

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

2006 – 2010



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

Role of Council
Role of State Government
Roles of the community
Objectives
Recommendations

PART 2 – THE PROCESS

Demographics
Consultation Plan
Animal Management Plan Reference Group
Animal Management Plan Residents Forum
Community Consultation

PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

Role of Council
3.1 Dog Registration
3.2 Dogs on Council land
3.3 Obedience training
3.4 Education
3.5 Dog barking
3.6 Dog attack
3.7 Dog faeces
3.8 Number of dogs
3.9 Enforcement

PART 4 – CAT MANAGEMENT

Role of Council
4.1 Legislation
4.2 Identification of cats
4.3 Other Issues

PART 5 – POULTRY

Role of Council
5.1 Guidelines for keeping poultry



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3

All councils within South Australia are required to develop an Animal Management Plan for the next five years. In developing this Plan the City of Onkaparinga saw this as an opportunity to engage its community and determine community views on a range of pet ownership issues. The process for developing this Plan is outlined in Part 2 of this document.

Our Animal Management Plan focuses on issues surrounding dog, cat and poultry ownership. Issues relating to the keeping of other animals in the urban environment may be considered in future plans if deemed necessary.

To date dog management has been the priority for most South Australian Councils. It is anticipated that over the life of this plan cat management will receive more attention and become a higher focus for this and other Councils.

This Plan contains the roles and responsibilities for the various parties involved in animal management ie State Government, Local Government and the community. The Plan further provides a series of objectives and recommendations to achieve a higher level of responsible pet ownership in the community and provides a framework for animal management over the next five years.

A requirement of the Animal Management Plans in South Australia is that they prescribe which council reserves can be used for the exercise of dogs off leash. Currently Council has approximately 2,000 parcels of open space land – all but two of these reserves are designated as off leash areas. The exceptions being Thalassa Park (Happy Valley) and the Old Willunga Courthouse. Council staff are currently considering Jubilee Park, adjacent to the adventure playground at Port Noarlunga South as an exception to the dogs off leash requirement. Our community consultation to date shows there is not a demand to change this situation; accordingly these off leash provisions are not being extended in this Plan. We have undertaken however to develop a set of guidelines to assess requests to change the off leash status of council reserves as they arise.

While council is required by legislation to develop this Plan, Council also acknowledges the benefits of responsible pet ownership in the community and believes that the implementation of this Plan can have wide ranging benefits for all the parties concerned.



PART I – INTRODUCTION

4

ROLE OF COUNCIL

Council has a variety of roles in relation to urban animal management. Many of these are dictated by legislation such as the Dog & Cat Management Act 1995. A statement of Council's role in relation to each of the areas addressed in this Plan is contained at the commencement of each section.

ROLE OF STATE GOVERNMENT

State Government has a role in animal management in the creation and maintenance of legislation to ensure that animals are kept in a manner that is satisfactory to the community and relevant enforcement agencies.

Specifically in relation to Dog and Cat Management, the State Government has created the Dog & Cat Management Act 1995. The objectives of the Act are:

- a) to encourage responsible dog and cat ownership;
- b) to reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats;
- c) to promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including through encouragement of the desexing of dogs and cats).

The Dog & Cat Management Board is formed under this Act. The Board has a number of statutory obligations and to achieve these obligations the current Board has determined that its priorities are to:

- » Reduce dog attacks
- » Assist councils in the development of animal management plans
- » Improve public awareness of the dog legislation
- » Develop a cat management strategy
- » Provide training for animal management officers
- » Promote responsible pet ownership.

The Dog & Cat Management Board manages a fund of monies that is financed by each council contributing a percentage of dog registration fees received. Generally, metropolitan councils contribute 20% of registration fees and country councils contribute 10%. These funds are used to meet the obligations and aims of the Board. Monies are also available from this fund to councils for specific projects and initiatives.

ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

It is generally acknowledged that there are significant benefits that flow from responsible pet ownership in the community. To ensure that these benefits continue to be enjoyed, the community as a whole need to participate in the resolution of animal management issues. In the development of this Plan, Council has attempted, through a number of means, to engage a broad cross-section of the community in the development of strategies to promote responsible pet ownership over the next five years.

Pet owners have a number of obligations in relation to their pets. These include the health and wellbeing of the animal and compliance with relevant legislation. Further, pet owners must ensure that other members of the community are not adversely affected by their keeping of a pet.



PART I – INTRODUCTION

5

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

1. TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP IN THE CITY OF ONKAPARINGA.
2. TO EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY ON RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP
3. TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY OF LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH PET OWNERSHIP
4. TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS
5. TO PLAN FOR EMERGING ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH PET OWNERSHIP
6. TO ESTABLISH GOALS FOR THE IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF URBAN ANIMALS



PART I – INTRODUCTION

6

RECOMMENDATIONS

(Not prioritized)

1 From 2007/2008 Council, commence the equalization of registration fee rebates for trained and desexed dogs over a 3 year period which will result in both of these rebates being 25% by 2009/2010.

Source 3.1.1

2 That Council lobby the Dog & Cat Management Board to amend the Dog & Cat Management Act to enable the introduction of optional 3 year registration of dogs.

Source 3.1.2

3 That Council staff develop a program for the ongoing conduct of dog registration surveys over the life of this Plan.

Source 3.1.3

4 That the Dog & Cat Management Board be advised of concerns raised at the Residents Forum regarding microchipping.

Source 3.1.4

5 A report be presented to Council considering further restrictions of dog exercise at Jubilee Park Port Noarlunga South.

Source 3.2.1

6 That Council staff prepare a program of ongoing promotion of dog exercise areas within the City.

Source 3.2.2

7 That Council Staff develop a program for an increased presence at high use dog exercise areas.

Source 3.2.3

8 Council staff to liaise with Dog Clubs re the best method of promotion of their activities.

Source 3.3.1

9 Council staff liaises with the Dog & Cat Management Board regarding the development of audio visual aid providing tips to “train your dog”.

Source 3.3.2

10 That Council staff actively encourages primary schools to participate in responsible pet ownership education programs.

Source 3.4.1

11 Council staff continues to work to develop a dog barking standard to assist with the resolution of dog barking disputes.

Source 3.5.1

12 Council staff continues to review processes and procedures for assessing dog barking complaints.

Source 3.5.2

13 That Council staff develop an ongoing education to complement initiatives by the Dog & Cat Management Board with a view to reducing Dog Attacks within the City of Onkaparinga.

Source 3.6.1

14 That Council Staff prepare an information brochure, which encourages dog owners to remove their dog’s faeces from public places. This brochure should include a map of the City of Onkaparinga dog litterbag dispensers.

Source 3.7.1

15 As part of the review of the Dog By Law that Council consider an amendment that would make it compulsory to carry a dog litter bag when walking a dog in a public place.

Source 3.7.2

16 That Council staff continue to work with Noarlunga Health Services and other relevant parties to form a working group to deal with animal hoarding issues.

Source 3.8.1

17 Manager, Public Health and Safety to develop a business case for additional Ranger resources

Source 3.9.1

18 The feedback from the Residents Forum be forwarded to the Dog & Cat Management Board to demonstrate the strength of feeling in the community regarding stronger cat laws.

Source 4.1.1

19 Council to lobby State Government for legislative framework to deal with the community issue of cats wandering.

Source 4.2.1

20 Council staff to formulate information for community regarding the consequences of “partially owned cats”.

Source 4.3.1

21 Council staff to investigate types of cat enclosures available and prepare information promoting cat enclosures to the community.

Source 4.3.2

22 That the attached guidelines for the keeping of poultry be attached to this plan to form the basis of guidelines for poultry keeping within the City of Onkaparinga.

Source 5.1.1



PART 2 – THE PROCESS

7

DEMOGRAPHICS

The resident population for the City is 158,354 persons. Demographics indicate that the City has a higher proportion of children and young adults aged 0 – 19 (29%) than the Adelaide Metropolitan area (25%) and a lower proportion of 60 years and over (11%) than the Adelaide metropolitan area (15%).

Between 2002 – 2003 the City of Onkaparinga had an annual growth rate of 0.6%. This was the same rate as the Adelaide Statistical Division, and South Australia. The estimated population for the city in 2010 is 165,341.

	2006
Number of households	60,224
Number of residents	158,354
Age profile	
0-9	13%
10-19	14%
20-29	13%
30-39	14%
40-49	14%
50-64	17%
65 +	11%
Percentage of small dwellings	10%
Number of households owning dogs	
2002/2003	25,567
2005/2006	28,000
Number of registered dogs	
2002/2003	31,997
2005/2006	32,239

CONSULTATION PLAN

In April 2006 Council adopted a Consultation Plan (Attachment 1) for the development of the Animal Management Plan. This plan identified three contributors to the development of the plan. These are the Animal Management Plan Reference Group, Animal Management Plan Residents Forum and Community Consultation Program.

Animal Management Plan Reference Group

Following the adoption of the Consultation Plan by Council, the Animal Management Plan Reference Group was formed. This group met on three occasions prior to the Plan going to public consultation, and will continue to have input in the finalization of the Plan.

An outline of the Animal Management Plan Reference Group is attached (Attachment 2).

Animal Management Plan Residents Forum

The Residents Forum was attended by 75 randomly selected residents of the City of Onkaparinga. This Forum was conducted to provide input from a cross section of our residents on a range of animal management issues. Input received from the Forum forms the basis for a number of the initiatives contained within this Plan.

A detailed summary of the Forum process is contained as Attachment 3. The City of Onkaparinga wishes to thank all of those residents who took part in this very successful consultation process.

Following the Residents Forum a document was prepared containing the issues raised at the Forum and Council's response to these issues. This document can be found at Attachment 4.

Community Consultation

Following the presentation of the draft Plan to Council, the draft Plan will be presented to the community, with community comment being sought over a two month period. Articles advising of the draft Plan have appeared in Horizons newspaper and notices will be placed in local papers and community newsletters.

Following this process the draft Plan will be reviewed and presented to Council for adoption.



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

GOAL

To promote responsible dog ownership in the community.
To enforce relevant sections of the Dog & Cat Management Act 1995.

ROLE

	SERVICE PROVISION							
	OWNER / CUSTODIAN	REGULATOR	INFORMATION PROVIDER	ADVOCATE	FACILITATOR / INITIATOR	AGENT	PART FUNDER	DIRECT PROVIDER

ACTIONS

The Ranger Services section strives to provide best practice in dog management in South Australia.	Council provides for dog exercise on many of its parcels of open space. In doing so Council must provide information to the community and enforcement framework to ensure this activity does not adversely affect other users of this land.	Council has a number of roles under the Dog & Cat Management Act. Council has appointed 10 Animal Management Officers to carry out these roles. In addition Council has created a by-law to assist in the management of dogs in the community.	Council provides a comprehensive range of information via brochures and council's website. Council also participates in school education campaigns to provide this information to the section of community most at risk from dogs.	Council may from time to time make representation to the Dog & Cat Management Board on behalf of stakeholder groups or individuals within the community.	N/a	N/a	N/a	Council provides a number of services and facilities for dog owners including dog exercise areas, dog bag dispensers, hire of bark deterrent collars and microchipping days.
--	---	--	--	--	-----	-----	-----	--



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Section 26 of the Dog & Cat Management Act 1995 prescribes Council's responsibility for the management of dogs, including :

RESPONSIBILITY	RESPONSE
(1) Each council is required to administer and enforce the provisions of the Act relating to dogs within its area and for that purpose must:	
(a) Maintain a register of dogs containing the information required by the Board (which may be kept in the form of a computer record) that is to be readily available for public inspection; and	<i>Electronic copy available at Council offices</i>
(ab) Ensure that the Board is provided with information contained in the register as required by the Board from time to time; and	<i>Provided as required</i>
(b) Appoint a suitable person to be Registrar: and	<i>Team Leader Health & Ranger Services</i>
(c) Make satisfactory arrangements for issuing and replacing certificates of registration and registration discs; and	<i>Undertaken annually</i>
(d) Appoint at least one full-time dog management officer or make other satisfactory arrangements for the exercise of the functions and powers of dog management officers; and	<i>10 Dog Management Officers appointed who are appropriately trained in the exercise and functions of their powers</i>
(e) Make satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized under the Act;	<i>Contract arrangements with RSPCA</i>
(2) The arrangements made by a council under this section must be satisfactory to the Board.	<i>Successfully underwent audit by the Dog & Cat Management Board in 2006</i>
(3) Money received by a council under this Act must be expended in the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this Act relating to dogs.	<i>Council annually expends \$200,000 more than we receive for dog management</i>
(5) A council must pay into the Fund the percentage fixed by regulation of the dog registration fees received by the council.	<i>Council currently pays 20% of all dog registration fees to the Dog & Cat Management Board annually.</i>



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

10

3.1 DOG REGISTRATION

Current Situation

Section 26 of the Dog & Cat Management Act requires Councils to maintain a system of registration for dogs within its area.

Council sets registration fees annually. The current registration fee is \$40 with the following rebates:

- » 40% for desexed
- » 10% trained
- » 10% microchipped.

These rebates are cumulative and a further rebate of 50% applies for concession card holders. Registration for working dogs is \$10 per annum and there is no fee for recognised guide and therapy dogs. Schedule of fees attached.

In 2005/06 there were 32,239 registered dogs and 39 registered business premises which housed a further 488 dogs. Council pays 20% of funds received for dog registrations to the Dog and Cat Management Board.

In 2005/06 Council undertook a city wide survey to ensure all dogs in the city were registered.

All monies received from dog related activities must be spent on dog management. Council currently has an annual deficit (expenditure vs fees received as income) of \$200,000 for dog management. This deficit is funded from general revenue.

Challenges

- » Currently limited to registrations of 12 months duration
- » The ability to maintain an accurate register of all dogs within the city
- » Inequity in the current level of rebates available

Opportunities

The Dog & Cat Management Board is currently investigating optional 3 year registration. This initiative was supported by 95% of the attendees at the Residents Forum

Attendees at the residents forum indicated there was a need for better education regarding microchipping

Initiatives

Council explore “equalization” of current registration rebates particularly an increased rebate for trained dogs

Source Residents Forum

The Dog & Cat Management Board be lobbied to introduce option 3 year registration

Source Council Staff/Residents Forum

Continue with a dog registration surveys to ensure maximum registration is maintained

Source Council staff

Recommendations

3.1.1 Council move towards the equalization of registrations fee rebates for trained and desexed dogs over a 3 year period.

3.1.2 That Council lobby the Dog & Cat management Board to amend the Dog & Cat Management Act to enable the introduction of optional 3 year registration

3.1.3 That Council Staff develop a program for the ongoing conduct of dog registration surveys over the life of this plan

3.1.4 That the Dog & Cat Management Board be advised be advised of concerns raised at the Residents Forum regarding dog health and safety aspects of microchipping



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT



3.2 DOGS ON COUNCIL LAND (OFF LEASH AREAS)

Current Situation

Dogs are allowed to be exercised off leash on all but two of Council's reserves. The reserves where dogs must be held on leash are Thalassa Park, Happy Valley and the Willunga Court House. Council Staff are considering the imposing on leash or dog prohibition in the area of Jubilee Park, Port Noarlunga South adjacent the adventure playground.

Dogs can be exercised off leash on Council's six dog exercise beaches located at O'Sullivan's, Port Noarlunga South, Moana, Maslins, Aldinga and Sellicks Beaches. Dogs can also be exercised off leash on Council's remaining beaches during the winter months May to September inclusive. At all other times dogs on these beaches must be on-leash.

Most of the attendees at the Residents Forum supported the current off leash arrangements but felt there should be better promotion and enforcement in these areas.

Council does not support the establishment of fenced dog exercise areas as such facilities can be attractive to the owners of dogs that cannot be effectively controlled when off leash. This can lead to a high rate of dog attack in these facilities. It is Council's position that the owners of these dogs seek out appropriate training for their dogs rather than fenced exercise areas. The majority of the attendees at the Residents Forum supported this position.

Challenges

Balancing the need for dog owners to exercise their dogs with the needs of other park users.

The ability to provide adequate enforcement over approximately 2,000 Council reserves

Opportunities

Better promotion of dog off leash provisions may result in more dogs (and their owners) getting exercise

Better enforcement of high use dog exercise areas will reduce incidents and educate dog owners

Initiative

Consideration of further constraints for dogs in area adjacent to the adventure playground at Jubilee Park, Port Noarlunga South

Source Council Staff

Further promotion of off leash areas

Source Residents Forum

Increased enforcement and education at high use dog exercise areas

Source Residents Forum

Recommendations

3.2.1 A report be presented to Council considering further restrictions upon dog exercise at Jubilee Park Port Noarlunga South

3.2.2 That Council staff prepare a program of ongoing promotion of dog exercise areas within the City

3.2.3 That Council Staff develop a program for an increased presence at high use dog exercise areas



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

12

3.3 OBEDIENCE TRAINING

Current Situation

The City of Onkaparinga has four dog obedience clubs within the area - being Southern Districts Kennel and Obedience Club, School for Dogs Aldinga Bay, Noarlunga City Dog Obedience Club and Happy Valley Dog School. There are also private trainers who provide a service.

Owners of appropriately trained dogs are eligible for a 10% rebate for their dog registrations.

The Dog & Cat Management Board has recently confirmed the standard required to attract this rebate (Attachment 5) and Council Rangers and recognised obedience clubs can verify that this level has been achieved.

Attendees at the Residents Forum supported obedience training for dogs and believed it should be better promoted through leaflets, the media, promotion at pet shops (point of sale), and at the time of registration of dogs. There was also support for more incentives for obedience training and the development of schemes to assist the disabled/disadvantaged accessing obedience training for their dogs.

Challenges

A large proportion of dog owners appreciate the advantages of dog obedience training but only a relatively small number participate in obedience training.

Opportunities

More dogs and owners attending training through better promotion of Dog Obedience Clubs and the training they provide.

Flexible options for those who are unable to attend training

Initiative

Development of a video of “training tips” for dog owners

Source Resident Forum

Development of more flexible dog obedience training options for disabled/disadvantaged dog owners

Source Residents Forum

Recommendations

3.3.1 Council staff to liaise with Dog Clubs re the best method of promotion of their activities

3.3.2 Council staff liaise with the Dog & Cat Management Board regarding the development of Audio Visual aid providing tips to “train your dog”



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

13

3.4 EDUCATION

Current Situation

The primary aim of Council's Ranger Services Team is to educate dog owners in responsible dog ownership and compliance with the legislation and By Laws that relate to dogs. In most cases where a minor breach occurs Rangers attempt to educate the dog owner through advice or a warning if necessary. In more serious cases or for repeat minor offences enforcement action is considered.

Rangers also participate in other education initiatives as they become available.

Rangers are currently assisting with the delivery of the "Pet Pep" program in local schools and some have been trained to participate in the "Delta Dog" program. Both of these programs are intended to prevent dog attacks on children.

The Ranger Services Team has developed a range of brochures and a web site to provide information to dog owners on a range of relevant topics

Challenges

Statistics show that children are most susceptible to dog attack and it is believed that education in Primary Schools is an effective means of reducing attacks on this age group.

Opportunities

Both Pet Pep and Delta Dog programs are aimed at Primary School children and increased participation in these programs within the City of Onkaparinga may reduce dog attacks.

Initiative

Actively promote "Delta Dog" and "Pet Pep" programs to local schools with a view to increasing awareness of dog attacks in primary school aged children

Source Resident Forum/Council staff

Training/participation of more Rangers in education programs for primary school aged children

Source Council staff

Recommendations

3.4.1 That Council staff actively encourage primary schools to participate in Primary School dog education programs



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

14

3.5 DOG BARKING

Current Situation

Excessive dog barking is a problem that consumes a considerable amount of Council resources. 90% of dog barking complaints are resolved within 14 days but the remaining 10% can become intractable and particularly difficult to resolve. A significant number of the long standing dog barking complaints are associated with other disputes between the parties involved. Rangers continue to review their processes for dealing with dog barking problems

About half of the attendees at the Residents Forum had experienced a dog barking problems. Most believed that continual barking and barking at night to be particular problems.

Council has citronella collars available for hire for owners of dogs that are barking excessively.

Council has also been participating in trials of a prototype bark counting collar. The use of these collars has resulted in the resolution of dog barking problems in this and other Councils. At the current time the use of these collars is limited by their availability and the fact that they can only be used with the co operation of the dog owner.

To improve the effectiveness of assessing the data received from these collars and other sources Council has been working with an acoustic engineer with a view to develop a “Dog Barking Standard”. Such a standard will enable the objective measurement of dog barking data to determine whether the level of barking constitutes a “nuisance” in legal terms.

Challenges

Current legislation does not define barking nuisance. This leads to difficulties of interpretation and enforcement of dog barking problems

Opportunities

The introduction of the bark counting collar is a significant development in providing evidence in a dog barking dispute.

The development of a dog barking standard would further improve our ability to resolve dog barking disputes.

Initiative

Development of a dog barking standard to assist with the resolution of dog barking problems

Source Council staff/Resident Forum

Recommendations

3.5.1 Council staff continue to work to develop a dog barking standard to assist on the resolution of dog barking disputes

3.5.2 Council staff continue to review processes and procedures for assessing dog barking complaints



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

15

3.6 DOG ATTACK

Current Situation

Council currently receives approximately 280 reports of dog attacks each year. This figure has remained constant in recent years, the majority of these attacks being on other dogs and animals.

Council takes reports of attacks very seriously and investigates all reported attacks where sufficient information has been provided. If a dog attack is proved Rangers have a variety of enforcement options including expiations, prosecution, control and destruction orders. All penalties are applied in accordance with the National Recommended Aggression Incident Severity Scale.

The prevention of dog attacks is a primary aim of our Ranger Services Team. Distribution of educational material is our principle method of educating the community.

The Dog & Cat Management Board has recently released a publication “Golden Rules for Dog Owners” which is a significant addition to the educational material we distribute.

Early socialization of dogs also reduces the number of attacks. Council staff will continue to work with obedience clubs to promote their classes and puppy schools both of which contribute significantly to the socialization of dogs.

Challenges

The majority of dog attacks on people occur on private land. In many of these instances either the family pet or a dog known to the victim is involved. The key to reducing these attacks is raising the awareness of dog owners of high hazard situations

Opportunities

The release of the Golden Rules for Dog Owners brochure is a good platform for public education

Initiative

Council instigate an ongoing education campaign to complement the initiatives of the Dog & Cat Management Board with a view to reducing the number of dog attacks

Source Resident Forum/Council Staff

Council continue to work with dog clubs to promote obedience training and puppy school to assist with the socialization of dogs

Source Council staff/ Resident Forum

Recommendations

3.6.1 That Council staff develop an ongoing education to complement initiatives by the Dog & Cat Management Board with a view to reducing Dog Attacks within the City of Onkaparinga



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

16

3.7 DOG FAECES

Current Situation

Owners of dogs or the person responsible for the dog are required to remove any droppings left by their dog in a public place. Failure to do so is an offence under the Dog & Cat Management Act which attracts an expiation fee of \$55-00.

While the number of people who pick up after their dogs has increased significantly in recent years dog droppings are still a problem in many Council Reserves and beaches.

Under current legislation this is a very difficult offence to prove unless a Ranger witnesses the offence. The best method of achieving compliance is community pressure.

Council supplies over 70 dog bag dispensers across the City and spends in excess of \$12,000 per annum supplying bags and supplying and maintaining dispensers.

Challenges

Continuing community education campaigns to build community pressure to “pick up after your dog”

Opportunities

A number of agencies have active public information campaigns aimed at reduction of dog faeces in public places to protect the environment, waterways etc.

Holdfast Bay Council has introduced a By Law that makes it an offence to take a dog into a public place whilst not carrying a bag or suitable receptacle to remove any dog faeces.

Initiative

Produce a brochure “pick up after your dog” which includes a map of the dog bag dispenser sites

Source Resident Forum

Investigate amendment to the Dog By law to make it compulsory to “carry a bag”

Source Resident Forum

Recommendations

3.7.1 That Council Staff prepare an information brochure, which encourages dog owners to remove their dog’s faeces from public places. This brochure should include a map of the City of Onkaparinga dog litter bag dispensers

3.7.2 As part of the review of the Dog By Law, that Council consider an amendment that would make it compulsory to carry a dog litter bag when walking a dog in a public place



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

17

3.8 NUMBER OF DOGS ON PREMISES

Current Situation

The number of dogs on any premises is prescribed in Council's By law No. 9 Dogs.

The By Law allows one dog per "small dwelling" and two dogs on any other premises.

Council may give permission for more than the prescribed number. Council has currently issued 140 permits to keep three dogs.

Section 254 of the Local Government Act allows Council to serve orders on land owners or residents who keep an excessive number of animals that may a nuisance or a hazard or a hazard to health or safety

Challenges

Each year Council encounters a number of residents who keep excessive numbers of dogs or cats each year. Many of these people display "hoarding" tendencies and often have associated mental health issues. These residents are often repeat offenders.

Opportunities

Develop a comprehensive program that deals with all aspects of animal hoarding.

Initiative

Council staff are currently seeking to engage relevant parties including Noarlunga Health Services with a view to forming a working group to deal with all the aspects of animal hoarding issues

Source Council Staff

Recommendations

3.8.1 That Council staff continue to work with Noarlunga Health Services and other relevant parties to form a working group to deal with animal hoarding issues.



PART 3 – DOG MANAGEMENT

18

3.9 ENFORCEMENT

Current Situation

Council currently has 10 Dog Management Officers who work in the Ranger Services Team. In addition Council engages six Beach Patrol Officers who work for varying periods during the summer months. The Beach patrol Officers are also authorised as Dog Management Officers

The above officers spend in excess of 70% of their time working on dog related matters.

Council has Rangers on duty between 8.00am and 5.00pm seven days per week and has on call officers available to handle emergencies outside of those hours.

In the past year Council staff attended to 1,402 dog pick up; 784 dog wandering; 278 dog attack/harassment; 180 dog barking and 115 general dog complaints. During that time Council issued 1,940 dog related expiations

In addition Council has 23 Dog Control orders in place.

Challenges

Striking the right balance between educating the public and enforcement

Dealing with repeat offenders who take up significant amounts of Ranger resources

Opportunities

Take advantage of the revised provisions of the Dog & Cat Management Act that give the courts stronger powers against repeat offenders

Initiative

Use additional funds from Dog & Cat Management Board to fund an additional .5 FTE in Ranger Services 2006/2007 to undertake additional education and enforcement actions.

Source

Recommendations

3.9.1 Manager, Public Health and Safety to develop a business case for additional Ranger resources.



PART 4 – CAT MANAGEMENT

GOAL

To respond to community concerns regarding cat management.

ROLE

SERVICE PROVISION

LEADERSHIP OWNER / CUSTODIAN REGULATOR INFORMATION PROVIDER ADVOCATE FACILITATOR / INITIATOR AGENT PART FUNDER DIRECT PROVIDER

ACTIONS

Council will respond to instances where there are an excessive number of cats on council property.

Council has powers under the Local Government Act to control excessive numbers of animals on a property that are causing a hazard or nuisance. Council has from time to time used this legislation on cats.

Council provides information to the community on responsible cat ownership and management.

Council has, and will continue, to lobby the State Government in relation to state-wide cat management legislation.

N/A

N/A

Council provides cat traps for hire to the public and assists, when required, to dispose of excessive numbers of cats.



PART 4 – CAT MANAGEMENT

20

4.1 LEGISLATION - CATS

Current Situation

The Dog & Cat Management Act has some provisions relating to the management of cats. These principally relate to disposal of unidentified cats and the appointment of Cat Management Officers. Council has not appointed any Cat Management officers.

The Act also allows for Council to create By Laws to manage cats. Only a small number of Councils in South Australia have taken up this provision. When Council considered the topic of cat management in 2003 it confirmed its previously stated position that there needs to be a consistent legislative framework governing cat management in South Australia and that this consistency should be achieved through legislative means rather than through the creation of individual Council By-laws

100% of the attendees at the Residents Forum believed that there should be stronger cat laws. Of those that had a preference 85% believed that changes to these laws should occur at a state level.

Challenges

Achieving amendment to cat legislation at a state level due to the politically sensitive nature of the issue

Opportunities

Initiative

The feedback from the Residents Forum be forwarded to the Dog & Cat Management Board.

Source Council Staff

Recommendations

4.1.1 The feedback from the Residents Forum be forwarded to the Dog & Cat Management Board to demonstrate the extent of support in the community for more effective cat laws



PART 4 – CAT MANAGEMENT

21

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF CATS

Current Situation

The Dog and Cat Management Act allows a person to seize, detain, destroy or dispose of an unidentified cat. Only 20% of attendees at the Residents Forum were aware of this situation.

55% of attendees at the Residents Forum supported compulsory microchipping/ identification of cats

50% supported the registration of cats. At this time Council does not support the registration of cats as it believes that a registration scheme would be difficult to enforce and would not resolve the major cat related problem experienced by the community which is wandering cats.

Identification of cats is an issue which can be achieved without a complex registration framework.

Enforcement of wandering cats is very difficult (in comparison to dogs – the registration fee for dogs funds our enforcement actions in part).

Challenges

In the past there has been no requirement to identify cats or confine them to your property. There is growing community pressure for tighter controls on cats and further education of cat owners on what constitutes responsible cat ownership.

Opportunities

Further education of the community is required to encourage them to identify their cats and advise of the possible consequences of not identifying their cats

Initiative

Information be distributed to the community emphasising the importance of identifying cats

Source Council staff

Continue to lobby for state-wide cat legislation

Recommendations

4.2.1 Council to lobby State Government for legislative framework to deal with the community issue of cats wandering.



PART 4 – CAT MANAGEMENT

4.3 CATS - OTHER ISSUES

Current Situation

The majority of complaints Council received regarding cats are about cats wandering onto property. To assist residents resolve these issues Council hires out cat traps at a nominal fee. Many of the cat related issues raised at the Residents Forum related to wandering cats. These issues included 50% of attendees supported a cat curfew, other attendees sought to have penalties imposed for owners of wandering cats, and others felt that cats should be subject to the same regulatory framework (eg registration) as that imposed on dogs.

80% of the attendees believed that cats should be desexed if not being kept specifically for breeding purposes whilst it was also raised that cat breeders should be registered, cats should be desexed prior to sale and there should be free registration for desexed cats

Other issues raised at the Forum included: support for Council to promote and/or subsidise cat enclosures, a limit upon the number of cats per property, and Council to subsidise the desexing of cats.

Another issue that significantly effects the number of kittens born each year is the number of “partially owned” cats. These are cats that are fed by a resident but the cat is not housed or cared for in any other way. The majority of these cats are not desexed and contribute significantly to the stray cat population and wander freely at night causing many of the problem encountered by attendees at the Residents Forum.

Challenges

Educating persons who feed “partially owned cats” of the consequences of their actions

Opportunities

Promotion of cat enclosures may reduce the incidence of wandering cats.

Initiative

Council staff to formulate information for community regarding the consequences of “partially owned cats”

Source Council Staff

Recommendations

4.3.1 Council staff to formulate information for community regarding the consequences of “partially owned cats”

4.3.2 Council staff to investigate types of cat enclosures available and prepare information promoting cat enclosures to the community.



PART 5 – POULTRY MANAGEMENT

GOAL		SERVICE PROVISION								
ROLE		LEADERSHIP	OWNER / CUSTODIAN	REGULATOR	INFORMATION PROVIDER	ADVOCATE	FACILITATOR / INITIATOR	AGENT	PART FUNDER	DIRECT PROVIDER
		ACTIONS								
To enable members of the urban community to keep limited numbers of poultry without causing adverse impacts on their neighbors.		N/A	N/A	Council has powers under the Local Government Act to control excessive numbers of animals on a property that are causing a hazard or nuisance. Council has from time to time used this legislation on poultry.	Council has developed a guideline on the keeping of poultry in the urban environment.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



PART 5 – POULTRY MANAGEMENT

5.1 POULTRY

Current Situation

A number of residents in urban areas keep poultry for a variety of reasons.

Prior to the creation of the Local Government Act 1999 Council had the power to create a By Law for the keeping of poultry. With the creation of that Act that power was lost and replaced by an order making power where any animals and birds become a nuisance.

This situation has left a void as there are no guidelines for keeping of poultry in the residential areas of the City of Onkaparinga. Council frequently receives requests for such a document.

Council staff have drafted guidelines for the keeping of poultry (these guidelines generally reflect the provisions of the former By Law). It is intended that these guidelines be attached to this Plan (Attachment 6) to provide guidance for persons wishing to keep poultry within the City of Onkaparinga. They may also be used by Council staff when called upon to investigate complaints regarding poultry keeping.

Council received 30 complaints in 2005/2006 in relation to poultry – mostly about roosters crowing. Many of these complaints are similar to dog barking, if they are not resolved in the short term they become very emotion and are often combined with other issues. The number of complaints are small, however they take up a large amount of time and resources to resolve.

The impacts of poorly kept poultry lead to complaints about roosters crowing, an increased presence of vermin (ie rats, mice) and odour.

Challenges

While the keeping of poultry can be a beneficial exercise it can easily result in nuisance to neighbors in an urban environment.

Opportunities

Initiative

Source

Recommendations

5.1.1 That the attached guidelines for the keeping of poultry be attached to this plan to form the basis of reasonable poultry keeping within the City of Onkaparinga.