

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2012-2016



City of
KINGSTON

From the Mayor

Council is pleased to present this Domestic Animal Management Plan for 2012.

The principle aim of this plan is to create an environment where people and pets can peacefully and safely co-exist within the community and where pet owners activities and those of their pets do not adversely affect the rest of the community or environment.

Council supports and facilitates the benefits of animal ownership and companionship, encourages statutory compliance and promotes responsible pet ownership through education and enforcement.

This Plan has identified the need to reduce nuisances caused by dogs and cats and increase the public safety and general amenity of our neighbourhoods. Public safety can be increased by ensuring compliance by owners of declared dangerous and restricted breed dogs; provide for the welfare of cats and dogs; reduce the number of unwanted animals bred and euthanised; and ensure that Council fulfils its legislative responsibility.

I encourage all pet owners to read this Domestic Animal Management Plan and I thank the community for their feedback and involvement in preparing this Plan.

Cr John Ronke
Mayor of Kingston

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DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

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

68A Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

- (1) Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Primary Industries), 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.

INTRODUCTION

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) caters for the needs of companion animals, their owners and addresses the concerns of the general public in an equitable and compassionate manner.

The aim of this plan is to facilitate co-existence of pets, pet owners and the general population whilst addressing the welfare and legislative issues relating to animal management in urban areas. This plan also aims to promote responsible pet ownership and enhance the experience of animal ownership within the community.

The preparation of the Plan is in line with the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (DAA) which requires all Victorian councils to have a four year plan in place for the management of dogs and cats within their area.

It is now well recognised by the community and governments alike that there is more to animal management than merely collecting stray dogs and enforcing offences against the laws. Not so well recognised is the role that local government plays in protecting and promoting responsible animal ownership in the community and the environment, both essential to maintaining sustainable communities and a healthy environment.

This plan is designed to improve the provision of animal management services by maintaining the traditional Local Government role whilst expanding upon Council's capacity to respond to new and emerging animal management issues and implementing identified treatments.

The Plan integrates the developing expertise in domestic animal management within Victoria and Australia. Furthermore, the Plan incorporates Council's investigations of its own local needs to produce a program of action to be undertaken over the next four years (2012-2016). Relevant issues include those prescribed under relevant legislation and local laws as well as the generally understood notion of responsible pet ownership.

The aims of the plan are:

The principle aim of this plan is to create an environment where people and pets can peacefully and safely co-exist within the community and where pet owner's activities and those of their pets do not adversely affect the rest of the community or environment.

- ✓ Encourage statutory compliance and promote responsible pet ownership through education and enforcement;
- ✓ Support and facilitate the benefits of animal ownership and companionship;
- ✓ Increase public safety and general amenity by reducing nuisances caused by dogs and cats;
- ✓ Increase public safety by ensuring compliance by owners of declared dangerous and restricted breed dogs;
- ✓ Provide for the welfare of cats and dogs;
- ✓ Reduce the number of unwanted animals bred and euthanized; and
- ✓ Ensure that Council fulfils its legislative responsibility.

Current Programs and Services – Service Levels

Whether making decisions, advocating on behalf of others or enabling and facilitating networks, Council plays a crucial lead role in the field of dog and cat management.

Current services and programmes align to the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (DAA) and are based primarily on enforcement activities rather than compliance through education and conciliation. Service delivery is priority based and based on resource availability.

A snapshot of the City of Kingston

Located in Melbourne's south east, the City of Kingston is one of Victoria's most dynamic and diverse municipalities. It combines substantial residential areas, significant open space and a strong industrial sector, including one of the largest and most concentrated manufacturing regions in Australia.

The City is bounded by the City of Monash and the City of Glen Eira to the north, the City of Greater Dandenong to the east,

the City of Frankston to the south and the City of Bayside and Port Phillip Bay to the west. The municipality covers the suburbs of Moorabbin, Highett, Cheltenham, Clarinda, Oakleigh South, Braeside, Mentone, Clayton South, Dingley Village, Heatherton, Parkdale, Mordialloc, Aspendale, Aspendale Gardens, Edithvale, Chelsea, Chelsea Heights, Bonbeach, Carrum and Patterson Lakes.

The City of Kingston spans 91 square kilometers with a population of over 148,830 residents. The DAMP has been prepared specifically for the needs of the municipality, which is characterised by the following:

- The municipality comprises substantial residential areas;
- Extensive market gardens;
- One of the largest and most concentrated regions of manufacturing businesses in metropolitan Melbourne;
- Includes Southland and other major shopping districts;
- Some 13 kilometres of foreshore from Mentone in the north to Carrum in the south;
- The Moorabbin Airport is centrally located within the municipality;
- The Mordialloc Creek, Patterson River and Patterson Lakes System is a unique environment which has a large amount of infrastructure and is home to hundreds of moored motor boats and yachts;
- Land fill sites and quarry land;
- The municipality boasts 11 Golf Courses, and has some major open green space;
- Natural environments including Braeside Park and Karkarook Park managed by Parks Victoria; and
- Edithvale - Seaford Wetlands managed by Melbourne Water.

Animal Management Staffing and Operational Structure



Program/Service	Service Level
Identification and Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro Chipping • Website information • Prompt reactive enforcement • Mandatory registration of animals prior to release from pound
Identification and Registration – Door knock campaigns	Annual registration renewal doorknock
Domestic animal complaints	Response ASAP (Priorities by risk)
Dangerous dogs complaints	Response ASAP (high priority)
Routine street patrols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily on weekdays • Monthly (all roads/streets, foreshores, parks and reserves)
Pound Services (outsources) Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10am – 6pm weekdays • 9am – 1pm weekends
Education and Micro-chipping programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-18 year old responsible pet ownership programmes in schools and community • 2 annual pet expo and micro-chipping days held
Domestic Animal Business Registrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted annually in March and April • Random inspection also conducted
Dangerous/Restricted breed dog inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted annually in March and April • Random inspection also conducted
De-sexing voucher programme	Available at Customer Service Centres
Dogs on/off leash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order in place restricting dogs of leash in designated areas • 27 dog off leash areas and two dog exercise parks • 4 dog agility courses
Prohibited areas for dogs	Order in place designating prohibited areas such as areas of the foreshore during designated times
Prohibited areas for cats	1 x designated prohibited area in Waterways Estate
Prosecution for non-compliance	In house prosecutions team enforces non compliance through the court systems

TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

DAA Section 68(A)(2)(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.

CONTEXT

The following data outlines the demographic makeup of Kingston, for which our Officers provide Animal Management Services:

- In 2010 our population was 148,830;
- Council area covers 91.3 square kilometres;
- 19,437 Registered dogs;
- 7,477 Registered cats;
- 15 Registered domestic animal businesses which include:
 - 3 Vets
 - 8 Shops
 - 1 Boarding Kennel
 - 2 Day Care Centres; and
 - 1 Dog Training establishment

Full Time Authorised Officers

1 x Manager (who leads the Local Laws Team and two other teams within the Statutory Education and Compliance Department)

1 x Statutory Compliance Team Leader (leads Statutory Compliance Team and assists Local Laws in animal management and compliance with State and local legislation)

1 x Prosecutions Coordinator (leads the Parking and Prosecutions Team and assists Local Laws in animal management investigations and prosecutions)

1 x Local Laws Operations Coordinator

9 x Ranger/Local Laws Officers

1 x Local Laws Education Officer

1 x Local Laws Foreshore Officer

OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Learning and Development Policy - Council reference number 10/49046

Learning and Development Utilisation Policy – Council reference number 09/112542

Employee Engagement Policy – Council reference number 09/63338

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's file storage system.

CURRENT AND PLANNED TRAINING

All Authorised Officers are required to have a set standard of training qualifications prior to being employed with the City of Kingston, to meet the requirements of the position description for a Ranger/Local Laws Officer. Each Officer must successfully complete training in animal handling, investigation techniques and law enforcement including statement taking as a minimum. Formal post secondary qualifications are an employment requirement such as the Diploma of Justice or other related industry course.

Council maintains a training register detailing all qualifications and training courses completed by each Authorised Officer. Each year a formal training review is undertaken prior to creating each Officer's annual performance and development plan.

Kingston is dedicated to building a workforce that has access to the right learning and development, providing employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the organisation's success.

This learning and development program provides employees with the opportunity to access learning solutions that will not only increase their knowledge and skill base, but will contribute to their ongoing development and career progression.

Each year a number of programs are offered to all employees through this annual Learning and Development Calendar which is categorised into six key areas. These six key areas make up the Kingston Learning and Development Model.

These areas are:

- Leadership
- Professional Development
- System and Technology
- Safety and Compliance
- Wellness
- Inspired Leaders



This model assists everyone to understand what categories of development are on offer. By categorising learning into key areas allows for targeted employee development. Targeted development occurs only through defining development opportunities through the organisations training and development process and then providing specific development for these opportunities.

Refer Attachment 1 – Authorised Officer Training Register

OUR PLANS:

- All new staff are required to have completed the minimum of Certificate IV in Justice or equivalent;
- Identify required training for Authorised Officers and source appropriate training;
- All staff to be provided with Council's Learning and Development Calendar;
- All staff to receive emails offering opportunities to undertake training using Council's online learning centre;
- Review the Local Laws training register every 3 months to ensure appropriate training is being undertaken; and
- Ensure that all Authorised Officers have the opportunity to attend RSPCA, Bureau of Animal Welfare and industry related training days and workshops/seminars throughout the year

Objective 1: Implement training policy that clearly identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by all Authorised Officers by 2016

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements by consultation with Council's People and Culture team, management and staff	November 2013	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into an approved Local Laws training register by November 2013
Identify additional training opportunities by consultation with Council's People and Culture team, management and staff	November 2014	No. addition training sessions, records finalised and incorporated into an approved Local Laws training register by November 2014

Objective 2: Maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training by 2013

Activity	When	Evaluation
Maintain the current spreadsheet listing each officer's name, and their completed training, along with proposed training	Quarterly	Quarterly review of spreadsheet by Operations Coordinator, to ensure its accuracy and to determine whether proposed training goals have been met for each officer

Objective 3: Ensure all Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements for newly appointed officers (e.g. OH&S, animal handling), and record on current Local Laws training register	Within 12 months of appointment	Quarterly review spreadsheet by Operations Coordinator and ensure each officer has completed their minimum training requirements within 12 months of appointment

Objective 4: Offer at least 2 opportunities for additional internal training each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. conflict management, communication / education techniques, note taking, statement taking	Annually	Annually – review how many officers undertook training that was in addition to their minimum requirements. Meet objective of providing 2 additional internal training opportunities annually



REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

DAA 68A(2)(c)(v) Outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

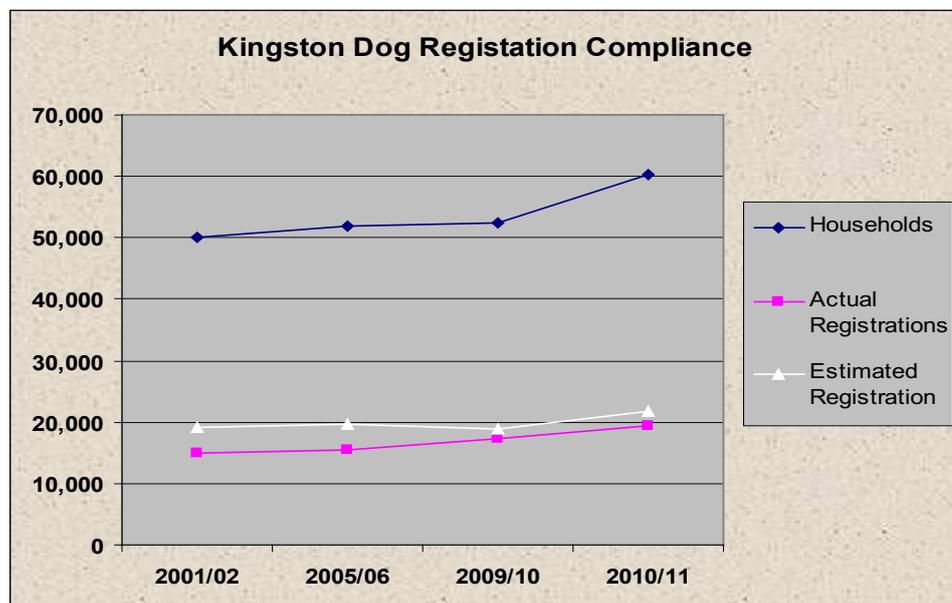
State Government Legislation requires all dogs and cats to be registered with Council at 3 months of age.

2011/2012 registration period there are 19,437 Registered dogs

2011/2012 registration period there are 7,477 Registered cats

	2001/02	2005/06	2009/10	2010/11
Households	50,187	52,000	52,535	60,305
Actual Registrations	14851	15412	17205	19437
Estimated Registration *	19071	19656	18912	21709
Estimated % Ownership *	38%	37.80%	36%	36%
Actual % Ownership	29.60%	29.60%	32%	32%

* Based on research data from Australian Companion Animal Council Inc. 2009.



Council has placed a statement acknowledging the important role animals play in our society.

Council has responded to previous consultation and included several suggested animal management activities in the previous plan and the current plan. This includes improved education programs, procedural changes where registered pets found wandering close to home are returned and secured where possible rather than impounding and improvements to our lost and found data base service.

Council has previously considered giving authority to veterinary clinics and Domestic Animal Business (DABs) to accept registrations on Council's behalf. This path was not pursued and an alternative option put in place. All veterinary clinics and DABs are provided with Council registration forms to provide to pet owners to facilitate registration.

Online registrations have also been investigated and are not possible at this point in time. Payment options have been improved.

Consultation

Based on community consultation in 2012, results indicate that there is a large percentage of our population that does not know the extent of the animal management services we provide, especially prosecutions and education programs available. 68% of those surveyed have a lack of understanding of what registration fees are used for and a lack of knowledge of the statutory functions we undertake in animal management.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Council introduced the following Order under Domestic Animals Act 1994:

As of 1 January 2009 all cats and dogs being registered for the 1st time (new registrations) must be de-sexed from the age of three months. Exemptions include any dog or cat registered with the City of Kingston before 1st January 2009 and animals exempt under the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

Exemptions include the following:

- A dog/cat that is owned by a person or body that conducts a domestic animal business registered with Council. Where the dog/cat is used for breeding purposes in connection with that business.
- A Dangerous Dog that is kept for guarding non residential premises
- A Dangerous Dog that has undergone protection training
- A dog/cat that is the subject of written Veterinary advice that the health of the dog/cat is liable to be significantly prejudiced if it is de-sexed
- A dog or cat that is owned by a person who is a current member of an ***applicable organisation** and the animal is registered with that organisation (proof must be provided of both owners and dog/cat membership at the time of registration)

***Applicable Organisations**

Australian National Cats Inc (previously known as Waratah National Cat Alliance);

Cats Victoria Inc. (new organisation);

Dogs Victoria;

Feline Control Council (Victoria) Inc.; and

The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy Australia and Victoria Inc

Local Laws:

Local Law 6.9 Restriction on Number of Dogs per Property

Local Law 6.10 Restriction on Number of Cats per Property

Local Law 6.18 Public Health and Nuisance Issues

Local Law 6.20 Dog and Animal Litter

Local Law 6.21 Litters of Animals

Council Policies and Procedures:

- Council will review animal registration/renewal forms annually and amend as necessary;
- Animal registration fees will be considered and determined by Council during the annual budget process;
- Kingston does not have a policy on the registration/refusal of registration/renewal of registration of dangerous and restricted breed dogs;
- Fees are determined by Council annually and are structured in line with the Act;
- Registration of Dangerous Dogs and Menacing Dogs are calculated on a cost of service basis;
- Council Authorised Officers are guided by the Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy and the Act - seizure and impounding of unregistered and/or unidentified dogs and cats, enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution; and
- Council Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of dog and/or cat owners as required

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Place information in local papers using media releases to advise of registration period and requirements;
- Rewards Program to recognise responsible pet ownership and compliance – Free Christmas Santa pet bags for randomly selected owners of registered dogs and cats;

- Use local radio to provide registration information to residents and hold talk back sessions so that residents can call and ask questions relating to animal registration;
- Registration/renewal of registration information listed on Council's website including advising when the date that registration is due, how to register, registration fee structure, what documents are required to be produced/supplied;
- Registration form available for download on Council's website;
- Registration period and information listed in Kingston Your City;
- Include registration information and forms in kits provided to new residents;
- Hold Mini Pet Expo events and provide registration information, provide opportunity to register animals on the day;
- Provide Responsible Pet Ownership programs to organisations;
- Provide posters to local veterinarians, pet shops to advertise Pet Expo events;
- Provide discounted micro-chipping at Pet Expo events;
- Ensure that information is provided on Council's website to clearly identify the difference between registration and micro-chipping;
- Conduct cat appreciation competitions at Council's Mini Pet Expo events;
- Display signage in residential areas during annual registration audit;
- Report through the DAMP statistics on the number of impounded animals reunited with their owners to promote identification; and
- Include registration, identification and renewal information in Council newsletters, in Council displays, in Council telephone 'on-hold' message

Our Current Compliance Activities

- Issue annual animal registration renewal notices;
- Follow up renewal notices with reminder notices;
- Dedicate one Officer to undertake door knock audit targeting properties that did not register after receiving renewal notices, usually done in August, September and October;
- Undertake random door knock audits throughout year when unregistered animals detected;
- Issue 7 day registration notices to pet owners throughout non audit period when finding unregistered animals;
- Issue infringement notices for failing to re-register/register;
- Issue life time registration tags;
- Check registration details of all dogs encountered on the streets, parks and foreshore;
- Conduct enforcement patrols along the entire foreshore area including the footpaths, cliff tops and sanded areas in order to educate foreshore users in the correct usage of the individual areas and to enforce the restrictions;
- Check that registered dogs are wearing current and correct registration tags;
- When dealing with animal complaints always check registration details;
- Authorised Officers to be equipped with micro-chip scanners;
- Provide all Authorised Officers with electronic tablet to be able to check animal registration and owner details whilst on patrol;
- Provide Council's on call depot after hours emergency staff with micro-chip scanner and instruct staff on how to use scanner;
- Check all injured and deceased animals for registration tag or micro-chip to be able to inform animal owner;

- Update animal registration database when notified of deceased, moved or sold animals;
- Ensure that all seized or impounded animals are registered prior to release to the owner;
- Review animal registration fees annually during budget process;
- Ensure that correct State Government levy is charged on animal registrations;
- Provide domestic animal business's with animal registration forms and information relating to animal owners responsibilities under the Domestic Animals Act 1994; and
- Audit all dog/cat sale notifications received from pet shops to ensure owners register their purchased animals

Summary

Over the next four years Council will be seeking to increase the number of cats and dogs registered in the municipality. This will be done through community education, random registration checks during patrols, undertaken by Authorised Officers and checking registration details of all animals sighted during visits to residential/commercial properties.

OUR PLANS

To increase the number of dogs and cats registered in the municipality

To increase awareness of the requirement to register dogs and cats

To continue to promote animal registration and identification using various media sources and Council's web page

To continue to undertake an annual registration audit

Objective 1: Update the council registration database by cross-referencing with pet shop dog and cat sales notifications data.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Update the council pet registration database by checking the registration details of all notifications of dogs and cats sold at pet shops and follow up those that aren't already registered	Quarterly	Demonstrate that all dogs and cats being sold to Kingston residents are being registered with Council Demonstrate increase in numbers of pets registered with council following the receipt of pet shop sales notifications

Objective 2: Increase dog and cat registration numbers by ensuring procedural processes followed and annual actions implemented.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Send out registration reminder notices to those pet owners who have failed to re-register their pets are receiving a renewal notice	May each year	Number of animals re-registered after receiving the registration reminder notice
Undertaking annual animal registration Door Knock Program - targeted door knocking of the municipality each year to check for unregistered dogs and cats	Annually - August, Sept and October	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Record of number of unregistered and un-identified animals detected during door knocks. Infringements issued for unregistered animals
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release from the pound.	Prior to animal being release from pound.	Review impounding and release forms to confirm all non registered animals were registered prior to release from the pound.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct community pet events to promote animal registration and opportunities to register pets outside normal business hours	Throughout the year	Number of programs provided Number of registrations processed at pet events Number of animals micro-chipped
Promote awareness of the benefits of animal registration through Council's website and other media outlets.	Throughout the year	Number of programs provided Community survey Information on penalties to be provided on Council's website
Ask puppy/kitten schools and obedience trainers to promote registration and identification – provide them with appropriate resources to do so.	November 2015	Registration forms provided and requested
Promote the services provided from registration fees	Ongoing	Information provided on Council's website

Objective 3: Issue animal infringement notices to all owners of pets that are found to be unregistered after receiving a registration renewal and reminder notice.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Issue animal infringement notices	Throughout the year	Number of infringement notices issued and the registration of these animals

Objective 4: Monitor and regulate excess animal permits

Activity	When	Evaluation
Create an electronic register (Pathway) to record all permits issued and ensure all animals registered (using current electronic spread sheet)	November 2015	Electronic data base established Review registration records against permit system each year Excess animal permits and registrations up to date

Objective 5: Improve statistical information on current % registration compliance to assist monitor registrations against estimated registrations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake research program over a three month period recording all animal registrations checked to determine a more accurate estimated % of animals per property in municipality	November 2015	Program conducted and statistical data available Estimated % applied to number of households to track compliance and assist evaluation of other registration programs

NUISANCE

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(vi) Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

The following statistics are based on the 2010/11 financial year.

- Council investigated 116 dog barking complaints;
- Council investigated 634 dog wandering at large complaints;
- Council investigated 266 cat wandering complaints;
- Council issued 24 infringements for not under effective control (separate offence to dog off leash);
- Council issued 2 infringements to owners failing to clean up dog faeces;
- Council issued 7 infringements to owners failing to carry a litter removal device;
- Council impounded 553 dogs (530 adults, 23 puppies);
- Council impounded 277 cats (207 adults, 70 kittens); and
- Total animals impounded 848 including small animals and livestock. This is a significant drop from the previous year's total of 972.

Consultation

46% of residents surveyed see fewer dogs wandering now compared to four (4) years ago. There appears to be a polarised view and opinion as to dogs being exercised off lead in on lead areas. Council's infringement statistics indicate that there is a reduction in this type of offence.

- 77% of residents surveyed believe off leash areas in parks or reserves are a very good idea.
- 60% believe there are not enough dog off leash areas within Kingston.

Although a high percentage of residents surveyed supported off leash areas, Council received numerous comments strongly opposing off leash areas. There appears to be considerable polarisation regarding dog access to open spaces within our municipality. Council has previously undertaken public consultation regarding dog access to parks and our foreshore. In response to community feedback Council introduced balanced, equitable access and a Council Order regarding dog control to assist in minimising any nuisances that may occur. Access to open space within Kingston is limited in some areas, reducing the opportunities for off leash spaces under the current assessment criteria.

Residents also responded that most current off leash areas are too small. It has also been suggested that Council consider restricting the access to dog off leash areas for commercial dog walkers (limit them to larger reserves).

Council has considered the provision of dog poo disposal bins in parks and bag dispensers and has chosen to promote "be prepared" where owners are required to carry litter removal devices at all times whilst out exercising their dog. The onus is on the owner to take responsibility for their dog's excrement. To compensate for not providing dog poo bag dispensers, Council provides free biodegradable bags at all customer service centres and free "Pooch Pouches" to all registered dog owners to promote compliance and Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO).

Community consultation indicates that residents continue to be inconvenienced by the failure of some dog owners to clean up after their dogs whilst in public places. Although Council has programs in place there is a strong call for continued education combined with increased enforcement. 60% of residents surveyed believe there is an issue in Kingston with dog droppings.

In consultation with our community, rewards programs have been implemented to recognise owners for responsible pet ownership, compliance and prompt response and resolution of nuisances.

Of the residents surveyed in 2012 45% believe that cat owners do not control their cats adequately however 60% indicate they have never been personally inconvenienced by cats. Further to this 80% indicate they are aware of the Night Time Cat Curfew but believe or witness residents failing to comply. When considering this result against the number of cats impounded each year, Council believes we still need to improve compliance with Council Order (night time curfew) focussing more on enforcement.

Council has previously reviewed dog access to environmentally sensitive areas, foreshore and local parks. Orders are in place which reflects the outcome of the consultation and assessment.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council introduced the following Orders under Domestic Animals Act 1994:

As of 1 January 2009 all cats and dogs being registered for the 1st time (new registrations) must be de-sexed from the age of three months. Exemptions include any dog or cat registered with the City of Kingston before 1st January 2009 and animals exempt under the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

From 1st November 2010 pursuant to Section 25 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 all owners of a cat are required to keep that cat securely confined to the owner's property and not allow that cat to wander at large outside the owner's premises between sunset and sunrise. The time of sunset and sunrise will be determined by the Bureau of Meteorology. The Order covers all areas of the municipality.

From 1 December 2010 the City of Kingston introduced an Order under the provisions of section 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

1. Dogs must be on leashes

The owner of the dog must keep attached to the dog a chain, cord or leash and held by the owner when in any public place not designated as an off leash area, school grounds, railway land, or shopping centres where an agreement pursuant to Section 26 (2A) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 is in place in the municipality.

2. Owners must be equipped to remove dog faeces

The owner of a dog must not allow any part of that dog's excrement to remain on any public place, school ground, shopping centre or railway land in the municipality. The owner must carry a litter removal device to pick up and remove all of the dog's faeces and must produce the litter removal device upon request of an Authorised Officer.

3. Owner's obligations

3.1 A dog may be exercised off a chain, cord or leash in a designated off leash area provided the owner:

- a. Carries a chain, cord or leash, sufficient to bring the dog under effective control if the dog behaves in a manner which threatens any person or animal;
- b. Remains in effective voice or hand control of the dog and within constant sight of the dog so as to be able to promptly place the dog on a chain, cord or leash if that becomes necessary; and
- c. Does not allow the dog to worry, cause a nuisance or threaten any person or animal.

3.2 If a dog is off a chain, cord or a leash in a designated area it must be brought under effective control by means of a chain or cord or a leash if the dog is or likely to be within 20 metres of:

- a. The arena or ground of an organised sporting or practice event
- b. A children's play equipment area
- c. A principal location of an organised public meeting or event
- d. A permanent barbecue or picnic area.

4. Meaning of words

In this order

'Owner' has the same meaning as the Domestic Animals Act 1994; and

'Designated off leash area' means any reserves, or part of a reserve, declared by resolution of the Council.

"Litter removal device" means an apparatus designed for or able to be used for the purpose of removing dog excrement and includes a paper or plastic bag.

'Public Place' means any reserves, or part of a reserve and Road (as defined in the Local Government Act 1989).

Pursuant to Section 26 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

a) No dog access will be allowed in or onto the Foreshore Reserve sand areas from 1 November to 31 March between 10.00 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

b) The No dog Zone boundaries in the northern district be amended to include the entire foreshore bounded by the Mordialloc Creek, Nepean Highway, Beach Road and the north western boundary of the Bay Street car park.

c) The south-eastern boundary of the designated Mentone foreshore off leash area be extended to the Plummer Road entry point during the designated access times.

d) The sand areas of the foreshore reserve be off leash between sunrise and 10.00 a.m. between 1st November to 31 March with the exception of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone.

e) Outside the Mordialloc No Dog Zone the sand areas of the foreshore reserve be off leash before 11.00 a.m. and after 3.00 p.m. between 1 April and 31 October.

f) Outside of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone dogs must remain on leash in or on the foreshore reserve between 11.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. between 1 April and 31 October unless in a designated off leash area.

g) Notwithstanding clause b) of this order, dogs be permitted on leash only at anytime on the concrete pathway which passes along the edge of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone as signed.

h) Outside of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone dogs must remain on leash in or on the foreshore reserve between 7.30 p.m. and sunrise between 1 November to 31 March unless in a designated off leash area.

Note that for the purposes of this order sand area means:

a) north of the Mordialloc No Dog Zone all areas of the foreshore which are exclusively sand underfoot (i.e. excludes concrete pathways, maintained grass areas, vegetated areas and cliff tops)

b) south of Mordialloc No Dog Zone the entire foreshore reserve including vegetated areas.

Pursuant to Section 26 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994:

Designated the following reserves or parts thereof, as off leash reserves:

Aspendale Gardens Nurten Parade Reserve

Aspendale Browns Reserve, Glen Street Reserve, Iluka Reserve

Bonbeach Bonbeach Sports Reserve -oval #5

Carrum Roy Dore Reserve

Chelsea Bicentennial Park

Chelsea Heights Amaroo Park Reserve

Cheltenham Kingston Heath Reserve F6 land between Farm Rd and Centre Dandenong Rd, Derring Lane Reserve, Le Page Park, Snowdon Dr Reserve, Sir William Fry Reserve- (NW cnr of Bay and Nepean)

Dingley Village Chadwick Reserve, Swallow Reserve

Clayton South Namatjira Park, Heatherton Park, Bald Hill Park

Highett Highett Reserve

Mentone Southern Road Reserve

Moorabbin Moorabbin Reserve, GR Bricker Reserve

Mordialloc George Woods Reserve, Kevin Hayes Reserve

Oakleigh South Dales Park, Mavis Hutter Reserve

Parkdale Walter Galt Reserve

Local Laws:

Local Law 6.9 Restriction on Number of Dogs per Property

Local Law 6.10 Restriction on Number of Cats per Property

Local Law 6.18 Public Health and Nuisance Issues

Local Law 6.20 Dog and Animal Litter

Local Law 6.21 Litters of Animals

Council Policies and Procedures:

- Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats;
- Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system;
- Procedure regarding noise nuisance complaints for dogs and/or cats (s.32);
- Procedure for surrendered dogs and/or cats by owners (s.33A);
- Nuisance Cat Trapping Procedure; and
- Procedure for After Hours Animal Emergency Service

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Provide information on Council's website and local media relating to:
 - The requirements of dogs being confined to their owner's property
 - Council's order requiring all dogs to be on leash throughout the municipality unless in an area designated and signed as an off leash area
 - Dog access to the foreshore
 - Dog Socialisation, Exercise & Training and list local service providers
 - How to avoid dog attacks
 - What to do if your dog is involved in an attack and detail the signs of aggression in dogs
 - Reasons why dogs bark and make available a barking dog statement for residents to download and complete-
 - Supervising dogs with children
 - Provide links on Council's website to animal related organisations
 - Responsible pet ownership
 - Cat confinement including various methods for the construction of cat enclosures
 - Residents rights about wandering cats
 - Cat and Dog de-sexing
 - Public health issues relating to cats and dogs
 - Cat trapping
 - promote off leash areas and dog exercise/agility parks;
- Promote the various resources available to ensure the correct choice of a pet such as 'Select a Pet' website program to assist prospective dog owners to choose an appropriate cat/dog to meet their lifestyle and circumstances. This will help reduce nuisances created and dog attacks;
- Use local media to disseminate information to residents, this includes newspapers, Kingston Your City and local radio;
- Provide a wide range of brochures;
- Utilise the 'Who's for Cats?' literature and posters to promote awareness;
- Distribute brochures to residents when requested and when investigating complaints;
- Provide Responsible Pet Ownership talks to various community groups and schools;
- Liaise with Environmental Health team in cases of animal hoarding;
- Rewards program to recognise and reward owners observed complying with legislation (free treats, show bags);
- Promote the areas designated for exercising dogs and the need for regular exercise to prevent behavioural and health problems;
- Ensure Council staff provides a proactive service to the community to ensure that the public are well informed and aware of current pet management issues;
- Provide information sheet to owners of impounded animals at the time of release to promote RPO and reduction in nuisance behaviour;
- Provide free "Pooch Pouches" to all registered dog owners to enable them to carry litter removal bags on their dogs lead;
- Provide free sample biodegradable dog litter removal bags at all customer service centres and libraries; and
- Conduct annual targeted "Stoop and Scoop" Campaign aimed at raising awareness and compliance, reducing dog littering.

Our current Compliance Activities

All nuisance

- Record all nuisance complaints on Council's Customer Complaint Management (CRM) system to track resolutions, repeat offenders and ensure Officers follow set tasks and procedures;
- Investigate all reported alleged nuisance complaints within specified CRM timeframes;
- Ensure nuisance investigation timeframes are as short as possible to reduce complainants' frustration;
- Review Council Orders, Local Laws, Council policies and procedures relating to nuisance on a regular basis with Animal Management Officers (AMOs) and Senior Officer/s;
- Offer to withdraw infringement and/or suspend Declaration if owner attends relevant training to address specific nuisance or general responsible dog/cat ownership course;
- Report outcomes of all prosecutions (and regular updates on number of infringements) regarding each area of nuisance to local media to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of preventing dog and cat nuisance;
- Ensure notices to comply, notices of objection, infringements, prosecutions are in line with Council Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy, legislation and operational procedures;
- Limit the number of cats/dogs that can be permitted to be kept on a premises, promote and enforce Council's Excess Animal Permits, monitor compliance of permit conditions to prevent nuisances and animal hoarding; and
- Require non-compliant owners to undertake a responsible dog ownership course and/or owner and dog to undertake basic dog training course

At large and trespass (see 'All nuisance' and the following)

- Patrol public places to check for dogs or cats at large or in prohibited public areas;
- Increase patrols during holiday periods/at times when native protected fauna are breeding/etc;
- Introduced an Order for a cat curfew between sunset and sunrise in public places;
- Introduced an Order associated with restraint of dogs in public places;
- Provide cat cages free to local residents for trapping cats trespassing on their property;
- Purchase additional cat cages and ensure compliant with Prevention of the Cruelty of Animals Act 1986 (POCTA) Regulations on confinement traps;
- Undertake cat trapping program to trap wild cats in response to complaints or where cat colonies are identified in public places;
- Impound all cats and dogs at large; and
- Return wandering registered pets to owners free of charge if found in the immediate vicinity of their registered address then impound and enforce for repeat offences

Barking dogs (see 'All nuisance' and the following)

- Operational Procedure in place to ensure Officers investigate all alleged barking dog complaints within given time frames including the provision of noise log sheets, noise activated digital recording devices to help gather evidence, provision of educational material;
- Utilise available educational kits and information to assist in investigations of complaints;
- Encourage complainant to contact owner of barking dog and advise them of their concerns as first step to resolving issue;
- Provide residents loan/hire of anti-bark collars (citronella, electronic) through Customer Service Centres and provide information to owners regarding requirements under POCTA Regulation 19 for electronic collars; and

- Note: barking dogs can also be considered unreasonable noise under Section 48A of the Environment Protection Act 1970, according to the EPA publication 'Annoyed by Noise?'

Dog poo (see 'All nuisance' and the following)

- Order was introduced Under Section 26 requiring the compulsory collection and disposal of dog poo by owner/person in charge of the dog. This was previously a Local Law dating back pre amalgamation. Our community support this regulation;
- It is a procedural requirement that Authorised Officers are to ask all dog owners who are found walking their dogs in public to produce a Litter Removal Device;
- Infringements issued for failing to carry a Litter Removal Device; and
- Infringements issued for failing to clean up after your dog

Summary

Kingston currently has an electronic tracking system to record complaints and infringements issued. Additional statistical data would assist Council to more effectively monitor compliance to assist to improve the communities' compliance. Our programs to date have resulted in a reduction of animals impounded each year reducing nuisances. There are still opportunities to address community concerns and target programs specific nuisances in our municipality such as reduction in dog droppings and barking dogs.

OUR PLANS

Reduce the nuisances caused by barking dogs

Improve compliance of Council's Orders – dogs on leash, under effective control, cat night curfew

Improve complaint resolution techniques

Objective 1: Reduce cat nuisances in the community.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Enforce the provisions of the Act with respect to breaches of Section 26 Orders and issue infringements in line with operational procedures	Ongoing	Number of infringements issued Number of complaints received
Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners in registration information packs each year.	Ongoing	Number of booklets distributed and information available on website
Assist residents with dealing with cat trespass / nuisance problems by purchasing an additional 10 cat traps and provide them to local residents for trapping nuisance cats	June each year	Number of traps purchased Number of cats impounded

Objective 2: Improve complaint resolution of reported animal nuisances and promote responsible pet ownership.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Implement barking dog information kits to provide to owners of alleged barking dogs to assist in training and abatement of nuisance	November 2014	Kit created and available free of charge
Encourage residents to report animal nuisances to enable Council to assist in resolving the complaint, improve animal welfare and improve the general amenity	Ongoing	Number of complaints received Information on website on how to report complaints
Review the barking dog complaint/ investigation procedure and modify to facilitate timely resolutions, encourage civil resolution prior to Council involvement	November 2014	Reduction in number of dog barking complaints received each year
All owners of dogs to be requested to produce litter removal devices. Infringements to be issued in line with operational procedures.	Ongoing	Number of infringements issued – monitored to determine numbers reducing and compliance improving.
Review and identify opportunity to increase designated off-leash exercise areas where sites are available to promote dog training and socialisation including opportunity for additional dog exercise/training equipment	November 2014	Number of off leash areas increased by 2015
Include information regarding confinement, barking, dogs at large etc in new registration information packs	November 2015	Packs available and number distributed
Introduce more opportunities for owners to participate in dog training through “Dog Park Parties” and hosting guest speakers for community events	November 2014	Number of Dog Park Parties conducted Number of guests presentations
Provide advice to pet owners on appropriate pet care during holidays, fireworks and thunderstorms	November 2013	Information placed on web site KYC articles Included in new owners pack
Seek out opportunities to provide responsible pet ownership educational sessions to the community involving industry professionals (animal behaviourist, training professionals)	November 2014	Number of education sessions provided
Improve compliance signage along the Long-beach walking track and increase patrols in this area to increase compliance of dogs on lead and reduce nuisances	November 2013	Signage installed Number of infringements issued and reduced number of offences

DOG ATTACKS

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(iii) Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

The following statistics are based on the 2010/11 financial year.

Number of reported dog attacks – 119 (includes alleged attack and rush offences)

Number of Declared Dogs – 31 (Dangerous/Restricted Breed/Menacing)

Number of serious dog attacks prosecuted – 10

Number of infringements issued for minor dog attacks – 8

Consultation

- 60.9% of residents surveyed are concerned about dog attacks;
- 57% of residents surveyed are concerned about dog aggression in public places;
- 46% of residents surveyed are not sure if Kingston has an issue with dog attacks;
- 23% of residents surveyed believe that there is an issue with dog attacks in Kingston; and
- 29% of residents surveyed believe that there is not an issue with dog attacks in Kingston

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

From 1 December 2010 the City of Kingston introduced an Order under the provisions of section 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 requiring all dogs to be on leash except in designated off leash areas. This Order is detailed in full in this plan under the section titled **Nuisances**.

The City of Kingston introduced an order designating reserves or parts of reserves to be off leash areas and placing restrictions on dog use on the foreshore. This Order is detailed in full in this plan under the section titled **Nuisances**.

Local Laws

Local Law 6.9 Restriction on Number of Dogs per Property

Local Law 6.18 Public Health and Nuisance Issues

Local Law 6.21 Litters of Animals

Council Policies and Procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Council Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of seized dog owners as required.

All reports of dog rush, dog attacks or dog bites fully investigated using Council's dog attack investigations procedure.

All Authorised Officers who seizes dogs found at large or not secured to owner's premises must contact the Local Laws administration to notify and provide all particulars about the dog and where it was found. The dog is then entered into a Lost / Found Register which is maintained by administration staff. This Register is utilised for the immediate notification of owners of lost and found animals. When an identified dog has been seized by an Authorised Officer, a notice of seizure is sent to the last known address of the owner of that animal within 4 days after the dog or cat is seized. Council currently has a contract with a pound facility where owners of impounded dogs and/or cats are notified and are able to collect the animal at the Pound facility.

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Review and increase designated off-leash dog exercise areas where public space becomes available;
- Promote Responsible Pet Ownership to new and existing dog owners to promote dog training and socialisation;
- Promote the various resources available to ensure the correct choice of a pet such as 'Select a Pet' website program to assist prospective dog owners to choose an appropriate cat/dog to meet their lifestyle and circumstances. This will help reduce nuisances created and dog attacks;
- Promotion of the need for dogs to be under effective control, at all times, including the need to ensure dogs can be effectively contained and /or fenced on their own property to ensure they cannot escape;
- Raise awareness of risk of dog attacks in the home, in the street and in parks and how to reduce these risks through:
 - distribution of brochures, fact sheets and other material developed by the Bureau of Animal Welfare and/or Council, regarding dog attacks
 - actively promoting the Bureau of Animal Welfare Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) Schools Programs (www.pets.dpi.vic.gov.au/01/main.htm) which address living with dogs and minimising risk of dog attacks, and the 'We Are Family' 'from pregnancy to pre-school' Program (www.dpi.vic.gov.au/pets/environment-and-community/we-are-family). Assist in promoting the advantages of these programs via letter from CEO/Mayor to hospitals, principals, liaison with maternal health officer, etc. Provide information on RPO program, visits and website, via Council website and other materials distributed by Council
 - distribute information through our Council publication "Kingston Your City" delivered to every residential property within Kingston
 - produce press releases for inclusion in local papers
 - providing information to vets, pet shops, breeders, shelters, etc, to display and/or hand out
 - Council's social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Run responsible dog ownership course and highlight ways of minimising the risk of dog attacks;
- Officer promote the importance of appropriate breed selection (Select-a-pet);
- Promote desexing of dogs to reduce aggressive tendencies and wandering at large;
- Promote early socialisation of dogs to other animals and humans;
- Promote regular exercise of dogs;
- Promote environmental enrichment for dogs at home;
- Use Council's social media (Facebook, Twitter);
- Promote the need for supervision of children, when dogs are present;
- Promote Council's available services relating to dog attack investigations including the after hours service and contact details; and
- Educate the public on managing situations when confronted with aggressive dogs

Our current Compliance Activities

- Utilise dog attack investigation procedures and Kingston Enforcement Protocols;
- Respond to/attend dog attack reports immediately as the top priority for animal management officers;
- Provide an after hours service to respond to reported dog attacks;
- Record all dog attack details on an electronic customer request system for officer investigation;
- Identify numbers of dog attacks in the community on a monthly basis, including information relating to the attacks: date, time, location, breed of dog, person attacked, animal attacked, category of injuries sustained, any information about owner/person in charge;
- Have established a Review Panel consisting of senior officers and prosecutions staff to review all dog attack investigations to ensure appropriate decisions are made in accordance with statutory requirements;
- Local Laws Operations Coordinator supervises all dog attack investigations and refers case briefs to review panel for consideration (prosecution, proposed declaration, seizure, destruction etc);
- Conduct regular patrols at locations where there is a high incidence of attacks. Conduct patrols during periods of the day when there is a high incidence of attacks;
- Conduct regular patrols to make sure dogs are confined to premises;
- Ensure all reported dog attacks are recorded and investigated to meet all points of proof provided in the Act. Seize dogs and prosecute owners in accord with Council's enforcement strategy;
- Enforce on-leash requirements – if not in an off-leash area, dogs must be on leash;
- Be proactive in declaring dogs dangerous or menacing (using the provisions of Sections and 34 and 41A respectively);
- Continue to enforce dog attack prevention strategy – model on Bureau of Animal Welfare Dog Attack Prevention kit;
- Maintain database with details of each animal reported/found to have attacked people, pets, wildlife and livestock;
- Ensure unclaimed dogs at the pound are temperament tested to determine whether they are suitable for re-homing;
- Take DNA samples from all dogs that have attacked humans or animals – training is available through the genetics laboratories;
- Seize dogs involved in serious dog attacks; and
- Actively prosecute owners of dogs involved in serious dog attacks

Summary

Council presents a significant number of education programs throughout the municipality aimed at improving community safety, promoting responsible pet ownership and the reduction of dog attacks. This is supported by our community although public consultation indicates there is a lack of knowledge in our community of these programs.

It is recognised that unfortunately dog attacks continue to happen and Council needs to undertake further research of our data to understand where these attacks are more likely to occur and identify some corrective programs.

OUR PLANS

To continue to investigate the incidents of dog attacks, reduce, minimise and manage the risk or threat of dog attacks and harassment from dogs.

Encourage the reporting of all incidences of dog attacks

Raise public awareness of dog attacks and how to prevent them from occurring

Undertake further research to improve our understanding of dog attacks in Kingston and subsequently develop improved enforcement education programs.

Objective 1: Encourage reporting of dog attacks in the community to assist Council to address attacking dogs, educate owners and improve community safety

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an MOU with Aust post to report all dog attacks, rushes, wandering animals etc within 24 hours of observation.	By November 2015	MOU in place Records of complaints – who complained, when where, response time, outcome of investigation.
Encourage public reporting dog attacks - use media articles, public notices in parks etc, A-frame billboards, website updates, to raise awareness on how to report dog attacks whether on public or private property – if bitten or witness an attack on a person or animal.	Ongoing	Evaluate this activity (and overall objective) by comparing number of dog attacks reported to council Undertake a community survey to measure awareness of dog attacks and how to report them
Ensure all RPO presentations include information on how and when to report dog attacks	Implement November 2013	Evaluation sheet provided at education programs presented to confirm information received
Promote the State 'Dangerous Dogs Hotline' 1300 101 080	Ongoing	Information on Council website Information on Council social media Article in KYC
Letter drop following dog attacks to residents in area of attack	November 2013	Procedure audited by Operations Coordinator – Officer delivering letters

Objective 2: Decrease number of dog attacks and dog rush incidents in the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review of data systems to ensure the accurate recording of appropriate statistics in relation to dog attack and harassment incidents to enable tailored education and enforcement activities.	November 2015	Accurate information recorded and tailored education/enforcement activities undertaken
Implement an awareness and education campaign publicising key dog attack prevention messages (eg confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc) through media articles, mail outs, website info, A-frame signage or billboards, Promote dog training through Council's web site and in new owner packs Promote Responsible Pet Ownership through media and Council education programs including promoting "We Are Family programs" through Maternal and Child Health Centres.	Ongoing	Compare number of reported dog attack incidents pre and post campaign. Identify % increase in community awareness of legislation regarding confinement, local leash Order through annual animal management community consultation survey Record type and number of education materials distributed Number of media articles published

Review dog attack/rush enforcement and investigation procedure	Annually	Procedure reviewed and reflects current legislation
Continue to deliver a variety of education programs promoting RPO, safety around dogs and prevention of dog attacks including – Pet Expos School RPO programs Use of State “Victor and Victoria” presentations at pet expo or children’s day festivals	Annually	Number of education programs delivered
Provide residents with information on implications for their dog and themselves if their dog attacks a person or animal	November 2014	Information produced and on website Incorporated into operation procedures
Display signage in public places to notify residents that officers are patrolling for dogs at large to prevent dog attacks	November 2014	A-frames signs produced and displayed in residential areas and shopping centres by Officers
Ensure any Magistrates Orders to confine dogs are being adhered to by unannounced inspections	Ongoing	Number of audits/inspections undertaken
Issue infringements for dog rush offences that have been proven through an investigation but prosecutions not proceeding (considered intermediate level of education)	Ongoing	Number of infringements issued



DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) Outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

The following statistics are based on the 2010/11 financial year.

Number of declared Dangerous dogs registered - 15

Number of declared Menacing Dogs registered - 4

Number of Restricted Breed Dogs registered - 12

Number of compliance inspections conducted (Dangerous and Restricted) - 62

Number of seized Restricted Breed Dogs (declared and suspected) - 1

Our community expects that Council will ensure all reported, suspected Restricted Breed Dogs are inspected and reports investigated. Residents have a high expectation that Council will utilise all available legislation to control restricted breeds and manage dangerous dogs within our municipality.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's animal registration form requires all owners of dogs to sign a declaration stating that the dog's breed has been correctly identified and if it is or is not a restricted breed dog. Registration can be refused if this declaration is not signed.

All proposals to declare dogs to be menacing or dangerous are considered through the Review Panel consisting of senior Council officers.

Council follows the steps in DPI's flowchart Restricted Breed Declaration: Process in conjunction with Kingston's Restricted Breed Dog Identification and Declaration Process form. This forms includes the approved breed standard for any dog that falls within the standard of pit bull terrier.

Council's Excess Animals Permit does not allow for more than one Declared Dangerous dog or Restricted breed to be kept at a property.

A nominated Administration Officer enters details of all declared dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry. This officer also updates the Victorian Dangerous Dog Register (VDDR) with details of declared dogs destroyed.

The VDDR is audited annually to ensure the details of all declared dogs in Kingston are up to date.

Prior to all seizures of dangerous and restricted breed dogs a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) is created to ensure that all staff clearly understand the associated risks involved with the task. All staff involved with the seizure are required to read the SWMS and sign the document to indicate that they understand their role in the seizure.

All notices to comply, infringement notices and filing of charges for prosecution regarding dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs is undertaken in accordance with the Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's file storage system.

Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of declared dog owners when required.

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Provide residents with information on:
 - the types of declared dogs and how they are to be identified and kept in compliance with the Act and Regulations, including prescribed collars, signage at premises, housing requirements, muzzling, etc; and
 - how to report menacing dogs, suspected restricted breed dogs

(see Registration and Identification Education/Promotion Activities section for methods of providing information to residents – Council website, mail-outs, media articles, signage at parks, etc);
- Provide extensive educational information on dangerous and menacing dogs/restricted breeds on Council website;
- Ensure all owners of declared dogs are aware of their obligations under the Act regarding identification and keeping these dogs by providing them with relevant sections of the Act, brochures, fact sheets/develop information kit;
- Schools education program includes awareness of dangerous dog signs and collars and restricted breed dog signs to ensure children can identify properties that house these animals;
- Provide all owners of registered Declared dog with information on requirements and updates on any legislative changes, to improve compliance; and
- Promote the 'Dangerous Dogs Hotline' 1300 101 080

Our current Compliance Activities

- Ensure that Council has effective declaration procedures to avoid declarations being overturned at VCAT (establish partnerships with other Councils that have success at VCAT for ideas and assistance). Ensure Council has specific declaration procedures for each of type of declaration:
 - dangerous dogs
 - menacing dogs
 - restricted breed dogs;
- Ensure all declared dogs are accurately registered on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and that details regarding change of owner/change of address/death of dog are updated as soon as possible. Link is www.ddvic.registry-service.com;
- Ensure declared dog registration information on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and Council's registration database matches;
- Conduct unannounced audit inspections of declared Dangerous and Restricted Breed dogs annually to ensure they are identified and being kept in compliance with the Act and Regulations;
- Follow-up non-compliance issues found during audits and ensure compliance with requirements;
- Respond to complaints regarding menacing dogs/dangerous dogs;
- Establish Council policies and procedures for non-compliance – notices to comply, infringements, prosecutions;
- Patrol industrial and commercial areas/non-residential premises to check dogs guarding premises have been declared as Dangerous Dogs and are identified as required (collar of the kind prescribed), and are being kept in compliance with the Act and Regulations;
- Ensure all declared dogs are implanted with a microchip by scanning;
- Examine registrations on Council database to identify and follow-up on suspected (non-declared) restricted breed dogs;
- Review all dog attack cases to determine if it is appropriate to declare a dog dangerous and commence the statutory declaration procedure;
- Maintain a register of all declared dangerous/menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs registered and housed in Kingston to ensure officers are aware of these locations
- Seize unregistered, suspected restricted breed dogs; and
- Actively prosecute owners of restricted breed and declared dogs involved in serious dog attacks

Summary

The City of Kingston rarely receives reports of suspected undeclared restricted breed dogs and it is not often that our officers detect any within the Kingston municipality. Council believes there is a high level of compliance regarding the ownership and management of declared dogs within Kingston.

Notwithstanding this, current education and compliance activities need to be continued to ensure continued community safety.

OUR PLANS

Continue our current education and compliance activities and promote responsible pet ownership aimed at reducing over time the number of declared dangerous dogs within Kingston.

Objective 1: Identify and register all Declared Dogs in the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Finalise a procedure providing guidance on when to declare a dog dangerous aimed at equity and consistency of decisions	November 2013	Procedure developed and implemented by Review Panel
Undertake regular patrols to inspect all industrial/commercial properties in the municipality for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes	On-going	Number of patrols Number of detected animals investigated
Educate the community about what is a declared dog	November 2013	Information available on website and media articles distributed
Develop a Policy regarding how and when to exercise the power of immediate destruction of a dangerous dog found at large	November 2014	Policy developed and adopted by Council 2015

Objective 2: Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annual to ensure they are following the keeping requirements.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake annual program of audits of all properties that house declared dangerous dogs and restricted breeds using inspection templates to ensure all requirements are in place	June/July	Documented evidence of inspections and Notices issued Full compliance with all the legislative requirements
Undertake unannounced audits of all properties that house declared dangerous dogs and restricted breeds using inspection templates to ensure all requirements are in place	Annually	Documented evidence of inspections and Notices issued Full compliance with all the legislative requirements
Direct mail to declared dog owners – fact sheet every year/regular newsletter re. housing/requirements	Annually -March	Number of fact sheets sent out to owners each year

Objective 3: Identify all suspected unregistered Restricted Breed Dogs and enforce the provisions of the DAA

Activity	When	Evaluation
Educate the community about what is a Restricted Breed dog	November 2013	Information available on website and media articles distributed
Encourage the reporting of suspected Restricted Breed dogs being housed in Kingston and promote reporting options available through our web site and educational material	November 2013	Number of registered reports and investigations



OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

DAA Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) Outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

Compulsory de-sexing of cats and dogs (with exemptions) has previously been considered by Council and Order adopted. There is high compliance with the Order and the number of entire animals registered with Kingston (excluding DAB registered animals) is decreasing.

Our community has provided comment that they would encourage Council to improve the number of adoptions to new owners of unclaimed animals.

82% of residents surveyed support Council's Order on the compulsory de-sexing of dogs

89.9% of residents surveyed support Council's Order on the compulsory de-sexing of cats

78.4% of residents surveyed are concerned about the number of abandoned pets

Several residents and veterinarians have raised concerns regarding compulsory de-sexing specifically the early age de-sexing. In light of this Council will review this matter further.

The issue of employing a dedicated cat Management Officer has been considered and not pursued. Additional cat management training has been provided to all AMOs to ensure they are competent in this area. Specialist knowledge is held within the team.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Council introduced the following Order under Domestic Animals Act 1994:

As of 1 January 2009 all cats and dogs being registered for the 1st time (new registrations) must be de-sexed from the age of three months. Exemptions include any dog or cat registered with the City of Kingston before 1st January 2009 and animals exempt under the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

This Order is detailed in full in this plan under the section titled **Registration and Identification**.

Local Laws

Local Law 6.9 Restriction on Number of Dogs per Property

Local Law 6.10 Restriction on Number of Cats per Property

Our current Education/Promotion Activities:

- Promote the benefits of de-sexing – no surprise litters, fewer unwanted animals in the community, fewer animals euthanased, reduced aggression, reduced wandering;
- Actively promote AVA/MAV subsidised de-sexing vouchers for eligible residents;
- Raise awareness about the contribution of the semi-owned cat population by participating in the 'Who's for Cats?' campaign ("Are you feeding a bigger problem?") which aims to raise awareness in the community about the cat overpopulation problem and the consequences of feeding unowned cats. Council can implement a range of resources and actions. These include:

- “Are you feeding a bigger problem?” (Who’s for Cats? campaign fact sheet) - distribution throughout the municipality, placement on website
- radio ad - used for council ‘on hold’ phone messages, and also airing on local community radio stations (note translated versions are also available in Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin and Vietnamese)
- media release for publication in local newspapers
- print advertisements for publication in local newspapers

The Who’s for cats? Website is www.whosforcats.com.au/

- Distribute de-sexing, overpopulation and high euthanasia rate brochures, fact-sheets and other material developed by the Bureau of Animal Welfare (BAW) and/or Council by providing to vets, pet shops, breeders, shelters, etc, to display and/or hand out;
- Continue registration and micro-chipping programs to ensure pet cats and dogs can be returned to their owners (see ‘Registration and Identification’ section for activities), to help reduce euthanasia rates;
- Promote appropriate pet selection to avoid animals being surrendered or dumped;
- Promote confinement of animal to owner’s premises to prevent straying and possible euthanasia, if not registered (see ‘Nuisance’ Section for activities related to confinement);
- Distribute fact-sheets regarding changes to the definition of domestic animal businesses – i.e. 3 or more fertile female cats, or 3 or more fertile female dogs, ‘for profit’ has been removed from Act, etc. Bureau of Animal Welfare has fact-sheets to distribute and/or put on your website. Obedience clubs/kennel clubs may be one way to distribute this information;
- Provide information for pet owners on how to find lost or stray pets on Council’s website, and other material distributed by Council;
- Promote the benefits of early age de-sexing;
- Involve breed clubs to assist in the re-homing of breeds of cats and dogs;
- Ensure that Council’s animal pound contractor has in place a dog and cat re-homing/adoption program to assist in the reduction of euthanasia rates;
- Promote other benefits of adopting animal from pound or shelter – e.g. usually cheaper than buying from a pet shop, breeder or on-line (especially when taking micro-chipping, registration and de-sexing costs into account); and
- Encourage people to surrender unwanted pets to Council or animal welfare shelters rather than abandoning them

Our current Compliance Activities

- Investigate reports of animal hoarding – work with owner to reduce numbers housed and facilitate the de-sexing of the remaining permitted number of animals;
- Investigate reports of unauthorised ‘backyard breeders’ to ascertain whether they should be registered as a domestic animal business;
- Provide cat cages at no charge to local residents for trapping nuisance cats trespassing on their property;
- Analyse animal impound statistics and other information to determine whether municipality has an overpopulation of cats and/or dogs by:
 - numbers of cats and dogs surrendered to Council
 - numbers of unidentified cats and dogs impounded by Council and number entire
 - number of excess animal cat and dog permits by Council and total number of cats and dogs per excess animal permit issued by Council - if animals are not de-sexed Officer will investigate the need to have owner registered as a domestic animal business otherwise all animals must be de-sexed
 - numbers of cat and dog hoarding cases and number of animals housed, numbers of owned and un-owned dogs seized within the municipality

- numbers of dogs recovered by owners, rehoused and/or euthanised by Service Provider in accord with the Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds
- numbers of owned, semi-owned, un-owned and wild cats impounded within the municipality
- numbers of owned and semi-owned cats recovered by owners;
- Review service agreement with Pound Services provider for impounded animals to establish if they can provide more 84Y agreements or more foster care to increase options for adoptions;
- Conduct patrols to impound wandering dogs and trap wild and stray cats to reduce breeding opportunities;
- Introduced cat night curfew to reduce incidence of breeding, to decrease the number of unwanted cat litters in the community; and
- the pound services provider has a formal program of assessment for euthanasia or suitability for re-homing of dogs and cats

Summary

Kingston continues to actively promote de-sexing and remove unwanted/un-owned animals from the community. Our current programs aim to reduce the number of animals bred then subsequently euthanized where homes are not available. Although Council has the support of the community for our compulsory de-sexing Order, the Order will be reviewed with respect of the age that animals are to be de-sexed. There is an opportunity to continue to identify un-owned cat colonies, identify feeders and work to promote formal adoption and de-sexing or removal to reduce unwanted reproduction.

OUR PLANS

Continue to promote responsible pet selection, ownership, de-sexing and responsible breeding through our current education and compliance activities

Identify animal hoarders to work collaboratively with them to reduce the number housed and reduce unwanted numbers being bred

Promote “Who’s for Cat’s” and reduce the number of un-owned cats in the community

Promote unclaimed shelter animals for adoption

Objective 1: Continue to reduce the percentage of registered dogs and cats that are currently entire and not part of a Domestic Animal Breeding Business each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Continue to support and provide AVA/MAV subsidised de-sexing for pets of low income earners	Ongoing	Number of animals de-sexed as part of the scheme Cost to run scheme Any changes in the longer term re proportion of impounded pets that are de-sexed

Objective 2: Raise awareness about semi-owned cat population and reduce the number of wild cats in Kingston

Activity	When	Evaluation
Implement "Who's for cats?" education campaign in local area. Utilise the following resources (available from BAW): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Are you feeding a bigger problem?" (Who's for Cats? campaign fact sheet) - distribution throughout the municipality, placement on website • Radio ad to be used for council 'on hold' phone messages, and also airing on local community radio stations • Template media release - for publication in local newspapers • Print ads - for publication in local newspapers • TV commercial file to be used on website Promotions to encourage people to take full ownership of cats - free products	Annually -October	Measure number and type of education materials distributed Record number of semi owned cats handed into pound Community survey to measure knowledge about semi owned cat problem before and after campaign Number of media stories published Measure uptake on any promotions to encourage people to take ownership of cats
Identify any cat colonies in Kingston, try to identify "feeder" and coordinate a trapping program.	Ongoing	Number of cats trapped in public places
Develop procedure for dealing with wild or stray cat colonies with a view to reducing number of unwanted cat populations	November 2015	Procedure developed and implemented by the Operations Coordinator
Review and amend current cat trapping procedure ensuring clear guidelines available for Officer's and residents	November 2015	Procedure reviewed and implemented



Objective 3: Identify illegally operating Domestic Animal Breeding establishments in the municipality, ensuring statutory compliance or take enforcement action to close establishment

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake education campaign to promote awareness about definition of breeding DABs and COP requirements for businesses: Advertisements in local classifieds Website information Follow up people advertising pets for sale (eg in local papers or on local noticeboards), to determine if they are a DAB and are registered with council	November 2015	Compare number of council registered breeding establishments annually
Audit every DAB each year prior to re-registration period for compliance. Enforce compliance with minimum requirements	Annually -Feb/ March	Number of audits conducted, and documented summary of outcomes (including any DABs closed due to non compliance)

Objective 4: Increase reclaimed and re-homing rates of impounded dogs and cats

Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate the opportunity to advertise impounded animal via online publication of seized animals	November 2016	Increase in the number of animals claimed and adopted from pound services provider
Promote Online adoption program of dogs and cats in animal shelters – provide links on Council web site to shelters to promote adoption of unclaimed animals to prospective new owners	November 2014	Links on web site
Investigate the opportunity to provide and promote first registration free of charge (i.e. registration fee refunded) if animal adopted from pound or shelter	November 2014	Number of free first year registrations provided

DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

68A(2)(c)(ii) Outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation

- also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

15 Registered domestic animal businesses

- 3 Vets
- 8 Shops
- 1 Boarding Kennel
- 2 Day Care Centres
- 1 Dog Training establishment

Our Orders, Local Laws and Council Policies and Procedures

Local Law 6.9 Restriction on Number of Dogs per Property

Local Law 6.10 Restriction on Number of Cats per Property

Council Policies and Procedures:

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Authorised Officers will attend VCAT hearings to hear appeals of proprietors of domestic animal businesses when required.

All notices to comply, infringement notices and filing of charges for prosecution regarding proprietors of domestic animal businesses is undertaken in accordance with the Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy.

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Provide relevant mandatory Code of Practice to proprietors/staff of existing and proposed domestic animal businesses;
- Ensure all relevant domestic animal businesses are advised and involved in any review of the mandatory Code of Practice for their type of business; and
- Invite DABs to be involved in Council's animal related community events

Our current Compliance Activities

- Register and audit all identified domestic animal businesses within the municipality:
 - Breeding and rearing establishments
 - Pet shops
 - Shelters and Pounds
 - Boarding establishments
 - Dog training establishments;

- Conduct annual unannounced inspections/audits of each domestic animal business premises in Kingston to ensure that the conditions of registration are in compliance with the DAA, and that all relevant mandatory Codes of Practice are being followed;
- Annual re-registration audits conducted prior to the 10 April annually to allow any non compliance to be addressed;
- Ensure that any non compliance with permit conditions is rectified using notices to comply, information sheets etc;
- In cases of serious non compliance, permits may be suspended or cancelled;
- Non complying DABs will not receive re-registration until legislative requirements are met;
- Procedures in place for domestic animal businesses to notify Council of any animals sold or given away, as required under S13 of the Act;
- Investigate all reported complaints about domestic animal businesses within operational response timeframes;
- Review weekly planning applications report to identify proposed domestic animal businesses to ensure appropriate conditions are placed on construction, operation and DAB application received;
- Inspect all proposed identified DABs to educate proprietor to assist with legislation requirements to meet the registration requirements;
- Provide educational information to people making queries about setting up a domestic animal business, to let them know of all the requirements involved, before they start making too many plans;
- DAB registration fees are set to reflect the cost of annual audits and inspections; and
- Investigate reports of unauthorised 'backyard breeders' to ascertain whether they should be registered as a domestic animal business

Summary

All Domestic Animal Businesses are audited annually to ensure compliance. Officers check all new planning applications to ensure that all new DABs are followed up and obtain relevant permits, codes of practice and aware of their responsibilities under the legislation.

Our Plans

Objective 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all businesses that should be registered DABs in the municipality, using yellow pages, local newspapers (or similar, including online sites) identify businesses selling pets / pet products / services in the municipality. Follow up to determine whether they are and should be registered with council.	Ongoing	Compare number of registered DABs before and after activity
Provide a list of all registered/registered and compliant domestic animal businesses on Council's website	November 2014	Complete list on Council's website
Distribute Bureau of Animal Welfare fact sheets regarding changes to the definition of domestic animal businesses	November 2013 - ongoing	Number of Bureau of Animal Welfare fact sheets provided to registered DABs Bureau of Animal Welfare fact sheets placed on Council's website.

Educate the public on the legislative compliance requirements pertaining to DABs and the registration process	November 2015	Information available on website
Provide information to the public on how to register a complaint regarding a DAB that they believe is non compliant	November 2015	Number of complaints received
Establish a consistent DAB registration number system for your municipality. These numbers have to be placed in advertisements by DABs of animals for sale, along with the name of the Council that issued the number.	November 2016	DAB registration number system implemented and on all DAB Registration Certificates

Objective 2: Annually inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Check local newspapers to ensure domestic animal business registration numbers and name of Council that issued that number are included in cat and dog 'for sale' notices	November 2016	Number of non compliance detected and investigated

Objective 3: Ensure 100% compliance with registration and mandatory codes of practice for all domestic annual businesses each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate and act upon public complaints about DABs	Ongoing	Number of complaints received All complaints investigated, required notices issued and DAB compliant

OTHER MATTERS

68A(2)(e) Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

Visibility of our Officers is clearly an issue for further consideration in this plan.

- 69% of residents surveyed are very satisfied/satisfied with Council's animal management service;
- 64.8% of residents surveyed have not seen Council Rangers patrolling the streets in their area in the past 12 months; and
- 55% of residents surveyed have not seen Council Rangers patrolling the parks or beaches in their area in the past 12 months

Kingston AMOs are all authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 and actively investigate all reported animal cruelty matters. Assistance is also provided to the RSPCA in their investigations of alleged cruelty.

Animals in emergencies – heat wave, other – AMOs provide assistance to our community during emergencies and periods of community need. Provide AMO assistance to State when required during emergencies such as bushfire recovery.

Community Consultation – liaise with key stakeholders regarding animal management issues including access to open spaces, control of domestic animals, canvassing on proposed Council Orders.

Dedicated Education Officer to promote responsible pet ownership throughout the community delivered at child care centres, schools, community groups, public events and media.

In-house Prosecutions Team dedicated to ensuring statutory obligations met, quality investigation briefs and cases managed efficiently and actively prosecuted in the relevant courts.

Our current Council Policies and Procedures

Kingston Enforcement Protocols - Education and enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding management of dogs and cats.

Operational procedures including OHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available to guide Officers in the performance of their duties. These are listed on Council's document management system.

Kingston Heatwave Policy – Animals in Heat Waves

Kingston Emergency Management Plan

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Promote RPO and animal welfare;
- Council inclusion of pets and animals from domestic animal businesses in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan;
- Provide advice/brochures/media releases on what to consider for pets in an emergency – include their needs as part of your emergency planning, e.g. food, water, bowls, bedding, cage, medication, registration and microchipping to help reunite pets with their owners after emergencies, external identification – e.g. collar with registration tag;
- Place information on Council's website to advise residents of fireworks approved in area to reduce animal fear and escape;
- Deliver school and community education programs promoting animal welfare and RPO;
- Liaise with local media to report outcome of Council prosecution of cruelty offences;
- Support community programs to educate the future generation of dog owners and children, in responsible pet ownership; and

- Educational information is available on Council's web site promoting responsible pet ownership and prevention of cruelty to animals.

For further information about animals in emergencies and the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan, see:

www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalemergencies

and

www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/about-agriculture/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare-in-emergencies/about-victorian-emergency-animal-welfare-plan/victorian-emergency-animal-welfare-plan

Our current Compliance Activities

- Adopt a pro-active approach to urban animal management and implement the Kingston Enforcement Protocols Policy;
- Integrate a broad range of environmental, social and economic considerations when making decisions about urban animal management;
- Support different management strategies including education, incentives and enforcement;
- Involve community groups in relevant review processes regarding animal management;
- Work closely with neighbouring Councils, other levels of government, key stakeholders and all sectors of the local community for urban animal management;
- Commit to monitoring, review and continual improvement;
- Collect data and report on actions for urban animal management;
- Commit to short-term and long-term actions for the benefit of generations now and in the future;
- When necessary take appropriate legal action by prosecuting offenders to encourage compliance within the community for serious offences and where other means of education have not achieved compliance;
- Administration of Briefs of Evidence to ensure statutory compliance and minimise identified risks;
- Established Review Panel of Senior Officers reviews all major case investigations to formally determine appropriate education and enforcement action;
- Develop a contact list regarding animal emergency planning – Council contacts, shelters, animal welfare organisations, DPI and have arrangements with those contacts in the event of emergencies;
- Annual inspection of excess animal permit properties, particularly those with permit for large number of animals to ensure welfare needs are being met;
- All animal management officers are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA);
- Investigate alleged reported animal cruelty matters and enforce provisions under the POCTA, Regulations and Codes of Practice; and
- Liaise and work with RSPCA and other authorised POCTA Officers in implementing and enforcing POCTA, Regulations and Codes of Practice

Summary

Kingston takes a holistic approach to animal management which is demonstrated in the breadth of services provided. Council regularly consults with the community on animal management issues to clarify their expectations and identify trends.

Not only does Council provide all required services in the education and enforcement of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 we also promote animal welfare (prevention of cruelty), provide extensive education programs delivered by our dedicated Education Officer and operate an in-house prosecutions team. Council's aim is to build upon our current expertise and services to ensure continued improved statutory compliance, reduced nuisances and promote the benefits of animal ownership.

OUR PLANS

Continued education through schools and the broader community on animal welfare and responsible pet ownership

Improved investigation procedures leading to successful resolutions and/or prosecutions

Maintain community satisfaction and respond to expectations raised by the community

Continue to seek opportunities to incorporate animals in emergency planning and management

Objective 1: Continue to educate the community on responsible pet ownership and benefits of pet ownership, aimed at community harmony and reduced nuisances

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide web links to Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA) information, codes (dog and cat private keeping, etc), brochures, etc, via Council's website	November 2014	Links available on website
Promote the role of Council Animal Management Officers (Authorised Officers) through web site, education programs and media	November 2014	Education programs modified Information on website Articles on social media Number of media articles
Review the visibility of Council AMOs to residents by considering permanent vehicle markings and high visibility and recognisable uniforms	November 2014	AMO vehicles clearly identified by logos and clearly identified uniform Survey residents
Investigate the development of a biannual Council produced pet ownership newsletter – distribute through DABs, veterinary clinics, on-line link	November 2015	Newsletter produced and distribution commenced by 2016

Objective 2: Improve procedures for investigations and prosecutions to ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and community expectations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop a Prosecutions Manual detailing procedures including decision making processes	November 2013	Prosecutions Manual developed and implemented
Undertake consultation with our key stakeholders to capture the communities needs and expectations	Ongoing	Results analysed and actions identified and considered and incorporated into business plans (i.e. Council Report)

Objective 3: Promote emergency planning to ensure the welfare of animals in emergencies

Activity	When	Evaluation
Liaise with breeding and boarding DABs about their emergency plans	November 2013	Number of visits to discuss emergency management
Discuss emergency animal welfare plans and Council Policy for evacuation/relief centres with MERO	November 2013	Item considered by Council Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Proposed actions identified
Provide education to residents regarding planning for their pets in emergencies	November 2014	DPI information distributed and link available on website

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

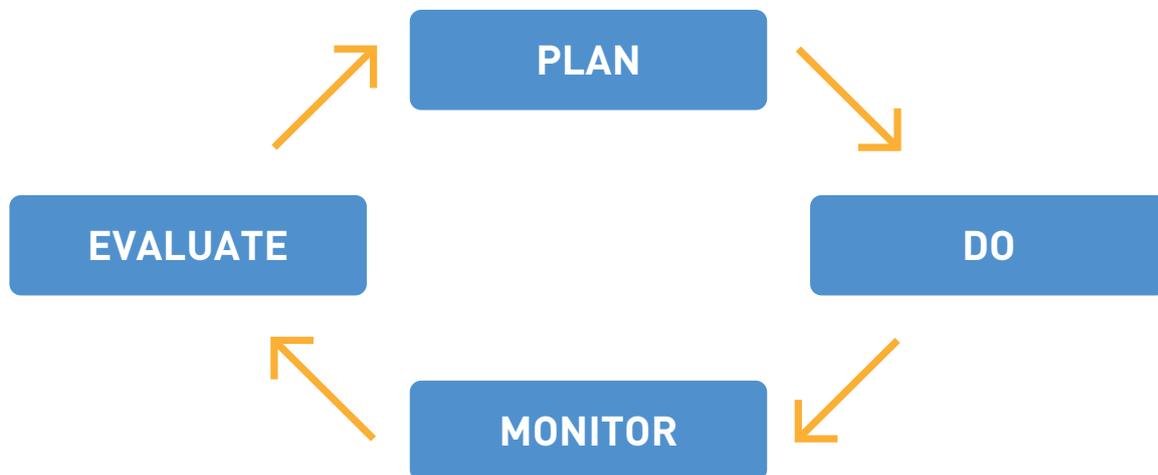
DAA Section 68A(3) Every Council must—

- (a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan
- (b) provide the Department of Primary Industries' Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan
- (c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

From a local perspective this plan calls for outcome based performance measurement to be incorporated routinely into all activities so information is readily available for future decision making.

REVIEW CYCLE/DATE FOR THIS PLAN

The Domestic Animal Management Action Plan adopts the adaptive management cycle of Plan - Do - Monitor - Evaluate, as shown diagrammatically below.



All activities contained in the Domestic Animal Management Plan contribute to strategies and outcomes in Council's Strategic Plan.

Actions contained in this Plan cover a four year period. Minor periodical reviews of the plan and actions will be undertaken in June/July each year and documented. A comprehensive review of this Plan will be undertaken in 2016. This timeline will ensure evaluation has occurred prior to Council's business planning sessions and reporting timeframes.

For each objective, there are two levels of evaluation that will be considered:

- 1) Each activity will be evaluated to determine if the KPI was achieved
- 2) If the KPI was achieved was it achieved by carrying out the planned activities or by other means

Council will consider if activities will be continued or modified to ensure effective animal management services and the needs of the community are being met. Discussions will be held internally as part of the annual business planning process.

The evaluation template to be used can be found in Attachment 2.

Attachment 1 Officer Training Register

COURSES	Officer 1	Officer 2	Officer 3	Officer 4	Officer 5	Officer 6	Officer 7	Officer 8	Officer 9	Officer 10	Officer 11	Officer 12	Officer 13
Advanced Diploma of Justice		YES				YES		YES	YES				YES
Local Government Regulatory Officer Training	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES				YES	YES	YES	YES
Identify and Respond to Animal Behaviour (4 day course - AnimalAid)	YES	YES	YES	YES		YES		YES		YES	YES		
Cert IV Animal Control & Regulation							YES						YES
Cert IV Government (Statutory Compliance)							YES		YES				YES
Cert IV Government (Investigations)									YES				
Privacy information session	YES	YES	YES	YES									
Conflict Resolution	YES		YES	YES									
Statement Taking Course	YES		YES		YES	YES							YES
Prosecutions Course						YES	YES			YES			YES
Investigations & Case Management Course	YES		YES		YES	YES				YES			
Childrens Crossing	YES	YES	YES	YES									
Technisearch Law Enforcement			YES	YES								YES	
MS Word 1		YES				YES		YES		YES			YES
MS Word 2	YES	YES				YES		YES					YES
MS Word 3		YES				YES		YES					YES
MS Publisher		YES				YES		YES		YES			YES
MS Excel 1		YES				YES		YES					YES
MS Excel 2		YES				YES		YES					YES
MS Word Mail Merge								YES					
TRIM		YES	YES		YES	YES		YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
Powerpoint		YES				YES	YES					YES	YES
Intra Maps	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES							
Pathway	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES							
Time Management		YES	YES					YES				YES	YES
Syringe Safety			YES	YES	YES		YES			YES		YES	
Multi Cultural Awareness					YES		YES		YES	YES			
Occupational Violence			YES		YES				YES	YES			
PEACE Training	YES		YES	YES	YES					YES		YES	
First Aid Level 2	YES	YES	YES			YES	YES		YES		YES		YES
Fire Warden Training										YES			
MFPO Training				YES						YES		YES	
Working with Interpreters			YES		YES		YES			YES			
Project Management					YES					YES		YES	
OHS Manual Lifting	YES	YES	YES	YES									
Hazard Assessment	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES							
OHS 5 day training		YES				YES	YES			YES		YES	YES
Defensive Driver training		YES		YES		YES							

Cert IV in Workplace Training										YES			
Venomous Snake Control	YES	YES	YES		YES								YES
DNA Course	YES	YES	YES		YES								YES
Red/White Card Training	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES							
Privacy - The Victorian Information Privacy Act													
Privacy - The Victorian Health Records Act													
Bullying Prevention													
Ethics & Conduct													
Health & Safety in the Workplace													

Blank spots indicate that staff member has not completed training. Each person’s training needs can be judged from this and can be addressed over the next four years

Attachment 2 Example of Evaluation Template of objective

Activity (tasks used to reach objective)	Responsible Person:	Evaluation/Activity to be completed 2012-13	Evaluation/Activity to be completed 2013-2014	Evaluation/Activity to be completed 2014-2015	Evaluation/Activity to be completed 2015-2016



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