

# **SOUTHERN MALLEE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



## **ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**2012 - 2017**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THIS ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 Section 26A it is a requirement for Council to develop an Animal Management Plan.

The purpose of the plan is:

- 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 requirement 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*
  - II. *to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and legislation; including council By-Laws*
  - 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*
  - V. *to encourage the registration and identification of dogs; 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 the 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 By-Laws that relate to the Council's area with a view to determining whether further orders or Council By-Laws dealing with the management of dogs in the Council area are desirable; and'*
- e) *provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs in the Council' area that it thinks necessary; and*
- f) *provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.*

By endorsing this Animal Management Plan, Council will be able to improve its service to the community increasing the likelihood of animals being reunited with their owners and reducing the number of dogs being surrendered or brought into animal shelters and consequently euthanised.

Another objective of this Plan is to have dog owners accept responsibility for the animals in their care ensuring they are healthy and content. This in turn will promote community harmony,

It is equally important that non pet owners gain an appreciation of the important role domestic animals play within the social fabric of our society. The plan will also increase the awareness of the Community as to the importance of the role pets have in supporting their owner's physical, social and psychological health.

This Animal Management Plan 2012 – 2017 will guide animal management by the Southern Mallee District Council over the next 5 years. The plan identifies strategies and actions to implement the missions, aims and objectives for animal management, and relates these back to the wider policy context. It is Council's intent to further improve animal management in the district over the next 5 years building on from the work achieved over the previous 5 years period.

## **2. VISION STATEMENT**

*"To recognize that animals are part of the community, contributing to its quality of life, and to ensure that the needs of animals and their owners are accommodated while recognising the differing needs of non animal owners of the community"*

*"To ensure that animals are managed responsibly and humanely at all times while being contained by Council"*

**3. AIMS**

- Promote responsible animal ownership
- Provide for the welfare and safety of animals
- Ensure public safety and enhance the amenity and environment and provide for the needs of animals and animal owners
- Harness the benefits of animal ownership.

**4. DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this document the following definitions apply;

<b>Animal</b>	<i>a member of any species of the sub-phylum vertebrate except- a) human being; or b) a fish and includes any prescribed animal</i>
<b>Bovine</b>	<i>means of or like an ox, of the genus of ruminants.</i>
<b>Cat</b>	<i>means an animal of the species felis catus</i>
<b>Domestic Animal</b>	<i>Animals kept by or living with man.</i>
<b>Dog</b>	<i>means an animal of the species genus canis familiaris but does not include a dingo or cross of a dingo</i>
<b>Enclosed</b>	<i>means enclosed with a good and substantial fence</i>
<b>Feral Animal</b>	<i>Wild, untamed, uncultivated in wild state after escape from captivity</i>
<b>Identification</b>	<i>means having or displaying a brand, tattoo, tag, microchip, name tag or registration disc</i>
<b>Ovine</b>	<i>of or like sheep</i>
<b>Public Pound</b>	<i>a public pound as determined in the Impounding Act 1920 as amended</i>
<b>Poultry</b>	<i>Domestic Fowls, ducks, geese, turkey etc,</i>
<b>Protected Species</b>	<i>Animals recognised by State Legislation</i>
<b>Ungulates</b>	<i>having hoofs</i>
<b>Veterinary Surgeon</b>	<i>A person who is registered as a veterinary surgeon under the Veterinary Surgeons Act, 1985.</i>
<b>Stock Proof Fence</b>	<i>A fence that is constructed to a standard to contain the appropriate animal kept within.</i>

**5. OBJECTIVES**

The following objectives should be observed with respect to animal management;

- Promote responsible animal ownership.
- Design and implement a publicity campaign to provide animal owners with information relating to responsible animal ownership.
- Establish and resource an education program in schools e.g. informative talks, lectures and responsible pet ownership.
- Support obedience and socialisation programs e.g. training programs.
- Provide for the welfare and safety of animals.
- Encourage animal owners to undertake routine preventative measures such as vaccination, de-worming, heartworm protection and other forms of parasite control.
- Policing of provisions of Dog and Cat Management Act, Impounding Act, and Order Making Policy as directed under the Local Government Act.
- Policing of identification and registration of animals to enable reunion of lost animals with their owners and control of un-owned animals.
- Maintain adequate local impoundment facilities for temporary protection of lost or un-owned animals.
- Ensure the provision of prompt veterinary attention to sick or injured animals.
- Policing of regulations regarding standards of local companion animal businesses, breeding establishments and boarding facilities.
- Provide advice and facilities to deal with unwanted animals.
- Ensure public safety, enhance the amenity, the environment and provide for the needs of the animal and animal owner.
- Provide easy access to public open space areas for regular utilisation by animal owners as exercise areas.
- Ensure that all areas are furnished with adequate signage.
- Harness the benefits of animal ownership.
- Inform the community of the social and economic benefits of animal ownership.
- Assisting with training and educate children to be responsible animal owners.

**6. POLICY CONTEXT**

The key actions for animal management are to:

- Complete and implement the Animal Management Plan
- Investigate and develop a strategy for the introduction of a microchip program for domestic animals in conjunction with local veterinarians to improve the identification of domestic animals and facilitating better use of available resources.

**7. THE LAW / GUIDELINES**

The responsibilities for dog and cat management in South Australia are prescribed in the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. Under the Act Councils are required to administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs within its area. Prescribed responsibilities include the appointment of a Registrar, the appointment of a dog management officer and to maintain a Dog Register, make arrangements for dogs seized, and its other obligations under the Act.

Council is also able to make By-Laws relating to the management of dogs, cats and other animals within its area.

The Act also provides for the appointment of the Dog and Cat Management Board, which has responsibilities to plan, promote, and advise on effective management of dogs and cats in the State, to monitor Councils management of their responsibilities, to issue Guidelines for Councils, to advise and assist Councils to undertake their responsibilities.

The Board also has a role to provide advice to the Minister, to keep the Act under review, to undertake research into companion animal management and to provide education programs for dog management officers and community awareness information.

The Act also provides that a Council may appoint an animal management officer or officers for its area and can make By-Laws relating to cats within its area.

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

The role of Local Government in administering good governance places an onus to represent the interests of its community and the safety of its constituents.

## **8. ANIMAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Southern Mallee District Council has identified that an animal management strategy needs to consider various species of animals and accordingly the following are described to embrace this strategy; Dog Management, identifying all animals of the genus *canis familiaris*, Cat Management, identifying all animals of the species *felis catus* and Other Species, identifying feral animals, protected animals, poultry, vermin, fish and ungulates.

- 1) Increasing animal registrations and encourage micro-chipping for dogs in order to reduce the level of dog euthanasia.

- 2) Reducing the threat to public safety from dog attacks and dangerous dogs.

- 3) Minimising any nuisance posed by dogs in the community.

Further, in order to support the implementation of this Plan two additional initiatives are proposed:

- 4) Ensure that Council's Compliance Officers have sufficient knowledge and skills to allow them to properly perform their functions and to deliver service at best practice standards achieved through the application of continual improvement techniques.

- 5) Provide mechanisms to evaluate the implementation of this Animal Management Plan and of Council's ongoing dog programs and services.

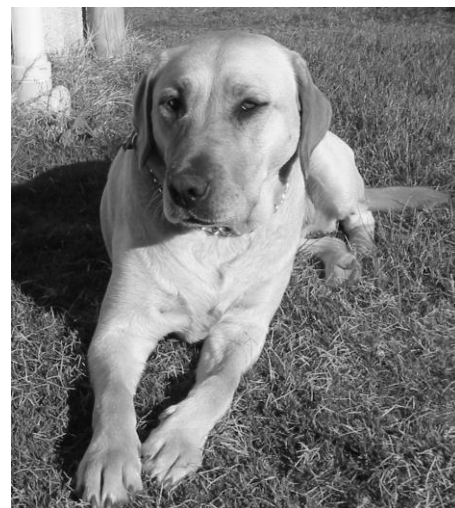
### **8.1 DOG MANAGEMENT**

#### **Responsibilities of the Owner or person responsible for the dog at the time;**

The Owner/Custodian needs to be aware of the responsibilities of dog ownership and ensures that the pet is registered, immunized, and de-sexed. The Owner/Custodian is also responsible to ensure that the dog is trained, and to be aware of the dog's behaviour at all times, including when the owner is away from the home. The Owner/Custodian is also responsible to ensure that the dog has adequate food, water and shelter and that the dog is regularly exercised.

#### **Determining the Breed**

The Breed determines the size, and often the temperament of the dog and its susceptibility to genetic defects. When selecting a dog it is important to seek appropriate advice on the soundness of animals being considered and their suitability to the home/yard that the dog will be kept in.



### **Home Environment**

The Home environment is made up of the part of the home that the dog will have access to. In most cases this will include an enclosed yard and possibly part of the house. Important factors are adequacy of the fencing, whether the dog can see out of the yard through a gate, adequacy of shelter, food/water and whether there are children, closeness of neighbours their pets and access to exercise areas are important factors.

Successful dog ownership has both financial and time commitments and it is therefore important that people contemplating dog ownership endeavour to match their choice of dog for their particular home and family circumstances.

### **Strategy**

That people contemplating obtaining a dog be encouraged to consider the factors affecting the suitability of successful pet ownership in their particular circumstances.

That source of this information includes;

- Advice being available from the Council Animal Management Officer
- Advice that Online information regarding breeds and assistance in pet selection is available on, Pet care Information and Advisory Service [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au) or The Dog and Cat Management Board of SA [www.dogsncats.asn.au](http://www.dogsncats.asn.au)
- That people contemplating obtaining a dog be encouraged to become familiar with the responsibilities under The Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 as amended, prior to obtaining a dog and be aware of the time that may need to be spent with their dog.

#### **8.1.1 WANDERING AND AGGRESSIVE DOGS**

A dog is deemed to be 'wandering at large' when it is in a public place and is not under effective control of a person. The owner, or person who is responsible for the dog wandering at large, has committed an offence and is responsible for the prescribed penalties under the Act. A dog wandering at large can be a threat to members of the public, particularly children and older people and Council is aware that serious attacks can arise in these circumstances. Council will therefore implement strategies to minimize its occurrence in the community.

The strategies are in two parts; the first to encourage owners to have adequate fencing and control over their dog and the second is the actions of the Council to the dogs 'at-large'

### **Objective**

To improve the amenity of the Southern Mallee District Council by encouraging owners to manage dogs in a way that protects the welfare of the animal and progressively minimises the nuisance caused by dogs.

### **Strategy**

- That owners be made aware of their responsibilities to:
  - Register their dog.
  - Adequately fence their property to control their dog or provide an enclosure within property boundaries.
  - To keep their dog under effective control when in a public place.
- That a dog management officer, conduct random (day of the week, and times of day) patrols of all public areas and detain dogs wandering at large.
- That Council respond to calls from the general public of a dog wandering at large.
- The priority of the Council will be to return the dog to the owner.
- Un-identified dogs will be impounded in accordance with the Act.

- Unclaimed dogs that are suitable as pets will be eligible for distribution to persons seeking a pet. Dogs being re-homed under this program will be required to be de-sexed, immunized and registered.
- Unclaimed dogs that are unsuitable as pets will be euthanised.

#### **8.1.2 REGISTRATION/IDENTIFICATION**

The cornerstone of successful dog management is identification and that includes registration. The purpose of registration includes;

- To fund dog management programs.
- To allow lost dogs to be reunited with their owners.
- To encourage responsible dog management through discounted registration fees.
- To ensure that dog owners interact with animal management staff at least once a year at the time of registration.
- To provide proof of ownership.

Council proposes to undertake a registration door knock on an annual basis to ensure compliance with legislation.

Microchip identification of dogs is recommended and the consideration of microchip identification with the evolution of better micro-chips and scanners is supported.

#### **Objective**

To achieve at least 80% level of dog registration in the life of this Plan (5 years)

#### **Strategy**

Promote responsible dog ownership

- Issuing annual dog registration renewal notice.
- Placement of advertising and editorial promoting registration and identification in local papers.
- Encourage micro-chipping of dogs for first registrations and dog transfers from another Council
- An extensive web page on Council's website dedicated to dog registration and identification.
- A program of follow-up for new pet owners.
- Discounted micro-chipping.
- Enforce legal requirements such as identification and registration.
- Educate dog owners about animal welfare issues such as food and shelter, exercise, disease prevention and parasite control.
- Educate dog owners about community issues such as roaming, nuisance, noise, faeces disposal and environmental damage caused by dogs.
- Promote and facilitate socialisation and training of dogs, especially puppies.
- Promote de sexing, including contribution to concessional schemes.

#### **Current/Ongoing Activities**

- Reactively investigate Customer Service Requests for animal management nuisance issues.
- Provide ongoing after hours on-call and back up service for emergency calls.
- Making available published information on Council's website.

#### **Planned Programs and Initiatives**

- Developing pages for the website to educate children on responsible pet ownership with interactive information and/or provide link on Council website to "fun stuff for kids"
- Conduct a Media Release strategy targeting seasonal issues in local papers, incorporating "snippets" weekly in a Council section.



- Instigate barking dog management
- Purchase dog barking counting collar as part of barking dog procedure.
- Continuing promotion of State Government initiatives and opportunities
- Include an information sheet regarding dog attack, registration, and\ infringement fees with next rates.
- Update Council's website with the above information and definitions – including links to the Dog and Cat Management Act and Regulations.

#### **Current/Ongoing Activities**

- Initiate immediate investigation as to the cause and circumstances surrounding the dog attack.
- If necessary initiate immediate court action and dog seizure following a dog attack.
- Investigate dog attacks through to resolution.
- Promote and encourage the reporting of dog attacks whether on private or public property.

#### **8.1.3 FAECES MANAGEMENT**

Dog owners are currently legally required to retrieve and dispose of their dog's faeces for health, environmental and amenity reasons. However, enforcement is complicated by the difficulty of identifying the offending dog (owner). Education is recognised as the key in the long term. However, to be effective, an education campaign needs to be carefully designed and targeted.

A lot of work has been done on changing public behaviour in comparable areas of public policy eg, littering. There are accordingly many lessons to be learned from use in developing an education campaign for faeces management.

In addition to education, dog owners need facilities to encourage them to retrieve their dogs' faeces. A range of options exist encompassing both Council provided and individual provided mechanisms (eg pooper scoopers, pooch pouch etc). The provision of such mechanisms would need to be prioritised by Council and the community.

#### **Strategy**

- Promote responsible dog ownership.
- Provide community awareness that failing to remove faeces in a public place is an offence and a danger to public health.
- Encourage dog owners to use the faeces bags/bins provided or to use their own plastic bags for faeces removal.
- Develop a faeces strategy that prioritises and reflects the different uses of parks and open space within the community.

#### **8.1.4 BENEFITS OF DOG OWNERSHIP**

Dogs encourage people to enjoy the outdoors. They have been shown to stimulate conversation between strangers in public places and they improve people's sense of security - both in the home and with their owner in public places. Dogs are also wonderful companions, and assist in combat loneliness and social alienation. These benefits are as important for the elderly and single person households as they are for households with children. Part of the challenge involves removing barriers to owning dogs. Local Government has a role to play in harnessing these benefits removing unnecessary barriers to responsible pet ownership.

#### **Strategy**

- Promote the benefits to the community of responsible dog ownership.
- Assist the community in accepting to co-exist with animals within the community.

### 8.1.5 **EDUCATION AND PROMOTION**

Education in the dog control area has many facets. It includes education of dog owners and their families as well as training of the dogs. Another focus receiving attention is educating other people about how to behave around dogs. Within each category there are further segments, eg dog owners may be adults or children; they may also be prospective owners.

Different programs cater for different needs; and Council needs to target its education activities based on a careful assessment of the needs of the whole community, bearing in mind the need to complement and avoid overlapping or duplication with education activities of the Dog and Cat Management Board.

#### **Strategy**

- Educate the community on the responsibilities of dog ownership
  - Mail out renewal notices to all registered dog owners in the first week of July. Included with that notice information on the responsibilities of dog ownership.
  - Advertise dog registration requirements in the local media and in Council Newsletters.
  - Promote in the media dogs in public places, on-leash and off-leash areas policies and the need to exercise dogs for successful pet management.
  - Provide information to the media on how members of the public should act around dogs.
  - Provide information to educate non-pet owners of their rights and responsibilities.
  - Provide information to the media of dog training classes in the community.
  - Promotion of puppy preschool and dog obedience classes etc.
  - Undertake regular school education programs.
- Advertise in the community when Council is planning dog registration door-knocks to encourage voluntary dog registration.
- Provide information to the media on the factors of successful pet ownership and where information is available to assist people to select the right pet for their circumstances.

### 8.1.6 **ENFORCEMENT**

The Dog and Cat Management Act requires Council to enforce the provisions of the Act in the Council area. The approach of the Council in the first instance will be to encourage people to accept their responsibilities of pet ownership and comply with the provisions of the Act voluntarily. However the community requires that public places are monitored to ensure that the provisions of the Act are complied with, and that a dog management officer is available to respond to concerns of the community and serious breaches of the Act. It is Council's responsibility to make arrangements for the provision of these services that are efficient and effective and that employ Best Practice ("Best Practice" refers to the way in which leading edge organisations are able to manage and organise their operations to deliver world class (the best) standards of performance in areas such as cost, quality and timeliness).

Council has found from past practice that these services are best provided by Council employees, who are able to represent all facets of Council's Animal Management Policies and at the same time supplement other compliance responsibilities of the Council.

#### **Strategy**

- Council will enforce the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act in its Council area using the following as a guide:-
  - Council will appoint a Registrar and at least one dog management officer and will ensure that these officers are trained and equipped to undertake their respective duties.

- Council will maintain a Dog Register which is current and represents the known ownership and dog details of all dogs in the community.
- Council will monitor all public places for compliance with the provisions of the Act.
- Council will respond to complaints from members of the public regarding possible non-compliance with the provisions of the Act.
- Council will develop an assessment process to determine when a dog is barking “to such a degree or extent that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of a person”.
- Dog Management Officers will be encouraged to re-enforce examples of responsible dog ownership, particularly with children.
- Dog Management Officers will be required to enforce the provisions of the Act for second offences under the Act involving the same dog or owner.

### **Objectives**

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work and to deliver service at best practice standards achieved through the application of continual improvements techniques.

### **Planned Program and Initiatives**

- Training of all Compliance Officers in animal behaviour – identifying risk behaviours and managing barking dogs.
- Skill Compliance Officers in mediation.
- Attendance by staff and involvement in industry committees.

#### **8.1.7 DOGS HELD BY COUNCIL**

Along with the role of policing dog management comes the responsibility of the Council to care and manage facilities for impounding, injured, lost or abandoned dogs. An approved facility must be designed and constructed in accordance with the standards applying for dog keeping facilities.

A carer of Council's pound facilities is responsible for the appropriate care and maintenance of dogs whilst under Council's care and control. Regular cleaning and maintenance is undertaken to ensure best practice standards are implemented and dogs under this care are treated humanely with the health and welfare of the animal considered as the utmost importance.

### **Strategy**

- Ensure that the facilities provided by Council for the keeping of dogs are;
  - provided with veterinary treatment where required.
  - fresh clean drinking water and suitable food is provided in accordance with relevant legislation.
  - maintained to a satisfactory standard to prevent disease transfer.
  - bedding and housing from the elements is clean, dry and comfortable.
  - segregation of individual dogs is undertaken for their protection, unless the specific dogs are compatible.
  - dogs seized or retained by Council shall be managed in accordance with The Southern Mallee District Council Standard Operating Procedures.
  - Regular training and auditing of procedures for staff is undertaken to ensure best practice standards are maintained.
- Appropriate facilities are in place for the humane euthanasia of dogs diseased or abandoned and the placement of their remains.

## 8.2 **CAT MANAGEMENT**

Cat management is still in its infancy with South Australian Councils. Most still operate in a process of trial and error with different approaches, however, The Southern Mallee District Council supports controls to ensure the protection of biodiversity within its area.

Goals to be achieved in cat management should be;

- Protect the welfare of cats.
- Recognise the value of the cat to society.
- Reduce the predation by cats on native wildlife.
- Reduce the incidence of public nuisance by uncontrolled cats.
- Reduce the transfer of disease.



### **Strategy**

- Promote responsible cat ownership in the community;
- Conduct regular education by;
  - provision of pamphlets and advice on cat ownership.
  - undertake school education programs to highlight responsible cat management.
  - offer advice and assistance with respect to complaints or enquiries related to cat keeping.
- Council supports the carrying of an identification collar or micro-chipping of cats within the district for identification purposes.
- Encourage owners to ensure that their cat is de-sexed, immunized, kept free of parasites and is fed/watered and provided with adequate shelter (enclose adventure/exercise areas) and prevented from roaming at nights.
- Encourage owners to be responsible for their cats' behaviour and take positive timely action to avoid nuisance to neighbours, impacts on wildlife and damage to property.
- Make traps available to the community to trap feral cats that are causing a nuisance.

## 8.3 **OTHER SPECIES**

The keeping of other species animals should not impair the health, amenity and living standards of the community and should be located so as to minimise any adverse impacts on the natural environment and existing, or proposed, land uses in the district.

Other species relates to the management of animals creating a nuisance or impact on the community or in the advent of a danger to the safety of that animal.

Most Local Government Authorities located in rural areas face issues relating to stock on roads, the keeping of poultry and other issues. Animal owners are required to keep animals in such a way as not to cause a nuisance or a hazard.

The Local Government Act and the Impounding Act provides powers to issue orders or seize and detain animals which may cause a nuisance or safety concern for the community. Specific matters pertaining to Other Species, identifying animals, feral animals, protected animals, poultry, vermin, fish and ungulates are identified in this plan.

### 8.3.1 **IDENTIFICATION**

Council supports the view that all animals should carry some form of identification where practical to enable their safe return to owners and provide identification in enforcement situations. Specific forms of identification seen as desirable are branding, tagging, tattooing or micro-chipping.

A district register should be maintained on all species (i.e national identification of cattle) to provide Council with a source of animal ownership.

### **8.3.2 SEIZURE AND CONTAINMENT OF OTHER SPECIES FERAL ANIMALS**

Feral animals are referred to as introduced domesticated animals that have reverted to a wild state. Council recognises that populations of introduced animals can affect natural ecosystems, endanger natural plant and animal species, jeopardise agricultural production and can harbour pests and diseases. Any measures taken to reduce populations of feral animals must require the same level of consideration for their welfare as given to domestic and native animals.

### **8.3.3 PROTECTED NATIVE ANIMALS**

Council believes that Native animals derived from the wild should not be kept as pets unless the animals are clearly identified as being suitable for this purpose, have non-demanding husbandry, are adaptable to live and have their needs met in the captive state and pose no health or public safety risk to humans or other animals. Any such animal should be identified and de-sexed.



Native Wildlife that is rescued by reason of sickness, injury or paternal loss should be promptly assessed (preferably by a veterinarian) and where the animal is found to be suffering significant pain or distress consideration should be given to its future. Where rehabilitation and successful release is unlikely, or there are no exceptional conservation reasons, or needs to keep the animal in captivity assessment should be made on this basis.

### **8.3.4 POULTRY AND OTHER BIRDS**

Owners are required to keep poultry and other birds in such a way as to not cause a nuisance or a hazard to the community.

There is relevant legislation available that provides Council the power to issue an order or orders to require animal or bird owners to abate a nuisance, or a health hazard caused by poultry and other birds.

Owners who keep poultry and other birds also have responsibilities under the Public and Environmental Health Act to ensure the property must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

### **8.3.5 OTHER DOMESTIC EXOTIC ANIMALS**

Owners are required to keep animals in such a way as to not cause a nuisance or a hazard to the community.

There is relevant legislation available that provides Council the power to issue an order or orders to require animal owners to abate a nuisance or a health hazard caused by domestic exotic animals.

Owners who keep domestic exotic animals also have responsibilities under the Public and Environmental Health Act to ensure the property must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

### **8.3.6 VIRMIN**

Owners of properties infested by vermin, should ensure appropriate action is taken to control or eradicate any rat or mouse infestation to minimise the potential for disease or health impacts within the community.



Owners of properties have responsibilities under the Public and Environmental Health Act to ensure the property is kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

**8.3.7 WASPS, BEES AND OTHER INSECTS**

Owners of properties who have problems with wasps, bees and other insects can contact councils, Public and Environmental Health Officer for assistance and advice in relation to the above.

**8.3.8 FISH**

Council recognizes the issue of owners or commercial fish facilities losing their fish through escape or release into public ponds, dams or rivers and will promote the benefits of responsible ownership in encouraging the owners of these pets to have regard to the environment and prevent the transfer of disease.

**8.3.9 UNGULATES**

Animal owners are required to keep animals in such a way as not to cause a nuisance or a hazard.

The Impounding Act and the Local Government Act provides the power to seize and contain or issue orders to abate a nuisance or hazard caused by animals.



Animals kept in the district solely for the domestic needs, or the enjoyment of the occupants of a dwelling, or for farming, or for commercial needs have a responsibility to the community to ensure they do not become a nuisance or danger to the public.

Owners who keep animals also have responsibilities under the Public and Environmental Health Act to ensure the property must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

**Strategy**

- Promote responsible animal ownership in the community;
- conduct education programs by;
  - provision of pamphlets and advice on animal ownership.
  - offer advice and assistance with respect to complaints or enquiries related to animal keeping.
  - Council supports the identification of animals within the district to enable the safe return of animals to their owners.
  - Encourage owners to ensure that their animals are managed, immunized, kept free of parasites and are fed/watered and provided with adequate shelter (enclose adventure/exercise areas) and prevented from roaming.
  - Encourage owners to be responsible for their animal's behaviour and take positive timely action to avoid nuisance to neighbours, impacts on wildlife and damage to property.
- Animals seized by Council to prevent injury or danger to the community will be:
  - transported in accordance with animal transport standards and returned to their respective owner where identification can be established. Or in the advent that no identification can be established, or no owner is present to take responsibility for the animal, animals will be appropriately managed, contained and kept in accordance with good animal management practices and in accordance with the Impounding Act 1920 as amended.
  - in the advent of sick or injured animals veterinary services shall be called to determine the animal's future.

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All costs associated with the transport, containment and administration of an animal will be

<b>9. ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>RESOURCES REQUIRED</b>
Undertake property inspection of unregistered dogs	Ongoing program	Within existing resources
Analyse the revenue implications of free registration of desexed and micro-chipped dogs under the age of five months for first year of registration and prepare a report and recommendation on the basis of this analysis, including publicity proposals	Year 3 of plan	Within existing resources
Examine the feasibility and economics of using real estate agents to promote animal registration with new property tenants.	Year 2 of Plan	Within existing resources
Review in-house guidelines for managing dangerous dogs and policy in line with legislative changes to ensure best practices	Annually	Within existing resources
Develop partnership with the RSPCA to promote their education programs offered on pet selection and animal behaviour to further educate the community.	Year 2 of Plan	Within existing resources
Conduct a Media Release Strategy targeting seasonal issues in local papers, Incorporating "Snippets" weekly in a Council section	Year 1 of plan	Within existing resources
Define the knowledge and skill required in the role of dog management	Year 1 of plan	With Existing resources
Schedule Compliance Officers for animal management skill training.	Years 1,2,3 & 4 of plan	\$2,000.00
Assign responsibility for the implementation of the Animal Management Plan.	Year 1 of plan	Within existing resources
Evaluate the set of key Performance Indicators (below) and adopt a set of reporting purposes.	Year 2 of plan	Within existing resources
Commence quarterly reporting against adopted Key Performance Indicators.	Year 1 of plan	Within existing resources
Produce an annual report on the progress in implementing the Animal Management Plan, with recommendations for amendments presented to Council and for inclusion into Council's Annual Report.	Year 1 of Plan	Within existing resources
Conduct a review of the Animal Management Plan every five years.	Year 4 of Plan	\$3,000.00

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<b>9.1 Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Target (over the Life of the Plan)</b>	<b>Current</b>
1. Dog Registration Rate (% dogs registered/estimated dog population)	80%	80%
2. Dog Complaints (number of dog complaints per 1,000 population)	Maintain current levels whilst increasing public awareness.	27.1
3. Dog Attacks (number of dog attacks causing injury per 4.1,000 population)	Maintain current levels whilst increasing public awareness.	1.14
4. Dog Re-housing Rate (%total rehoused/total dogs impounded)	Maintain current levels whilst increasing public awareness.	91%
5. Declared Dog Compliance Rates (number declared/number complaint/number of audits)	100%	100%

## 9.2 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The table below lists the Sections of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 that this plan is required to cover, and cross references to the strategies set up above.

Requirement of the Act		The Strategy which responses to the Plan requirement					
		3.2	3.2.1	3.2.2	3.2.3	3.2.4	3.2.5
<b>S 26A</b>	<b>Method of monitoring performance and evaluating the effectiveness of services</b>						
<b>S 27</b>	<b>Appointment and Training of authorised officers</b>						
<b>S 26A</b>	<b>Promote and encourage responsible pet ownership</b>						
<b>S 26</b>	<b>Ensure compliance with Act and Regulations</b>						
<b>S 30</b>	<b>Minimise risk of dog attacks</b>						
<b>S 26A</b>	<b>Over-population and high euthanasia rates</b>						
<b>S 33</b>	<b>Encourage registration and identification of dogs</b>						
<b>S 26A</b>	<b>Minimise potential for Nuisance</b>						
<b>S 50, 51</b>	<b>Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs</b>						
<b>S 26A, 90</b>	<b>Review of Orders and By-Laws</b>						
<b>S26A</b>	<b>Any other matters</b>						
<b>S 26A</b>	<b>Periodic evaluation of programs, services and strategies</b>						
<b>S 26A</b>	<b>Review of Animal Management Plan</b>						



## 10. **RESOURCES**

The Dog & Cat Management Act requires that revenues raised from the provisions of the Act shall be applied to dog & cat management for the area. Legislation applying for the control and welfare of animals should also be utilised for the provisions of those Acts for the care and control of those animals.

Revenue is derived from two principle sources, from registrations and from administration charges, expiation fees and fines for breeches to the provisions of the appropriate Act.

### **Strategy**

- Keep accurate and up to date records of dog registration, expiations issued under The Dog and Cat Management Act, the Impounding Act and the Local Government Act. Administration and fee for service charges accordingly.
- All revenue raised for the purposes of animal management shall be used to fund and further develop strategies for there administration.

## 11 **INTERNAL REVIEW**

A person who is dissatisfied with a decision which has been taken by the Council, a Council employee, or a person acting on behalf of the Council, may apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer to have that decision reviewed.

A request for a review of a decision by Council, a Council employee or a person acting on behalf of the Council, will be formally acknowledged within 5 days of receipt, including advice to applicants about the expected timeframe for dealing with the matter. In most cases applications for review will be considered within 21 days, although in some circumstances it may take longer. However, in all cases, applicants will be kept informed about the progress of the review, and advised in writing of the outcome of the review procedure and process. If applications for review are not resolved satisfactorily, applicants will be advised of other options for review, such as the State Ombudsman, legal advice, and/or the courts.

Council or its officers will not normally investigate anonymous complaints from any person;

Written complaints should be submitted within:

- 28 days in the case of an Expiation Notice
- 14 days in the case of an Reminder Notice
- 14 days of incident that the complaint relates to.

Where a complaint has been received from any person concerning another person and that person has asked that the complaint be confidential, then;

- If the complaint is considered at a meeting of Council, the name of the complainant(s) is not to be shown on the agenda or in the minutes. However, the name(s) will be given, in confidence, to any Member of Council who enquires, but not to members of the public.
- No fee is attached to the application for a matter to be reviewed.

12. **REVIEW OF THE ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis and in accordance with the Section 26a of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 as amended. Southern Mallee District Council must produce a plan for every five year term.



***Review of the Animal Management Plan***

*This document will be reviewed on an annual basis and in accordance with, Section 26a of the Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 as amended. (A Council must produce a plan for every five year term.)*