laws	Provide for the peace, order and good government of Greater Shepparton.
Planning for pets in emergencies	Plan for the management of domestic animals in a municipal emergency.
Community education	Promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership to the community.
Annual review of plan	Effectiveness of this plan is to be reported to Council annually.

This plan provides a structured framework for animal management services and includes a number of initiatives to promote responsible animal ownership and management.

## 2. Statutory Requirements

A four year Domestic Animal Management Plan is a statutory requirement for every Victorian municipality under the Domestic Animal Act 1994.

Section 68A of the Domestic Animal Act 1994 sets out the following requirements:

- (1) *Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare at 4 year intervals a domestic animal management plan.*
- (2) *A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must—*
  - (a) *set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and*
  - (b) *outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and*
  - (c) *outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—*
    - (i) *to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and*
    - (ii) *to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and*
    - (iii) *to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and*
    - (iv) *to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and 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. Background

### 3.1 Greater Shepparton Profile

As a growing regional centre with a vibrant cultural mix, the Greater Shepparton community comprises almost 61,740 residents living within 60+ localities. Greater Shepparton enjoys a young demographic with growing families, with 2011 census data showing the proportion of couples with children nearly 3% above the regional Victorian average, at 29.7%. The overall population is forecast to grow from 63,000 in 2013 to nearly 80,000 by 2031. As the population increases so will the number of animals.

The major towns in Greater Shepparton City Council are Shepparton, Mooroopna and Tatura. Other towns include Arcadia; Ardmona; Boxwood; Bunbartha; Byrneside; Caniambo; Congupna; Cooma; Coomboona; Cosgrove; Cosgrove South; Dhurringile; Dookie; Dookie College; Gillieston; Girgarre East; Gowangardie; Grahamvale; Harston; Karramomus; Katandra; Katandra West; Kialla; Kialla East; Kialla West; Kyabram (locality, not town); Kyabram South; Lancaster; Lemnos; Major Plains; Marionvale; Marungi; Merrigum; Moorilim; Mooroopna; Mooroopna North; Mooroopna North West; Mount Major; Murchison; Murchison East; Murchison North; Nalinga; Orrvale; Pine Lodge; Shepparton; Shepparton East; Shepparton North; St Germain's; Stanhope South; Stewarton; Tallygaroopna; Tamleugh North; Tatura; Tatura East; Toolamba; Toolamba West; Udera; Waranga; Wyuna; Zeerust.

The municipality is a major fruit and vegetable processing centre with large food facilities located in or in close proximity to Shepparton. Dairying is also a major agricultural activity with a number of major milk processors operating in the local area.

### 3.2 Current Domestic Animal Management Programs and Services

#### Customer First Commitment

The Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to providing responsive and reliable service to its customers. This customer first commitment aligns with the Council Plan and outlines what our customers can expect when they contact the Council. It explains a customer's rights when dealing with Council and provides methods of contact.

We will strive to provide service excellence through:

- informed professional guidance;
- listening to and understanding our customers needs;
- developing skills and motivated staff;
- strengthening relationships between staff and the customer; and
- ongoing evaluation, reporting and continuous improvement.

#### Community Rangers

Community Rangers undertake a variety of services associated with animal management. The Council employs a system of registration of domestic animals that utilises an identification tag inscribed with the registration number. This tag is replaced annually. Each year for the last six years a door knock has been undertaken by a designated Authorised Compliance Officer visiting door to door in targeted areas to check registration and compliance.

The Council aims to offer a response to domestic animal complaints within 30 minutes of receiving a call during working hours. Community Rangers are assigned tasks and complaints by priority being urgent, high, medium and low. An audit trail for all complaints and responses is kept. After hours response times can sometimes be longer due to only one officer generally being available, however Community Rangers will endeavour to respond within 30 minutes of a call after hours. Routine street patrols are carried out daily often in conjunction with other tasks. When problems of wandering animals are advised patrols are carried out on a regular basis in specific areas that have been identified. All terrain vehicle patrols along community pathways have been a recent innovation that has been implemented by Community Rangers.

Community Rangers attend micro-chipping days organised by other organisations. Community Rangers also attend meetings of other organisations when requested to talk about responsible domestic animal ownership.

Community Rangers respond to animals at large on Council managed roads. This service is operated 24 hours per day with many requests coming through Victoria Police (D24). Community Rangers often liaise with Victoria Police in regard to potential crime scenes where requests are made to attend animals that may hinder the police in the performance of their duties.

Community Rangers are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, but the majority of complaints attended are in relation to domestic animals. Some cases require utilising legislation under both Acts.

### **Greater Shepparton Animal Shelter**

The Council operates an animal shelter in accordance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994 Code of Practice for Shelters and Pounds. The capacity of the animal shelter is 40 dog pens and 20 cat pens incorporating separate re-housing provisions.

When an animal is brought to the shelter, whether by a Ranger, a member of the public or any other third party, the animal is assessed immediately for disease, temperament and any obvious signs of injury. The animal is also scanned for a microchip and all details are recorded including breed, age, sex, colour etc.

If animals are microchipped or wearing identification, their owners are contacted as soon as possible. Animals with no identification are photographed and placed on the lost animals register on the Council's external website.

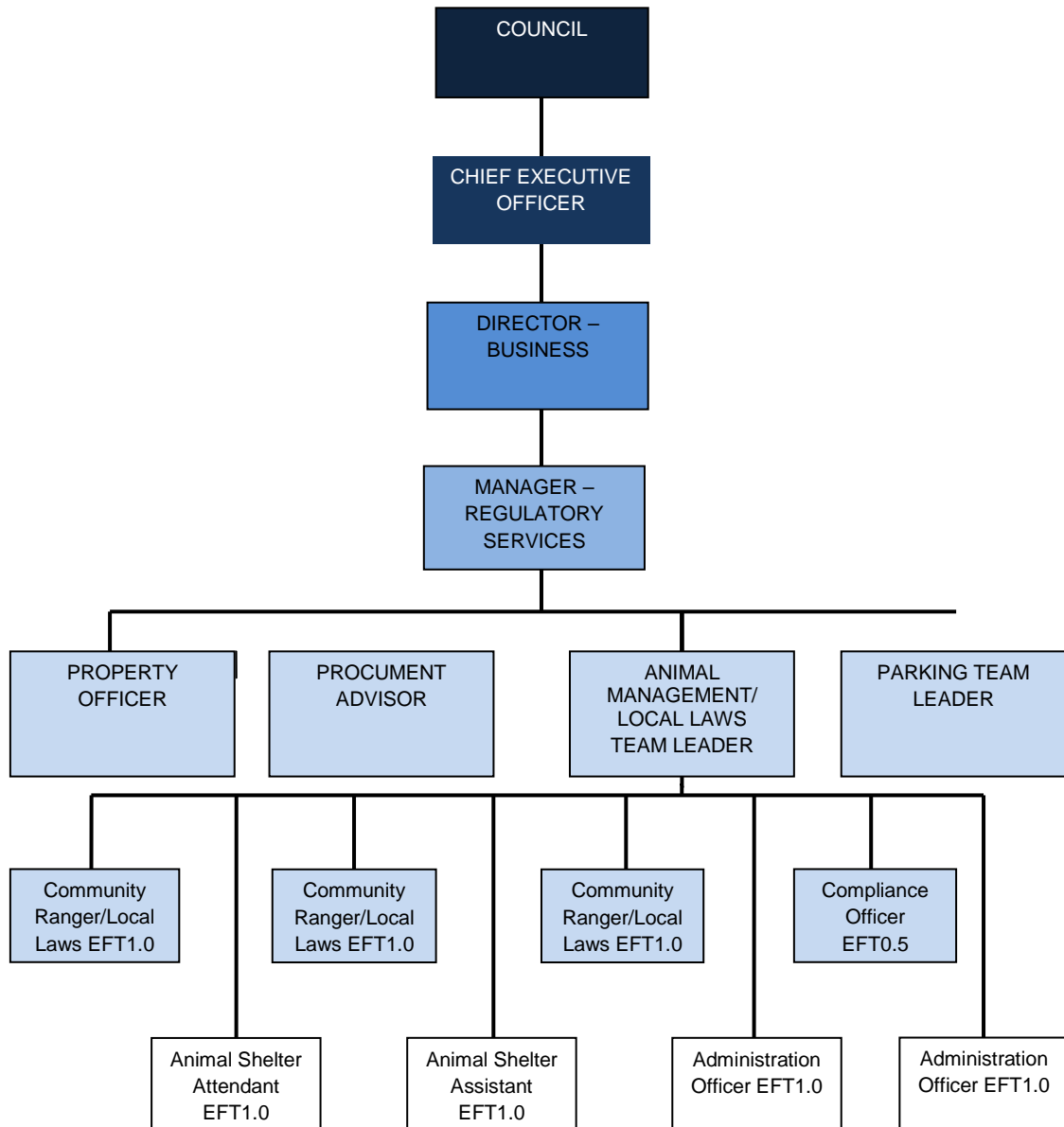
Unclaimed animals that have been at the shelter for eight days or more are assessed by a veterinarian for rehousing. Each animal is individually tested for disease, congenital abnormalities, temperament and suitability to be rehoused with other animals and people. When an animal passes this testing, they are photographed and placed on the rehouse animal register on the Council's external website.

### **Domestic Animal Management Stakeholders**

Stakeholders of Council's animal management unit for domestic animal management purposes include:

- Domestic animal owners;
- Domestic animal businesses;
- Veterinarians;
- Victoria Police;
- RSPCA;
- Animal welfare organisations;
- Department of Sustainability and Environment;
- Parks Victoria;
- The General Public; and
- Other Council departments.

Greater Shepparton Organisational Structure – Local Laws and Animal Management



## 4. Programs

### Training of Authorised Officers

Greater Shepparton City Council provides training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district in accordance with Section 68(A)(2)(b) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

### Current Training Programs and Education

The Council is committed to the training and development of all its employees to support the delivery of services to citizens. Council's Community Rangers must hold or be undertaking Certificate IV – Statutory Compliance and Certificate IV – Animal Control and Regulation.

Community Rangers also undertake regular training in the following aspects of animal management to enable them to carry out their tasks and to be aware of industry changes that impact on service delivery:

- Attendance at regional group meetings comprising other councils
- Bureau of Animal Welfare seminars – generally covering changes in legislation and breed identification
- Ongoing training in conflict resolution and mediation
- Firearm training annually
- Occupational health and safety training
- Information technology systems training

### Occupational Health and Safety

Greater Shepparton's animal management services conducts its business in a manner that contributes to the health and well being of its employees, and ensures the safety of employees, contractors and the public.

All employees in accordance with the Council's Occupational Health and Safety Policy Statement are committed to:

- providing a safe and healthy work environment to prevent injury and illness;
- the identification and quick resolution of health and safety issues in the workplace;
- consultation and cooperation between management and employees to resolve workplace health and safety issues;
- establishing and providing resources to support an Occupational Health and Safety Committee and Health and Safety representatives;
- educating staff with respect to OH & S issues and training staff in safe work practices;
- providing appropriate safety equipment, clothing and protective gear to prevent accidents and injuries;
- regularly monitoring the health and safety of employees who work in high risk areas, especially providing hearing and eyesight testing on a regular basis;
- development a work place based rehabilitation program to assist injured employees to return to the workforce as soon as possible after an injury or illness; and
- encouraging a consultative approach between all parties to improve health and safety performance.



## **Our Plans**

*Objective: Community Rangers can properly administer and enforce the Act.*

### Key Activities:

- Community Rangers must hold or be undertaking Certificate IV – Statutory Compliance and Certificate IV – Animal Control and Regulation
- Community rangers are to undertake training so that they have current knowledge of legislation and authority to act.

### Annual Performance Measures:

- All Community Rangers must hold or be undertaking Certificate IV – Statutory Compliance and Certificate IV – Animal Control and Regulation
- Community Rangers to attend all Bureau of Animal Welfare seminars

## 5. Nuisance Animals

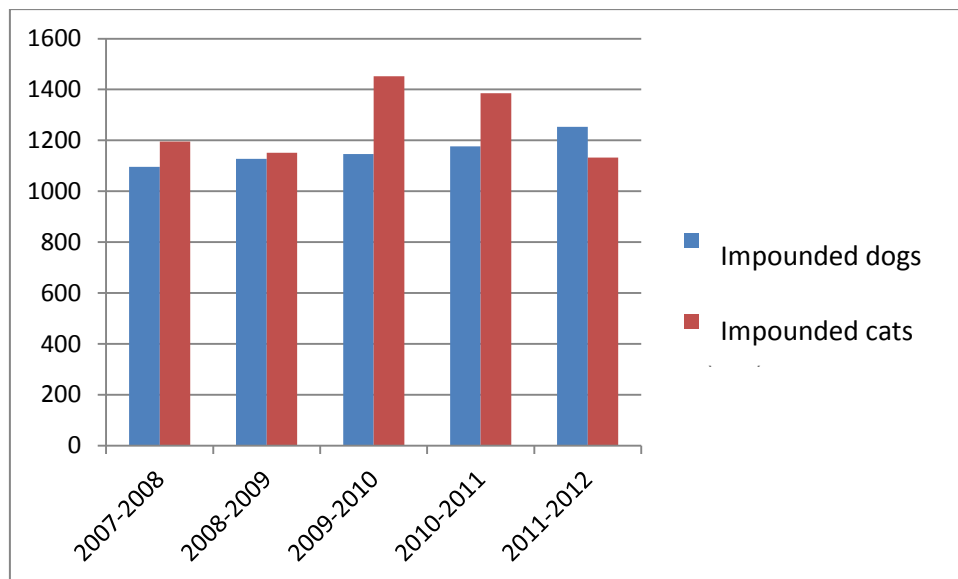
This section outlines programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance in accordance with Section 68A(2)(c)(vi) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

### Current Community Education Programs

Current programs, services and strategies to minimise nuisance include:

- Website information on responsible pet ownership (updated monthly)
- Identification of lost animals and animals for rehoming on website (updated weekly)
- Encouraging residents to record and complete Barking Dog Diaries
- Responding to complaints
- Provision of cat cages to local residents for trapping nuisance cats including conditions of use
- Investigating options for the establishment of an off leash dog park
- Attendance in public areas promoting responsible pet ownership, registration and micro chipping (regular all terrain vehicle patrols along walking track during daylight savings twice a week)
- Media interviews to reinforce responsible animal ownership (especially around holiday periods) (4 interviews in 2012/13)
- Monthly advertorial in local newspapers regarding responsible pet ownership
- Signage and installation of litter bags and bins

**Greater Shepparton City Council Annual Impounded Animals**



## **Our Plans**

*Objective: To encourage people to manage their pets in a way that minimises the potential for nuisance to others.*

### Key Activities:

- Maintenance of an official warning register
- Follow up on verbal and written cautions and check for compliance
- Assist residents in dealing with cat trespass/nuisance problems by providing cat cages for trapping nuisance cats
- Encourage residents to complete Barking Dog Diaries
- Trial an off leash park for the exercise of dogs
- Continue to provide subsidised desexing vouchers to pension card holders

The following statistics will reported annually:

- Number of cat traps loaned.
- Number of barking dog diaries received.
- Number of cautions/infringements issued?
- Number of dogs and cats impounded.
- Number of dog and cat desexing vouchers issued.

Annual Performance Measures:

- Evaluation of off leash dog park trial reported to Council.

## 6. Identification and Registration

This section outlines programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats in accordance with Section 68A(2)(c)(v) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

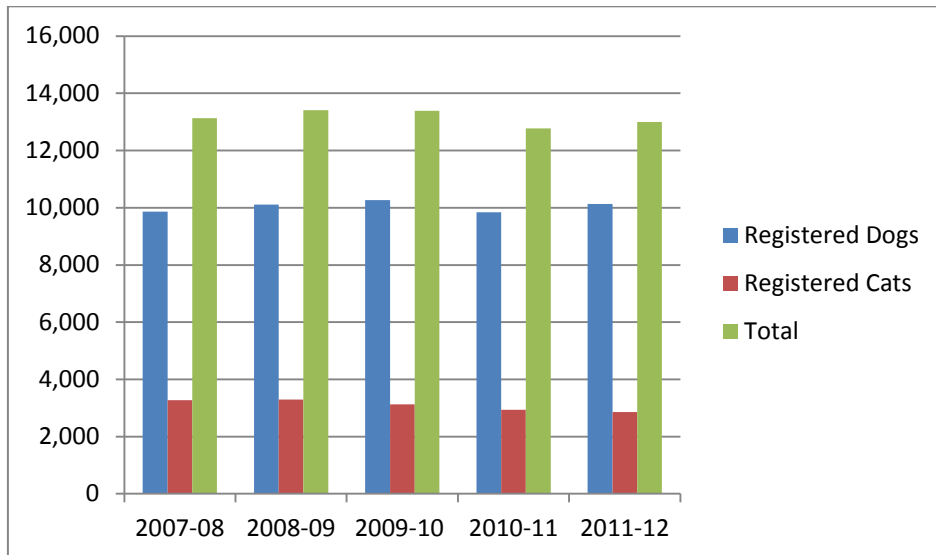
### Current Situation

Greater Shepparton City Council's current identification and registration education include:

- Media interviews to reinforce responsible animal ownership
- Forwarding of renewal registration data to known animal owners
- Annual door knock campaign in urban areas of municipality
- Participation in State Government's Pet Registration Scheme
- Compulsory registration of domestic animals at 3 months of age
- Compulsory micro chipping of dogs and cats at first registration from May 2007
- Free registration for animals under 6 months of age
- Community Ranger's issued with individual microchip scanners
- Information about registration process and fees on Council's web site
- A range of brochures and information provided in conjunction with the Bureau of Animal Welfare
- Follow up of registrations of domestic animals purchased from registered pet stores

### Greater Shepparton City Council Registrations

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Registered Dogs	9,860	10,114	10,261	9,842	10,135
Registered Cats	3,272	3,299	3,128	2,932	2,864
Total	13,132	13,413	13,389	12,774	12,999



**Comparison with other Regional City Councils**

<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Shepparton</b>	<b>Mildura</b>	<b>Latrobe</b>	<b>Ballarat</b>	<b>Bendigo</b>
Population	61,740	54,337	71,703	88,437	100,617
Area	2,421km <sup>2</sup>	22,330km <sup>2</sup>	1,422km <sup>2</sup>	740km <sup>2</sup>	3,000km <sup>2</sup>
Registered dogs	10,135	7,097	13,560	14,615	18,401
Registered/population	16%	13%	19%	17%	18%
Registration fee	\$40	\$33	\$34	\$32	\$38

<b>Cats</b>	<b>Shepparton</b>	<b>Mildura</b>	<b>Latrobe</b>	<b>Ballarat</b>	<b>Bendigo</b>
Population	61,740	54,337	71,703	88,437	100,617
Area	2,421km <sup>2</sup>	22,330km <sup>2</sup>	1,422km <sup>2</sup>	740km <sup>2</sup>	3,000km <sup>2</sup>
Registered cats	2,864	1,221	4,454	6,210	5,797
Registered/population	5%	2%	6%	7%	6%
Registration fee	\$40	\$33	\$34	\$32	\$29

**Our Plans**

*Objective: To increase the percentage of registered domestic animals in the municipality.*

**Key Activities:**

- All impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release.
- Investigate the feasibility and ability to reconciling the Council pet registration databases with microchip registries.
- Door knocking random properties each year to check for unregistered dogs and cats
- Follow up properties where animal registration has lapsed.
- Attend atleast 2 micro chipping days held in conjunction with local vets and other parties
- Promote the benefits of registration to pet owners
- Investigate the feasibility of lifetime registration tags
- Investigate the feasibility of registrations being completed by veterinary clinics
- Implement pro-rata registration fees for first time registration of animals

The following statistics will be reported annually:

- Records of number of unregistered animals identified during random door knocking reported
- Number of micro chipping days attended in conjunction with local vets and other parties
- Number of animals registered at micro chipping days in conjunction with local vets and other parties

Annual performance measures:

- Increase in the number of dog and cat registrations each year
- Door knocking of 2,500 random properties each year to check for unregistered dogs and cats
- Lifetime registration tag feasibility report to be prepared for Council's consideration
- Investigate the feasibility of registrations being completed by veterinary clinics.
- Investigate pro rata registration fees where animal is registered under 6 months of age.

## 7. Compliance and Enforcement

This section outlines programs, services and strategies to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation, in accordance with Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

### Current Activities

Greater Shepparton City Council's current activities in this area include attending to inquiries/complaints from residents on the matters listed:

- Ensure compliance by animal owners with legislation
- Enforcement of requirements of Council Local Law relevant to domestic animals
- Keeping of dogs and cats in residential areas – compliance checking
- Control of dogs under leash – regular patrols
- Noise complaints – investigating and resolving
- Deposit of animal excrement in public places – imposing compliance where possible
- 24 hour cat curfew – implementing compliance strategies
- Provision of information on Council web site

### Our Plans

*Objective: To maximise compliance with state and local domestic animal laws, orders and regulations.*

Key Activities:

- Doorknocking and random domestic animal registration inspections
  - Distribution of animal registration reminder notices
  - Conduct investigations and regular patrols
  - Official warnings, infringement notices and prosecution
- 
- The following statistics will be reported annually: Reduce the number of impounded dogs and cats
  - Report number of warnings, infringement notices and prosecutions

Annual Performance Measures:

- 2,500 random property inspections

## 8. Domestic Animal Businesses

This section outlines 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. In accordance with Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*, and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f).

### Current Situation

Greater Shepparton currently has 12 registered domestic animal businesses.

Domestic animal business registration is controlled by the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

Greater Shepparton has a variety of domestic animal businesses. There are approved Codes of Practice for the operation of breeding and rearing establishments, boarding establishments, and shelters and pounds. Pet shops are also included. Council is obliged to ensure each establishment complies with the relevant Code of Practice with regular audits.

Where Planning Department compliance is required to establish a business, information will be provided to applicants on process to be followed

Council provides information and guidance to every domestic animal business on the necessity of registration, the procedure and the requirements to be fulfilled under the Act.

Council will continue to investigate all reports regarding domestic animal breeding businesses and seek compliance for any non-registered domestic animal business by conducting door knocks and property inspections.

### Our Plans

*Objective: To ensure all domestic animal businesses are registered with Council and comply with the requirements of the Domestic Animal Act 1994.*

#### Key Activities:

- Ensure all pet shops, breeders and shelters are provided with information on registration and identification responsibilities they have under the DAA
- Inspect domestic animal businesses in response to complaints

#### Annual Performance Measures:

- All registered animal breeding businesses audited and provided current information
- Number of complaints received regarding domestic animal businesses

## 9. Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

This section outlines 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, in accordance with Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

### Current Situation

#### *Greater Shepparton Shire Council Registered Declared Dogs*

	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Registered Dogs	9,860	10,114	10,261	9,842	10,135
Registered Declared Dogs	14	24	30	35	40

There are 5 restricted breed dogs in Victoria. They are the American Pit Bull Terrier; Dogo Argentino (Argentinean Mastiff); Fila Brasileiro (Brazilian Mastiff); Japanese Tosa and Perro De Presa Canario.

Council treats all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs very seriously. Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of such offences:

- vehicle patrols and complaint response;
- dog attack (immediate - including 24 hour emergency service) and dog at large call-out services;
- registration and identification of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs (declared) including renewal and door-knocks; and
- infringement notice system and where required, prosecution services.

### Our Plans

*Objective: To ensure all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are identified and kept in compliance with the Domestic Animal Act 1994.*

#### Key Activities:

- Educate the community about what are dangerous menacing and restricted breed dogs, as well as confinement problems and penalties for dog at large
- Investigate complaints regarding dangerous, menacing and restricted dog breeds

#### Annual Performance Measures:

- Number of identified dangerous, menacing and restricted dogs
- Number of complaints received regarding dangerous, menacing or restricted dogs



## 10. Dog Attacks

This section outlines programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals in accordance with Section 68A(2)(c)(iii) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

### Current Situation

Often when a dog attack is reported, officers find that it is a recurrence of an offence that went unreported previously. Had initial attacks been reported, subsequent attacks may have been prevented through impoundment or surrender of the animal, better confinement and retraining of the animal if attacks were not serious.

All dogs are required to be confined to their property. This is a requirement under the Domestic Animal Act 1994 and Council will continue to place importance on the need for dogs to be confined. Council encourages citizens to have their dogs desexed, as this helps to reduce their tendencies to wander and be at large.

### ***Greater Shepparton City Council Dog Attacks***

	<b><i>2008-09</i></b>	<b><i>2009-10</i></b>	<b><i>2010-11</i></b>	<b><i>2011-12</i></b>
Reported dog on dog/cat attacks	8	16	8	8
Reported dog on people attacks	5	1	3	7
Reported dog on livestock attacks	0	5	1	2
Total reported dog attacks	13	22	12	17

Community Rangers attend education and information services provided by Bureau of Animal Welfare regarding dog attack issues.

Council treats the issues of dog attack very seriously. Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of nuisance offences:

- vehicle patrols and nuisance complaint response;
- dog attack (immediate - including 24 hour emergency service) and dog at large call-out services;
- registration and identification of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs including renewal and door-knocks;
- infringement notice system and where required, prosecution services; and
- a domestic animal pound for impounded animals;

Confinement of dogs is a priority because the instances of wandering dogs increases risk to other pets, humans and livestock, and consumes time and resources of Community Rangers. Desexed animals are less likely to wander so Council will continue to encourage people to have their pet desexed.

## **Our Plans**

*Objective: To minimise dog attacks on people and animals.*

### Key Activities:

- Continue to inform the community how to report dog attacks, if bitten or a witness
- Further develop the relationship with veterinarians and police to encourage the reporting of dog attacks
- Continue to educate pet owners of problems caused by dog confinement, leash laws and penalties for dog attack

### Annual Performance Measures:

- Reported dog attacks by type
- Number of dog attacks reported by vets or police

## 11. Overpopulation and Euthanasia

This section outlines programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats, in accordance with *Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).*

### Current Situation

Council's animal shelter and euthanasia policies are guided by the Domestic Animal Act 1994. Council policy is to wherever possible return any lost or seized at-large animal to its owner. However, registration and identification of ownership is essential to the return of animals to their owners.

Council's promotion of registration and microchipping strongly emphasises the return of lost pets. Council currently undertakes the following educational and promotional activities in support of nuisance offences:

- Weekly update of lost animals and animals for rehoming on Council's website
- Weekly promotion of animals available for rehoming in local newspapers

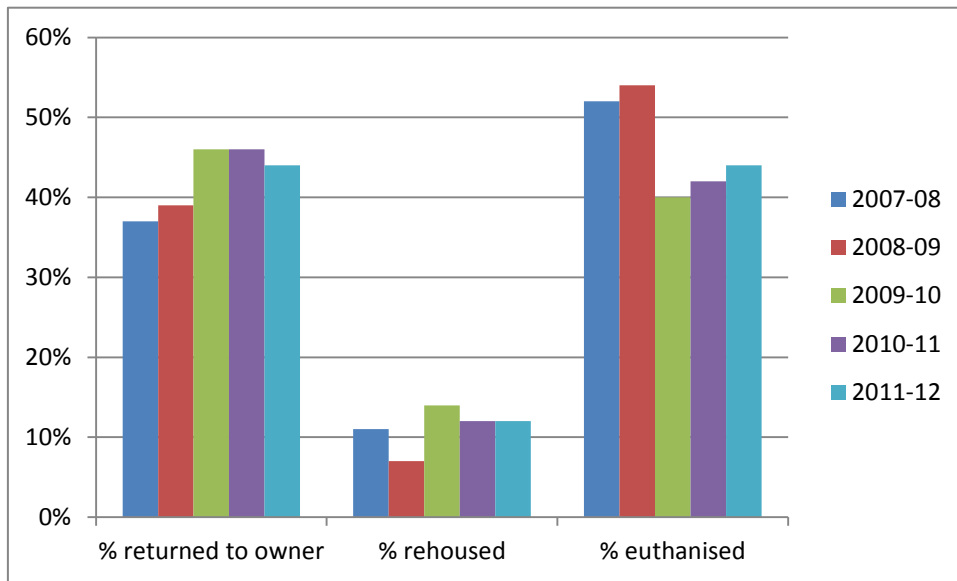
Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of increasing registration and thereby reducing euthanasia rates:

- renewal follow-ups for registration and identification for domestic dogs and cats;
- vehicle patrols and nuisance complaint response;
- a domestic animal pound for impounded animals;
- infringement notice system and where required, prosecution services.

A large number of impounded cats are feral cats. It is important that community members take responsibility for owned animals by registering, microchipping and desexing. Council assists property owners with cat trapping to remove unwanted and unowned animals. The damage to native fauna from feral cats cannot be over-stated, together with problems of disease and parasites.

**Greater Shepparton City Council population and euthanasia of dogs**

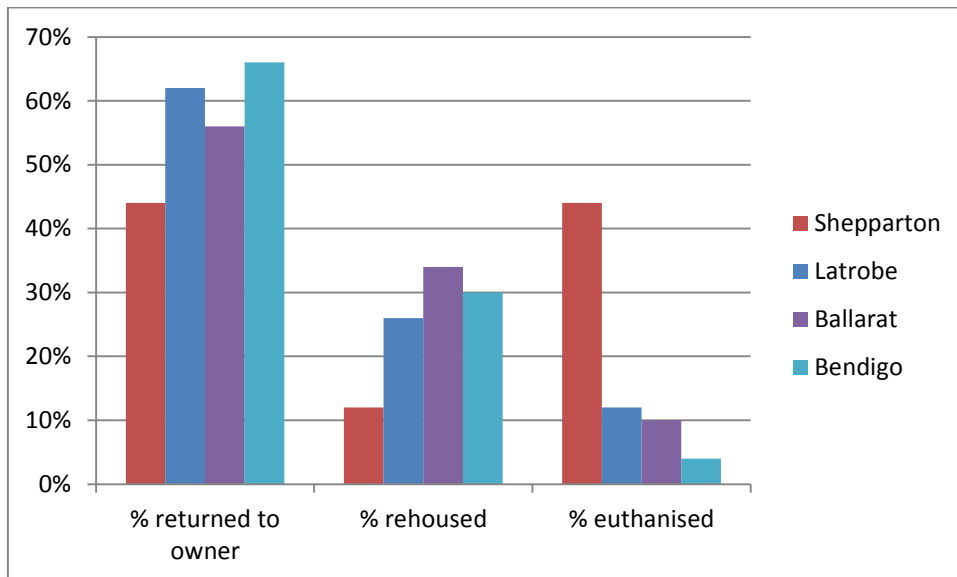
<b>Dogs</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Registered dogs	9,860	10,114	10,261	9,842	10,135
Impoundments	1,096	1,098	1,159	1,127	1,253
Returned to owner	408	423	537	518	557
Rehoused	124	79	164	133	145
Euthanised	564	596	458	476	551
% returned to owner	37%	39%	46%	46%	44%
% rehoused	11%	7%	14%	12%	12%
% euthanised	52%	54%	40%	42%	44%



**Comparison with other Regional City Councils**

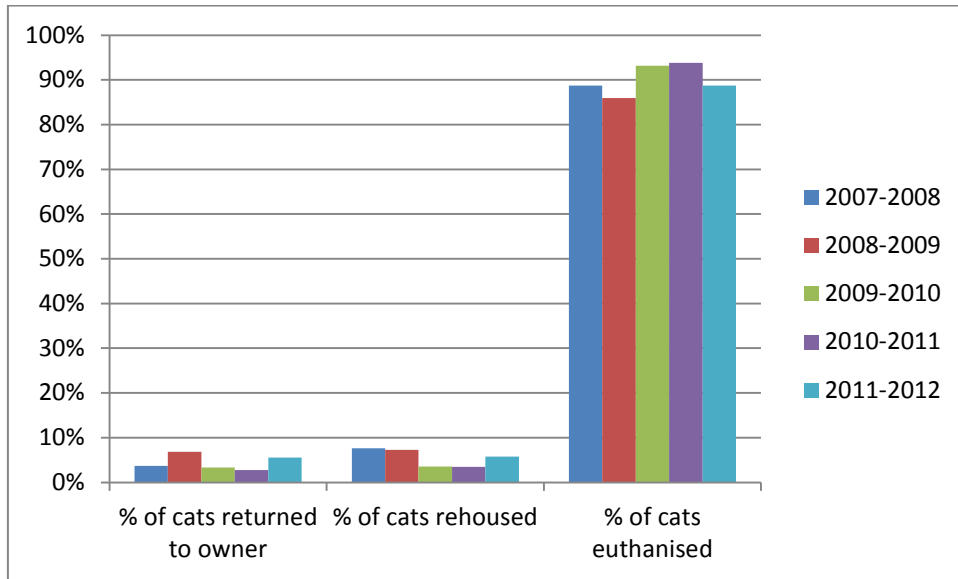
<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Shepparton</b>	<b>Latrobe</b>	<b>Ballarat</b>	<b>Bendigo</b>
Population	60,442	71,703	88,437	100,617
Area	2,421km <sup>2</sup>	1,422km <sup>2</sup>	740km <sup>2</sup>	3,000km <sup>2</sup>
Registered dogs	10,135	13,560	14,615	18,401
Impoundments	1,253	1,137	1,779	2,204
Returned to owner	557	710	994	1,461
Rehoused	145	291	597	648
Euthanised	551	136	188	95

<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Shepparton</b>	<b>Latrobe</b>	<b>Ballarat</b>	<b>Bendigo</b>
Registered/population	13%	19%	17%	18%
% returned to owner	44%	62%	56%	66%
% rehoused	12%	26%	34%	30%
% Euthanised	44%	12%	10%	4%



**Greater Shepparton City Council population and euthanasia of cats**

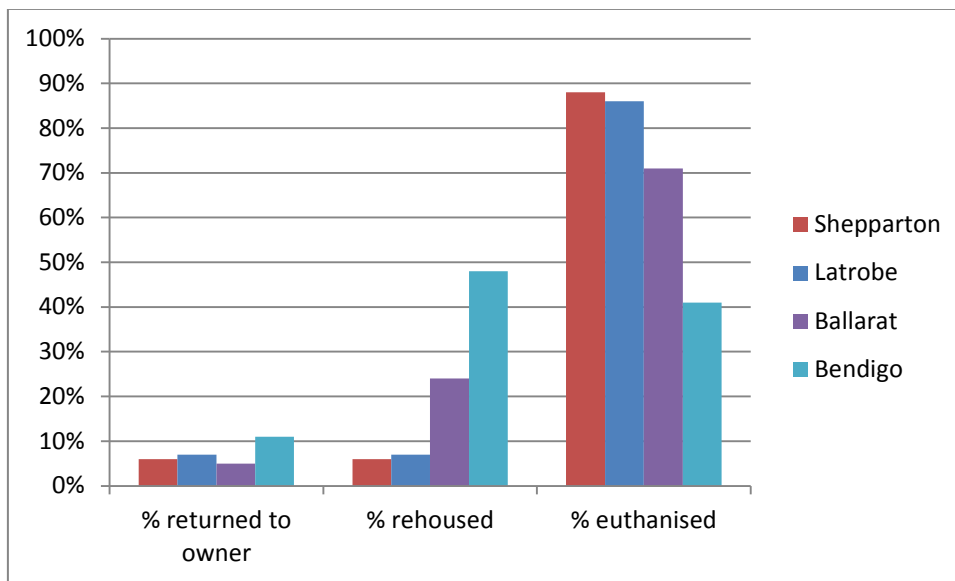
Cats	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Registered cats	3,272	3,299	3,128	2,932	2,864
Impoundments	1,196	1,143	1,441	1,358	1,132
Returned to owner	44	78	48	37	63
Rehoused	91	83	51	47	65
Euthanased	1061	982	1342	1274	1004
% returned to owner	4%	7%	3%	3%	6%
% rehoused	8%	7%	4%	3%	6%
% euthanased	88%	86%	93%	94%	88%



**Comparison with other Regional City Councils**

<b>Cats</b>	<b>Shepparton</b>	<b>Latrobe</b>	<b>Ballarat</b>	<b>Bendigo</b>
Population	60,442	71,703	88,437	100,617
Area	2,421	1,422km2	740km2	3,000km2
Registered cats	2,409	4,454	6,210	5,797
Impounded cats	1,132	569	1,468	1,500
Returned to owner	63	40	74	165
Rehoused	65	41	356	722
Euthanased	1,004	488	1,038	613

<b>Cats</b>	<b>Shepparton</b>	<b>Latrobe</b>	<b>Ballarat</b>	<b>Bendigo</b>
Registered/population	4%	6%	7%	6%
% returned to owner	6%	7%	5%	11%
% rehoused	6%	7%	24%	48%
% euthanased	88%	86%	71%	41%



## **Our Plans**

*Objective: To decrease euthanasia rates of impounded and unclaimed animals.*

### Key Activities:

- Increase the number of animals registered with Council so that they can be returned to their owner
- Promotion of animals available for rehousing updated weekly on Council's website
- Weekly promotion of animals available for rehousing in local newspapers
- Work with animal welfare organisations to promote the rehousing of impounded animals
- Breed specific animals available for rehousing promoted on partner animal welfare websites

### Annual Performance Measures:

- Reduce euthanasia rates for impounded dogs and cats.
- Enter into agreement/s with registered animal welfare group/s.



## 12. Local Laws

This section provides for the review of existing local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable in accordance with Section 68A(2)(d) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

### **Current Situation**

Council's Local Law #1 Community Living provides for the peace, order and good government of the municipal district of the Greater Shepparton City Council. Part 6 relates to the keeping of animals, birds and poultry (Refer Appendix 1 refer to pages 28 to 32 of the local law).

### **Our Plans**

*Objective: To provide for the peace, order and good government of Greater Shepparton.*

If the trial of an off leash dog park is successful the local law may need to be amended to designate off leash areas within Greater Shepparton

Key Activities:

- Review whether Local Law #1 Community Living requires amendment following the trial of an off leash dog park

Annual Performance Measures:

- Council report evaluating off leash dog park trial to take into consideration the adequacy of Local Law 1 Community Living.

## 13. Animals in emergencies

This section provides for the review of the management of domestic animals in emergencies in accordance with Section 68A(2)(e) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

### Current Situation

At present, like in many municipal emergency management plans, Greater Shepparton City Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) does not provide for domestic animals. Animals (live and dead) are held to be the responsibility of the Department of Primary Industries in a municipal emergency. However, this primarily means livestock, not domestic animals.

While full responsibility for domestic animals in all circumstances rests with the owner of the animal, Council needs to consider issues of domestic animal management when considering evacuation procedures, emergency relief centres. Housing and feeding animals may become an important issue, when people bring domestic animals into relief centres or domestic animal businesses require evacuation.

### Our Plans

*Objective: To plan for the management of domestic animals in a municipal emergency.*

#### Key Activities:

- To prepare an Emergency Animal Welfare Plan for inclusion in Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Inform the community of what they should do with their domestic animals in an emergency

#### Annual Performance Measures:

- Emergency Animal Welfare Plan adopted by Council for inclusion in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 30 June 2015
- Domestic animal emergency management information available to the community by 30 June 2015

## 14. Community Education

This section provides for community education activities to promote responsible pet ownership in accordance with Section 68A(2)(e) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

### Current Situation

Current community education activities include:

- Website information on responsible pet ownership (updated monthly)
- Identification of lost animals and animals for rehoming on website and in local newspapers (updated weekly)
- Media interviews to reinforce responsible animal ownership (especially around holiday periods)
- Monthly advertorials in local newspapers about responsible pet ownership
- Forwarding of renewal registration information to known animal owners
- Annual door knock campaign in urban areas of municipality
- Follow up of registrations of domestic animals purchased from registered pet stores
- Information about registration process and fees on Council's web site
- A range of brochures and information provided in conjunction with the Bureau of Animal Welfare
- Signage and installation of litter bags and bins

### Our Plans

*Objective: To promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership to the community.*

Key Activities:

- To continue to promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership, with a particular focus during the animal registration renewal period
- Promotion of animals available for rehoming in local newspapers
- Promotion of animals available for rehoming on Council's website and partner animal welfare organisation websites
- Promotion of animals available for rehoming using social media
- To increase the community's awareness of the operations of Council's animal shelter by holding an annual open day

Annual Performance Measures:

- 12 media releases issued annually
- Annual campaign to promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership during the animal registration renewal period
- Weekly promotion of animals available for rehoming local newspapers
- Promotion of animals available for rehoming updated weekly on Council's website
- Breed specific animals available for rehoming promoted on partner animal welfare websites
- Hold an annual animal shelter open day

## 15. Annual Review of Plan

This section provides for the annual review of the Plan and Annual Reporting in accordance with Section 68A(3)(a)(b)(c) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994* as 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.*

### **Current Situation**

Since the Council's adoption of the previous plan in 2008, the plan has not been presented for review by the Council.

### **Our Plans**

*Objective: The effectiveness of this plan is to be reported to Council annually.*

#### Key Activities:

- Performance will be assessed and reported quarterly to the Director Business
- The annual review of the plan will be reported to Council and the plan amended if required
- An evaluation of the plan will also be included in Council's Annual Report

#### Annual Performance Measures:

- Annual review of the plan to be reported to Council
- An evaluation of the plan is to be included in Council's annual report

# Appendix 1

## PART 6 – KEEPING OF ANIMALS, BIRDS, POULTRY

### 6.1 Animals, Birds (including Pigeons), and Poultry

- (a) No person may without a permit keep any animals, birds (including pigeons), or poultry other than a domestic animal, fowl hen or songbird on any property in a residential area.
- (b) No person shall allow to remain on any property any noisy animal, bird (including pigeons), or poultry which in the opinion of an authorised officer cause a nuisance to any person residing in the neighbourhood
- (c) For the purpose of this Part, noises emanating from such animals, birds (including pigeons), or poultry shall not be deemed to cause a nuisance to any person unless objections in writing have been lodged with Council from more than one resident of immediate neighbouring properties
- (d) Pigeons shall not be kept on any property unless in a pigeon loft constructed to Council's requirements.

#### **Penalty**

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

## 6.2 Dogs

- (a) Any person who keeps a dog or dogs on any property in a residential area must have a minimum area of bare land made available to the dog or dogs. Such land does not include areas covered by any buildings, swimming pools, sheds or the like. The minimum area to be made available is:

for 1 dog - 100m<sup>2</sup>  
for 2 dogs - 200m<sup>2</sup>  
for 3 dogs – 400m<sup>2</sup>

- (b) No person may without a permit keep more than two dogs on any property in a residential or commercial area, or on any property in a rural area which comprises less than eight hectares.
- (c) No dog shall be housed or confined in an enclosure or tethered at a lesser distance than 7.5m from any dwelling on an adjoining property, and such enclosure shall comprise an area of not less than nine square metres in respect of each dog being confined.
- (d) A person who owns or is in charge of a dog on any highway or Council land must keep the dog under control by a leash, chain or cord connecting that person to the dog unless the highway or Council land has been designated by Council resolution and signage to be excluded from this requirement.
- (e) The owner of a dog must ensure their dog does not encroach upon any area in which dogs are prohibited by Council resolution and so designated by Council signage.

### **Penalty**

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

## 6.3 Cats

- (a) No person may without a permit keep more than two cats on any property in a residential or commercial area.
- (b) No person shall keep or allow to be kept a cat which in the opinion of an authorised officer causes a nuisance or damage to any person, property or the environment.

### **Penalty**

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

## 6.4 Poultry

- (a) No person shall keep on any property in a residential or commercial area a number of fowl hens greater than ten mature birds.
- (b) A poultry house shall consist of a minimum floor area of five square metres to house ten fowls.
- (b) Poultry shall not be kept on any property other than in a poultry house which is:
  - (i) at least 20m from the property frontage;
  - (ii) at least 3m from any other street or road;
  - (iii) at least 12m from any dwelling whether on the same or adjoining property, and an enclosed run attached to a poultry house must also comply with this requirement.
- (d) The provisions of this Part referring to poultry shall not apply to any commercial poultry farm.
- (e) An owner or occupier of land on which a poultry house is located must ensure that it has:
  - (i) a location on ground which is well drained; and
  - (ii) weatherproof walls of approved materials, provided that wire netting may be used in a portion of one wall; and
  - (iii) a weatherproof roof of approved materials; and
  - (iv) a wall height of not more than 2.1 metres.

### Penalty

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

## 6.5 Vermin Control

- (a) The owner or occupier of any property shall keep the area of land within two metres of a poultry house, pigeon loft, bird cage or enclosure free from all dry grass, weeds, refuse and other materials capable of harbouring vermin.
- (b) No person shall keep on any property where poultry or birds are kept, any food for their consumption unless such food is kept in vermin-proof receptacles or buildings.

### Penalty

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

## 6.6 Cleanliness

- (a) The owner or occupier of any property shall cause every poultry house, pigeon loft, bird cage or enclosure, to be thoroughly cleansed as often as may be necessary and shall keep the same in a clean and sanitary condition at all times.
- (b) Droppings and refuse from any animal, bird or poultry shall be removed from the property from time to time or as frequently as may be directed by an authorised officer so as not to cause a nuisance or offensive conditions.

### Penalty

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

## 6.7 Horses

- (a) No person may without a permit keep any horse on any property in a residential or commercial area.

### Penalty

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

- (b) A permit to keep a horse on any property in a residential or commercial area shall not be granted unless the property concerned:
  - (i) is of an area of not less than 500 square metres; and
  - (ii) has an adequate water supply; and
  - (iii) is securely fenced on all sides.
- (c) A permit for the keeping of a horse on any property in a residential or commercial area will be assessed on the following basis:
  - (i) the zoning of the land;
  - (ii) the proximity of adjoining properties;
  - (iii) the amenity of the area;
  - (v) the likely effects on adjoining owners;
  - (vi) the adequacy of shedding and fencing; and
  - (vii) any other matters relevant to the circumstances associated with the application.
- (d) Prior to the assessment of an application for a permit under this clause, the applicant must advise all adjoining owners of the application in writing and of the fact that they may make written comments on the application to Council within 14 days of the advice of the application, and provide evidence to Council of such notification.



- (e) In assessing an application for a permit as required by clause 4.7(a), Council must take into consideration the views expressed in writing by adjoining landowners.

#### **6.8 Control of Disease**

The owner or occupier of any property on which there is kept any animal, bird, or poultry which develops any contagious or infectious disease which is or is likely to be injurious to any human being, shall cause such animal, bird, or poultry as the case may be, to receive appropriate treatment from a qualified Veterinarian or be destroyed and properly disposed of to the satisfaction of an authorised officer.

##### **Penalty**

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units

#### **6.9 Animal Excrement**

- (a) No person in charge of an animal shall allow any part of the animal's excrement to remain on a highway or Council land.
- (b) A person in charge of a domestic animal must carry a suitable receptacle for the removal of that animal's excrement from a highway or Council land.

##### **Penalty**

First offence – 2 penalty units

Second or subsequent offence – 4 penalty units