



CITY OF
MONASH

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017-2021

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN – 2017-2021

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DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

Under Section 68A of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, 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 Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources*), 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.

PART A

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Plan

This Domestic Animal Management Plan (hereinafter referred to as the DAM Plan) has been prepared to provide a strategic framework to the City of Monash for policy direction and action plans related to animal management during the four-year period to 2021.

Council has a dual role of enforcing relevant State legislation and its own Local Laws together with educating our community on issues of animal management and responsibilities associated with pet ownership.

The DAM Plan aims to integrate best practice in domestic animal management with Council's priorities for actions to be undertaken during the period 2017-2021.

1.2 Domestic Animal Management

Council is charged with responsibilities on a wide range of issues associated with the management of dogs and cats. Substantive issues include:

- Animal registration;
- Animal identification;
- Dog attacks;
- Restricted breeds of dogs;
- Problem barking;
- Dogs wandering at large;
- Dog access to public places (parks, reserves and streets);
- Dog faeces management;
- Impact of cats, including their confinement;
- Education in responsible pet ownership;
- Welfare of animals, including unwanted animals and the issue of de-sexing;
- Health, leisure and social aspects of pet ownership; and
- Training for animal management officers.

Council has traditionally focussed on the enforcement of laws relating to the keeping of dogs and cats but this has shifted in recent times to include to the education of the community in responsible pet ownership.

This DAM Plan focuses on encouraging best practice for the management of dogs and cats in Monash and to promote responsible pet ownership.

1.3 Process for Developing this Plan

In preparing this Plan, the following methodology has been applied:

- Existing animal management operations were reviewed including existing procedures, local laws and orders.
- The strategic content was reviewed including plans and strategies that might be relevant to animal management.
- A Monash Community Survey was conducted by Council during March 2017. This survey sought community input on a range of issues, including: dog parks, animal registration and nuisance cats. (Refer to Annexure 1 for a summary of the feedback).
- A draft Plan was prepared and following Council's consideration, released for community consultation.
- This Domestic Animal Management Plan was adopted by Council in October 2017.

1.4 Structure of the Plan

This Plan is presented in three parts, namely:

- Part A – Purpose, demographics, process and resources;
- Part B - Key Issues and Strategic Directions for the next four years; and
- Part C – Annual reviews and reporting.

1.5 Domestic Animal Controls in Monash

Controls on domestic animals are derived from various sources. The following summarises these controls for Monash:

1.5.1 *Domestic Animals Act 1994 (the Act)*.

Under provisions of *the Act*, all dogs and cats must be registered with Council by 10 April annually, or upon them reaching three months of age. The animal's registration tag must be worn on its collar at all times when outside of the premises in which it is kept.

The Act stipulates specific controls for the keeping of Restricted Breed Dogs. Particular provisions also apply for the control of dogs declared to be dangerous or menacing.

A Council Order made under Section 26A of *the Act* requires dogs to be exercised on a leash in all public places except for designated off-leash parks.

1.5.2 Council's Local Law No 3 – Community Amenity

Amongst other things, this Local Law regulates the keeping of animals in Monash. It requires an annual permit from Council to keep more than two dogs and two cats.

The Local Law also contains requirements for housing animals, controlling animal odours and removing dog excrement from a road or Council land.

2. MONASH IN CONTEXT

2.1 Key Features of Monash

The municipality of Monash encompasses an area of 81.5 square kilometres. The municipality is predominantly residential, but it also contains substantial industrial, commercial and recreational areas. Suburbs within Monash's municipal boundaries are:

- Ashwood,
- Clayton,
- Glen Waverley,
- Hughesdale,
- Huntingdale,
- Mount Waverley,
- Mulgrave,
- Notting Hill,
- Oakleigh,
- Oakleigh East; and
- Wheelers Hill.

Monash also contains parts of the suburbs of:

- Burwood,
- Chadstone; and
- Oakleigh South.

Major features of Monash include:

- Monash University in Clayton;
- Monash Medical Centre in Clayton;
- Four private hospitals;
- Major shopping precincts in Brandon Park, Clayton, Glen Waverley, Mount Waverley, Oakleigh and Waverley Gardens;
- Regional parks managed by Parks Victoria including Jells Park, Bushy Park, Shepherds Bush, Scotchmans Creek Linear Park and Corhanwarrabul Wetlands;
- Well positioned and maintained public parks and reserves throughout Monash for both active and passive recreational pursuits.

Adjoining municipalities are:

- Boroondara;
- Glen Eira;
- Greater Dandenong;
- Kingston;

- Knox;
- Stonnington; and
- Whitehorse.

Monash's municipal boundaries are defined by:

- Highbury Road in the north;
- Dandenong Creek in the east;
- Police Road/ Dandenong Road/ Westall Road/ Centre Road in the south; and
- Poath Road/ Dandenong Road/ Warrigal Road in the west.

2.2 Monash's Population

The City of Monash estimated resident population for 2016 was 190,234 with a population density of 23.36 persons per hectare, making it one of the most populous municipalities in Victoria.

The cultural diversity of Monash's residents is amplified by the fact that 45% of Monash's residents were born overseas, having come from 45 different countries, including China, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, United Kingdom, Greece, Italy, Vietnam, Hong Kong, South Korea and Indonesia. Other than English, the main languages spoken in Monash households are Mandarin, Greek, Cantonese, Italian, Sinhalese, Vietnamese, Tamil, Korean, Hindi and Indonesian.

Monash residents are generally highly skilled and well-educated. Thirty percent of Monash residents aged over 15 have a bachelor university degree or higher qualification (compared with 23% of the Greater Melbourne population).

Together, businesses in Monash provide 121,467 jobs. This makes Monash the second largest employment destination in Melbourne, after the Central Business District.

2.3 Public Open Space

Monash has extensive areas of public open space well distributed and located across the municipality. Over 90% of the available open space is owned and managed by Council. These spaces provide important leisure and recreation opportunities for the public to exercise their dogs.

2.4 Registered Dogs

For the 2016 calendar year, 11,462 dogs were registered with Council. This represents a decrease of 4.3% compared to the number of dogs registered in 2015 (11,981 in 2015).

2.5 Registered Cats

For the 2016 calendar year, 4,690 cats were registered with Council. This represents a decrease of 3.4% compared to the number of cats registered in 2015 (4854 in 2015).

2.6 Registered Domestic Animal Businesses

Six Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) are registered in Monash. These comprise:

- Four Pet Shops;
- One Dog Trainer; and
- One Boarding Kennel.

3. TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

3.1 Authorised Officers

Monash City Council employs five full time Community Laws Officers and two full time Senior Community Laws Officers. All officers are multi-skilled and provide animal management, as well as general community laws services.

The Community Amenity Department has four administration officers who spend approximately 50% of their collective time on animal management matters (registrations, enquiries and complaints).

Council's Coordinator Community Laws spends approximately 30% of their time on animal management matters.

In addition to the animal management service provided during business hours, an after-hours service is also provided.

3.2 Authorised Officer Training

As part of our animal management strategy, Council recognises the importance of authorised officers being adequately trained. All staff have, or will be required to gain the Certificate IV Animal Control and Regulation and Certificate IV in Government (Statutory Compliance) which addresses the skills of animal handling, investigation, report writing, communication and time management.

Table 1 sets out the status of training for our officers and training proposed during the forthcoming four year period.

Table 1: Training Status for Authorised Officers

Authorised Officer Training	Current (2017)	Planned
Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation Senior Officer 1 Officer 1 Officer 2 Officer 3 Officer 5	Completed Completed Completed	2017 2018
Certificate IV in Government (Statutory Compliance) Senior Officer 2 Officer 4	Completed Completed	
Industry training – animal handling		All officers to complete every 18 months
Bureau of Animal Welfare – training and information days	All officers to attend when notified	All officers to attend when notified
Canine DNA evidence collection Senior Officer 1 Senior Officer 2 Officer 1 Officer 2 Officer 3 Officer 4 Officer 5	Completed	All officers to complete course by 30/06/2021
Microchip implanting in cats and dogs		Selected Officers to acquire this skill to attend by 30/06/2021
In-house training on relevant subject matter, e.g. brief preparation,		Training needs to be identified and all officers to attend quarterly

statement taking		training
Induction program for new staff		
Senior Officer 1	Completed	Training available through corporate training internally
Senior Officer 2	Completed	
Officer 1	Completed	
Officer 2	Completed	
Officer 3	Completed	
Officer 4	Completed	
Officer 5	Completed	

3.3 Our Plans for 2017-2021

Objective 1: Review and update induction plan for new staff.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review minimum training requirements in consultation with management and staff including ensuring all staff have successfully completed Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation	By 30/06/2018	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into an approved induction plan by 30/06/2018. All staff to have completed Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation by 30/6/2020.
Identify additional training opportunities in consultation with management and staff	Annually by 30/06/2018	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into individual officers' training plan as part of the organisational development plan process by 30/06/2018

Objective 2: Develop and maintain a training calendar for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training as part of performance planning

Activity	When	Evaluation
Complete a development plan process with each staff member, identifying training needs	As part of scheduled organisational performance conversations	Completion of development plan process

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

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review minimum training requirements for officers (e.g. OH&S, animal handling, Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation), and monitor records.	Ongoing	Review spreadsheet quarterly and ensure each officer has completed their minimum training requirements within 18 months of appointment

Objective 4: Offer additional training opportunities each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, conflict management, communication/education techniques	By 31/12 each year	Review annually how many officers undertook training that was in addition to their minimum requirements.

PART B

4. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

4.1 Current Situation

4.1.1 Our current data

4.1.1.1 Registrations:

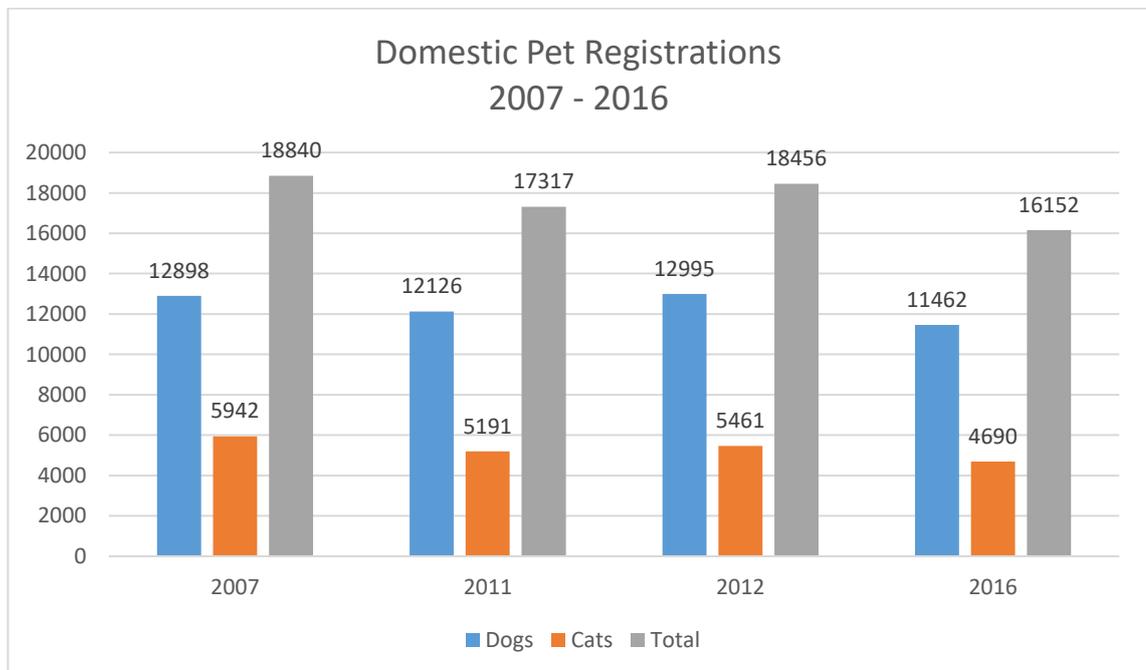
Council's registration of dogs and cats for the 2016 calendar year and the categorisation of these registrations are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Dog and Cat Registrations for 2016

	DOGS	CATS
De-sexed animals registered	9,073	4,592
Entire animals registered	2,389	98
Total number of animals registered	11,462	4,690

Trends in pet registrations since 2007 are shown in Graph 1 below.

Graph 1: Pet Registration Trends 2007 - 2016



For the period from 2007 to 2016, there has been a downward trend in both dog and cat registrations noting that there was an increase between 2011 and 2012. The overall pattern however is one of decreased registrations.

4.1.1.2 Pet Micro-chipping

Dogs and cats being registered for the first time must be micro-chipped. Micro-chipped animals can be promptly returned to their owners when they stray or become lost.

4.1.1.3 Pet De-sexing

In 2016, 79% of dogs and 98% of cats registered with Council had been de-sexed.

In 2015, Council introduced compulsory cat de-sexing (exempting cats where a vet recommends against desexing) for newly registered cats to reduce the number of stray cats wandering Monash streets. The compulsory de-sexing of cats helps reduce the unwanted litters of cats and will over time assist in the reduction of feral cats and decrease the number of potentially unwanted animals, which may otherwise need to be euthanised due to lack of homing options.

4.1.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's **Local Law No 3 – Community Amenity** relates, in part, to the keeping of animals. Amongst other things, it requires:

- an annual permit to keep more than 2 dogs and 2 cats;
- animal housing to be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition so as not to cause a nuisance;
- an occupier of land on which any animal is kept to not allow any noise or smell to cause a nuisance; and
- a person to not permit excrement of a dog to remain on a road or on Council land and to carry a bag for the purpose of removing dog excrement from a road or Council land.

A Council Order made under Section 26A of *the Act* requires dogs to be exercised on a leash in all public places except for designated off-leash parks.

When a dog is being exercised in an off-leash area, the owner must:

- remain in effective voice or hand control and within constant sight of the dog so they can promptly place the dog on a lead, if that becomes necessary;

- carry a lead no longer than 1.5 metres to bring the dog under effective control if the dog behaves in a manner which threatens any person or animal;
- not allow the dog to worry or threaten any person or animal and not allow the dog to attack any person or animal;
- bring the dog under control if it is, or is likely to be, within 20 metres of an:
 - organised sporting or practice event that is underway;
 - occupied children’s playground;
 - organised public meeting; or
 - occupied permanent barbeque or picnic area.

4.1.3 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

Council:

- makes available to residents a pamphlet titled ‘Living with Dogs and Cats’ as a guide for both pet owners and non-owners;
- follows up pet owners that have not renewed their pet registration;
- publishes information on the Council website and in the Council newsletter distributed to residents to advise of the registration period and requirements;
- promotes the requirement for owners to “pick up” after their dogs and dispose of waste appropriately;
- provides dog waste bins and drinking fountains at some reserves; and
- distributes registration brochures and fact sheets to residents.

4.1.4 Our current Compliance Activities

During 2016, pet registration renewals were sent to all registered pet owners. Reminders were also sent to 2935 pet owners that had not renewed registration for their pet(s).

Authorised officers have conducted door-knocks within the municipality to follow up both new registrations and registrations that were not renewed. Micro-chipping agencies have also been approached to obtain records of resident pets micro-chipped by them and compared with Council’s pet registration data base.

In the Monash Community Survey conducted in March 2017, 83.66% of residents indicated that they believed residents should be fined for failure to register their pets – an indication that residents regard enforcement as an important part of compliance activities.

4.1.5 Summary

A total of 16,152 dogs and cats were registered in Monash during 2016, made up of 11,462 dogs and 4690 cats. For the period from 2007 to 2016, there has been a downward trend in both dog and cat registrations noting that there was an increase between 2011 and 2012. The overall pattern however is one of decreased registrations. For dogs registered during 2016, 79% were de-sexed and 87% were micro-chipped. For cats, 98% were de-sexed and 80% were micro-chipped.

The promotion of pet registration and responsible pet ownership together with education in ownership obligations are considered high priorities for Council to focus on.

4.2 Our Plans for 2013-2017

Objective 1: Improve the accuracy of Council registration database by cross-referencing with micro-chip registry data.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Improve accuracy of Council pet registration database by contacting micro-chip registries to obtain details of dogs and cats in the municipality that are micro-chipped.</p> <p>Check that all animals are also listed on Council's pet registration database, and follow up those that are not.</p>	<p>Annually by 30/09</p>	<p>Demonstrate Council's pet registration database can be accurately cross referenced with micro-chip registries</p> <p>Demonstrate an increase in numbers of pets registered with Council following microchip registry cross-referencing exercise.</p>

Objective 2: Improve promotion of pet registration and responsible pet Ownership.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Increase publicity and education regarding animal registration and micro-chipping among Council's non-English speaking residents by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publishing information to CALD communities; • publishing information in Monash University student publications; • publishing information at local vets 	Throughout the year	Review relevant publications to ensure registration is advertised/promoted
Increase publicity and education regarding animal registration and micro-chipping among all residents by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posting information on Council's website and social media, e.g. Facebook & Twitter; • placing temporary signage on vehicles promoting pet registration; and • placing temporary signage in reserves promoting pet registration 	Throughout the year	Review relevant media to ensure registration is advertised/promoted

Objective 3: Improve compliance with pet registration requirements

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake annual registration door knock program	By 30/09 annually	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Record of unregistered and unidentified animals detected during door knocks. Infringements issued for unregistered animals.

Seize animals that remain unregistered after enforcement action was taken.	As required	Number of prosecutions undertaken and animals seized.
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5. NUISANCE

5.1 Current Situation

5.1.1 Our current data

Statistics for nuisance-type resident issues recorded for 2016, as against those recorded in 2012, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 – Resident Service Requests and Complaints

Nature of Request/ Complaint	Year		%	
	2012	2016	Increase	Decrease
All dog & cat complaints	1567	2004	28%	
Dogs - Barking	200	119		40.5%
Dogs - Impounded	847	546		35.5%
Dogs - Euthanised	93	9		90%
Cats - Nuisance	240	24		90%
Cats - Impounded	800	462		42%
Cats - Euthanised	486	121		75%
Animal Infringement Notices Issued	156	261	67%	

When comparing 2012 and 2016 statistics, the following variations were noted:

- the total number of dog and cat requests and complaints have increased by 21%;
- the number of animals impounded have decreased substantially;
- the number of dogs and cats euthanised have decreased dramatically; and
- animal infringement numbers have increased by 40%.

5.1.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's Local Law No 3 – Community Amenity, at clause 89 requires persons walking dogs to remove the dogs' excrement from a road or Council land.

Clause 132 requires structures housing animals and the area within 3 metres of the structure to be maintained:

- in a clean, inoffensive and sanitary condition;
- so as not to cause any nuisance; and
- to the satisfaction of Council or an authorised officer.

Clause 134 requires an occupier of land on which any animal is kept to not allow any noise or smell to interfere with the reasonable comfort or convenience of persons who occupy adjacent land.

Clause 135 prohibits the feeding of an uncaged animal that is causing a nuisance or damage to property.

The three main nuisance types in Monash have been identified as:

5.1.2.1 Barking Dogs

It is part of Council's role to investigate nuisances caused by barking dogs. When a complaint is made, Council's authorised officers' conduct an investigation to establish whether the barking goes beyond mere annoyance, and if an offence has occurred or continues to occur.

When something is annoying it is often thought of as a nuisance. However, there is a difference between what is annoying and what is legally classed as a "nuisance". Council can only intervene with a barking dog complaint if the barking that is being complained about, is considered in a legal sense as a nuisance. A nuisance can be generally defined as persistent, substantial and unreasonable.

When lodging a complaint with Council, it is expected that the matter is being referred to Council because the neighbour-to-neighbour approach has not worked. The first step Council takes when responding to initial complaints about a barking dog, is to obtain a statement from the customer indicating the times the barking occurs and the impact it has on the complainant.

Council also provides the dog owner with information about how the barking may be reduced, and the dog owner is asked to implement strategies to address the barking.

The investigation then proceeds with enquiries being made with other neighbours and the investigating officer making his or her own

observations. The dog owner is also made aware that an investigation is underway, and once all of the available evidence has been collected the dog owner may be formally interviewed.

Council will continue to review our practices so that they are consistent with best practice.

5.1.2.2 Nuisance and Feral Cats

The biggest nuisance with cats in Monash is caused by stray and feral cats. These cats are encouraged to remain in an area by residents feeding them and they generally raid the natural habitat and upset the amenity of the area in which they take refuge.

Council hires out cat traps and proactively set traps in areas of the municipality where nuisance and feral cats are known to be of concern.

The introduction of Clause 134 of the Local Law has also assisted in raising awareness of the problems caused by feeding feral cats.

Whilst 31.69% of those who participated in the Monash Community Survey indicated that they had been affected by nuisance cats, it is also noted that the number of complaints about nuisance cats received by Council have reduced considerably. Survey participants and respondents to the draft Plan expressed significant support for the introduction of a night-time curfew for cats and this is thought to be in response to ongoing concerns regarding the destructive effect of cats on wildlife and nuisance caused by cats.

Initially the introduction of a night-time cat curfew was not proposed as an action to arise out of this plan. This is because cat curfews are inherently difficult to enforce and it was therefore proposed to focus on educative efforts designed to encourage the containment of cats at night. Nonetheless, the high level of community support suggests that people generally expect that cat owners should be compelled to keep cats contained at night. Whilst cat curfews are difficult to enforce it can be expected that cat containment may be normalised through heightened awareness and a willingness to comply with a legal control.

Under this plan a night-time curfew for cats will be introduced following the development and delivery of an education program that promotes the well-being of cats and the environmental benefits that arise from them being contained at night.

5.1.2.3 Dog Faeces

Existing Council local laws require dog owners to remove their dogs' faeces from public places. Owners are encouraged to carry bags with

them and dispose of faeces when they return home. Community and peer pressure on dog owners to remove their dogs' faeces from public places has been successful in raising awareness regarding this issue.

Council is only in a position to act on such incidents when observed by an authorised officer during patrols or a witness comes forward and provides sufficient information to locate an offender and to give evidence in court, if required.

5.1.3 Fenced dog off-leash area

As part of the Monash Community Survey residents were asked how important it is for Monash to have at least one fenced off-leash area. 39.4% of respondents indicated that it is very important and 25.92% indicated that it is important for Monash to have such a park.

It is clear that the feasibility of the introduction of such an area within Monash must be investigated.

5.1.4 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

Council publishes a monthly news bulletin for its residents in which topical articles on animal management and current animal issues are regularly included.

In addition, it is important that face to face contact with residents continues to occur. Accordingly, regular patrols are conducted by authorised officers in Council parks and reserves. This allows officers an opportunity to interact, educate and advise pet owners on responsible pet ownership.

Continuing to provide a range of methods to talk to the community, including face to face contact, written publications and the use of social media will ensure we reach the widest possible audience. Signs have been erected in some parks to remind dog owners of the rules applicable when visiting a park.

5.1.5 Our current Compliance Activities

Authorised officers regularly patrol the municipality and speak to owners of dogs and cats that may be causing a nuisance.

Officers will continue to investigate both reported and proactively detected complaints and breaches and Council will continue to engage best practice in its animal management activities.

5.1.6 Summary

An increase of 21% in the total number of complaints regarding cats and dogs indicate that this is an area that requires continued focus. It is encouraging that the number of animals impounded and euthanised has substantially decreased.

Council's focus in recent times has been on barking dogs, nuisance cats and dog faeces removal from public places. These will continue to be high priorities for officers over the currency of this Plan.

5.2 Our Plans for 2017-2021

Objective 1: Reduce cat nuisance complaints by delivering an education program prior to introducing a night time curfew for cats.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and deliver an education program that promotes the well-being of cats and the environmental benefits that arise from them being contained at night.	By 31/12/2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media prompts• Information mail-outs to cat owners• Bulletin articles• A reduction in the number of nuisance complaints about cats
Introduce a night time curfew for cats.	By 31/12/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date curfew introduced• Number of nuisance cat complaints prior to and after introduction of curfew

Objective 2: Reduce and minimise the amount of nuisance dog complaints to Council by education and enforcement.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Utilise barking dog complaint/investigation procedure and ensure it is published on the Council website	By 30/06/2018	Procedure distributed and information available on website
Continue to roll out the provision of dog faeces disposal bins and bag dispensers in parks within budget constraints	Ongoing	The needs and wants of dog owners and the needs at reserves
Increase awareness of requirement to pick up dog faeces by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distributing brochures; and • using stencilled designs on footpaths in reserves 	Brochure design to be completed by 30/06/2018 Stencil design to be completed by 30/06/2018 and in use by 31 July 2018	Brochure designed and distributed to residents Stencil designed and utilised in reserves
Investigate the feasibility of a dedicated fenced off-leash area	By 31/12/2020	Investigation completed and recommendation made to Council
Include information regarding confinement, barking, dogs at large etc. in registration information packs each year	Ongoing	Review information included annually.

6. DOG ATTACKS

6.1 Current Situation

6.1.1 Our current data

Statistics for dog attacks in Monash recorded for the 2007, 2012 and 2016, periods are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 – Recorded Dog Attacks in Monash

Nature of Attacks	Year		
	2007	2012	2016
Dog attacks reported	85	53	54
Dog attacks referred to the Magistrates' Court	51	9	8

These statistics show little difference between 2012 and 2016. These statistics however only reflect those dog attacks reported to Council. It is known that not all dog attacks that have occurred are reported.

The number of dog attacks for 2016 referred to the Magistrates' Court is on par with the 2012 number.

6.1.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Reported dog attacks receive the highest priority from authorised officers. Depending on the severity of an incident, there are a range of actions that Council can consider. These can include, but are not limited to, the issuing of fines, prosecution, declaring dogs menacing or dangerous which places additional obligations on the owner associated with the keeping of the animal. Where serious injury results from a dog attack, Council may seize the offending dog pending the outcome of any prosecution and can determine to seek to euthanize a dog where it is considered it may pose an unacceptable risk to the community.

To reduce the risk of dog attacks, officers regularly patrol the municipality for wandering or at-large dogs and dogs or their owners that are not complying with animal management requirements. The risk of dog attacks is also minimised by dogs being required to be leashed within 20 metres of any occupied children's playground or play equipment, occupied picnic area or organised sporting event.

6.1.3 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

Where appropriate, dog owners are encouraged to implement one or a number of the following processes to reduce dog attacks:

- match dog breed choice with a dog owner's life style;
- have dogs de-sexed to reduce their aggression or desire to wander at large;
- implement early socialisation and training for the dog;
- provide suitable conditions for confining the dog at its home;
- provide environmental enrichment at its home to relieve pent up energy; and
- regularly exercise the dog.

Officers also focus on owners and the public in general in promoting the important principles of dog attack avoidance. This is promoted through information brochures and Council's website.

6.1.4 Our current Compliance Activities

Authorised officers routinely:

- maintain street and reserve patrols with a specific focus on high risk areas e.g. high attendance reserves;
- promptly respond to complaints; and
- use declaration/destruction powers appropriately.

6.1.5 Summary

Statistics for 2016 for dog attacks are consistent with those from 2012. Officers' prioritisation of responding to dog attacks, promoting de-sexing of pets, advising on the suitability of appropriate dog breeds for domestic pets and stronger legislation controlling dog breeds are all designed to assist in reducing the incidents of dog attacks. A continuation of these approaches is proposed for the currency of this Plan.

6.2 Our Plans for 2017-2021

Objective 1: Reduce and minimise the risk of dog attacks in the community.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc.) through media articles (with a specific focus on the multi-cultural community), website and social media information and targeted patrols.	Ongoing	Compare number of reported dog attack incidents pre and post campaign Number of media articles published Number of patrols conducted

7. DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

7.1 Current Situation

7.1.1 Our current data

Definitions for dogs fitting one of these three classifications are:

7.1.1.1 A **Dangerous Dog** is either:

- a dog declared as dangerous by the Council (e.g. it has caused death or serious injury to a person or animal); or
- a dog kept as a guard dog for the purpose of guarding non-residential properties or a dog trained to attack or bite a person or thing when attached to or worn by a person.

7.1.1.2 A **Menacing Dog** is a dog declared menacing by the Council because it has:

- rushed at or chased a person; or
- bitten a person or animal causing a non-serious injury to that person or animal; or
- has been declared a menacing dog under a law of another State.

7.1.1.3 A **Restricted Breed Dog** is a dog that is any one of the following breeds:

- Japanese Tosa;
- fila Brasileiro;
- dogo Argentino;
- Perro de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario);
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier).

Statistics for dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs registered in Monash for 2016 compared with registrations in 2012, are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 – Registered Dangerous, Menacing or Restricted Breed Dogs

Dog Classification	Year		% change
	2012	2016	
Dangerous Dogs	11	5	54.5% reduction
Menacing Dogs	9	2	77.8% reduction
Restricted Breed Dogs	15	8	46.6% reduction
TOTALS	35	15	57% reduction

These statistics show a 57% reduction in the total number of dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs registered when compared with 2012 statistics.

7.1.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Undisciplined and/or inadequately trained dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs in public places pose the largest risk to the public and authorised officers. These categories of dogs are dealt with in accordance with the relevant legislation and Council procedures.

7.1.3 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

Fact sheets are provided to the owners of these dogs informing them of their obligations and responsibilities in owning such dogs.

7.1.4 Our current Compliance Activities

During the course of a year inspections are conducted on each property that contains a restricted breed or declared dangerous dog. In line with State Government legislation, Council deems the control of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs as a very serious matter.

Random door knocks that are conducted throughout the municipality annually also assists to identify these types of dogs. Authorised officers also conduct routine street and park patrols and promptly respond to complaints from residents.

7.1.5 Summary

There has been a reduction in the total number of dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs registered when compared with 2012. Current Council protocols for these dog breeds, together with our plans for the currency of this Plan, are considered appropriate for the management of these dog categories.

7.2 Our Plans for 2017-2021

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

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review policies on when to declare a dog	By 31/12/2018	Policy must remain current
Cross-reference micro-chip database information with current Council registration database for potential restricted breed dogs	By 30/09 annually	Cross referencing with Council's registration database
Inspect all industrial properties in the municipality for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes	Annually as part of door knock process	Number of guard dogs identified as not registered

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

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct inspections	By 30/06 annually	Review of inspection reports and updates to the registration database.

8. OVER-POPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

8.1 Current Situation

8.1.1 Our current data

Statistics for animals impounded in Monash and euthanised during 2016 compared with those recorded for 2012 are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 – Animals Impounded and Euthanised

Animal	Year		%age change
	2012	2016	
Dogs Impounded	847	546	35.5% reduction
Cats Impounded	800	462	42.3% reduction
Dogs Euthanised	93	9	90% reduction
Cats Euthanised	486	121	75% reduction

These statistics show a significant decrease in both animals being impounded and euthanized. There is a direct correlation with these statistics and a reduction in the overall number of animals being impounded.

8.1.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's Local Law No. 3 – Community Amenity (refer to section 4.1.2 in this document for more detail) effectively controls overpopulation of animals in Monash.

No orders are currently in place for overpopulation or high euthanasia. The statistics in Table 7 above indicate manageable impounding and euthanasia trends in Monash which have significantly declined in the last 4 years.

8.1.3 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

Council has available a range of information to the public on responsible pet ownership, such as the "Who's for Cats Program" and the "Are you a Cat Owner" brochure.

8.1.4 Our current Compliance Activities

In conjunction with the RSPCA, all reasonable efforts are made to locate the owner, house or re-home impounded animals. Only after alternatives to

house or re-home a stray dog or cat have been exhausted, will euthanasia be considered.

8.1.5 Summary

In 2015 Council introduced compulsory de-sexing of cats registered for the first time within the municipality.

If an animal is impounded, all reasonable attempts are made to contact the owner. If this fails, alternatives to house or re-home the animal are exercised. Euthanasia for impounded animals is always the last resort.

8.2 Our Plans for 2017-2021

Objective 1: Reduce the percentage of registered dogs and cats that are currently entire

Activity	When	Evaluation
Organise discount de-sexing days to encourage pet owners to de-sex their cats.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of animals de-sexed as part of the scheme • Cost to run scheme • Any changes in the longer term regarding proportion of de-sexed animals on pet registration database, proportion of impounded pets that are de-sexed etc.

9. DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

9.1 Current Situation

9.1.1 Our current data

Six Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) are registered in Monash.

These comprise of:

- Four Pet Shops;
- One Dog Trainer; and
- One Boarding Kennel.

9.1.2 Our Orders, Local Laws and Council Policies and Procedures

The Act and associated regulations specifically regulate DABs. Comprehensive codes of practice developed from those regulations require no additional policies or procedures from Council.

9.1.3 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

At every stage of the process, Council advises and if necessary educates, DAB operators on any changes to legislation or on any new codes of practice that relates to their businesses.

9.1.4 Our current Compliance Activities

Compliance inspections of DABs are conducted annually by authorised officers. In addition, spot checks on DABs are carried out throughout the year. Should public complaints relating to DAB animal management practices be received, they are promptly investigated and responded to.

9.1.5 Summary

The six DABs registered in Monash are sufficiently monitored with spot checks and compliance inspections. Accurate registers of DABs are maintained.

9.2 Our Plans for 2017-2021

Objective 1: Maintain an up-to-date register of all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review all DABs in the municipality and ensure they continue to be registered with Council.	30/6 annually	Numbers of DABs that are found non-compliant

Objective 2: Maintain DAB compliance.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct compliance inspections on DABs	30/6 annually	Numbers of DABs that are found non-compliant

10. OTHER MATTERS

10.1 Emergency Management

10.1.1 Our current data

Like all municipalities in Victoria, Monash has its own Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) for handling natural disasters and emergencies. The purpose of the MEMP is to provide a coordinated response and then

recovery to support an emergency-affected community. This plan sets out the procedures to be followed when Council and community resources are required in the case of an emergency.

Monash is generally a low risk area however storm, flood damage, major transport emergency or chemical spillage may require an appropriate and prompt response. It is important for residents to know how the MEMP operates and what to do in an emergency.

The Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan has recently been reviewed and updated to ensure it provides a strong framework for responding to animal welfare emergency needs in Victoria.

The plan is a joint responsibility of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). Under the plan, DEDJTR is responsible for coordination of activities relating to all animals other than wildlife, DELWP is responsible for coordination of activities relating to wildlife.

In 2017 an Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP) was developed for Monash City Council which outlines the procedures to enable council animal management staff to understand their roles and responsibilities when undertaking activities assigned to Council and when they are assisting members of the community to manage their companion animals and livestock during an emergency.

10.1.2 Our current Council Policies and Procedures

The Monash Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP) deals specifically with the welfare of animals in Monash in case of an emergency. In the plan trained personnel are appointed to respond to any such emergencies.

10.1.3 Our current Education/Promotion Activities

Monash City Council ensures that emergency relief and recovery components of the MEMP details local arrangements and providers for relevant animal welfare services including:

- Liaison with relevant animal welfare agencies and organisations to enable effective and timely delivery of Council's animal welfare services; and
- Developing information for the public and media relating to the management of animals impacted by the emergency.

10.1.4 Our current Compliance Activities

Council responds to all emergency situations as a matter of urgency. Currently the Coordinator Community Laws undertakes annual reviews of the operational requirements involved in emergency management and recovery.

10.1.5 Summary

Emergencies may pose a risk to animal welfare. Where this occurs owners and carers of animals may be under considerable stress. The primary responsibility and duty of care remains with the person in charge of the animal. However Council does have a role and responsibility to play if an emergency is to occur. Council's responsibilities are outlined in the MEMP and the EAWP.

10.2 Public Education Program

10.2.1 Our current data

Our partnership with DEDJTR allows us to implement programs into schools which focus on the importance of responsible pet ownership. One of the programs currently used throughout Monash is the 'We Are Family' program. This program focuses specifically on the parents of children in the 0 to 4 age bracket, the most at risk group to a dog attack that could require hospitalisation. The Program provides information and strategies for parents to ensure the child and pet relationship is a happy and safe one.

10.3 Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (POCTA) Legislation

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA) allows for the authorisation of local government officers, who are employees of council and authorised under Section 72 of *the Act*.

Council officers who are authorised under POCTA have the powers to investigate cruelty, seize and dispose of animals, destroy suffering animals, deal with abandoned or distressed animals and prosecute cruelty offences.

At this point in time Council officers are not authorised as POCTA inspectors as the investigation of POCTA offences that occur within the municipality are currently investigated by the RSPCA and police. The RSPCA and police have demonstrated an ability to adequately respond to animal welfare matters that are controlled under the provisions of POCTA and therefore further Council involvement may be unnecessary.

10.4 Our Plans for 2017-2021

Objective 1: Maintain accurate information in Council's MEMP & Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP).

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review to ensure that the personnel and information contained in the MEMP and EAWP remains current	Half-yearly	The number of changes necessary at each review

Objective 2: Consider authorisation of officers under POCTA.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate the necessity of authorising Council officers under POCTA	30/06/2020	Investigation completed and recommendation accepted

PART C

12. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

12.1 Statutory Requirements for Review and Reporting

Section 68A(3) of *the Act* states:

Every Council must –

- (a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and*
- (b) provide the Department of Primary Industries' 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.*

12.2 Process for Review and Evaluation

A review of this Plan will be conducted annually. The review will evaluate the activities listed under each objective in this plan to determine whether they have successfully been achieved, are in progress or otherwise.

The Activity Evaluation Flowchart in Annexure 2 is provided to assist this process.

The annual evaluation of this Plan will be:

- Published in Councils' Annual Report; and
- Provided to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Secretary together with any amendments to the plan.

12.3 Summary of Objectives and Activities for 2017-2021

The objectives and activities in this plan are repeated hereunder for ease of review.

Objective 3.3.1: Review and update induction plan for new staff.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review minimum training requirements in consultation with management and staff including ensuring all staff have successfully completed Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation	By 30/06/2018	All staff to have completed Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation by 30/6/2020.

Identify additional training opportunities by consultation with management and staff	By 30/06/ 2018	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into individual officers' training plan as part of organisational development plan process by 30/06/2018
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Objective 3.3.2: Develop and maintain a training calendar for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training as part of performance planning

Activity	When	Evaluation
Complete a development plan process with each staff member, identifying training needs	As part of scheduled organisational performance conversations	Completion of development plan process

Objective 3.3.3: Ensure all Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within eighteen months of appointment.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review minimum training requirements for officers (e.g. OH&S, animal handling, Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation), and monitor records.	Ongoing	Review spreadsheet quarterly and ensure each officer has completed their minimum training requirements within 18 months of appointment

Objective 3.3.4: Offer additional training opportunities each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, conflict management, communication / education technique	By 31/12 each year	Review annually how many officers undertook training that was in addition to their minimum requirements.

Objective 4.2.1: Improve the accuracy of Council registration database by cross-referencing with micro-chip registry data.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Improve accuracy of Council pet registration database by contacting micro-chip registries to obtain details of dogs and cats in the municipality that are micro-chipped.</p> <p>Check that all animals are also listed on Council's pet registration database, and follow up those that are not.</p>	Annually by 30/09	<p>Demonstrate Council's pet registration database can be accurately cross referenced with micro-chip registries</p> <p>Demonstrate an increase in numbers of pets registered with Council following microchip registry cross-referencing exercise</p>

Objective 4.2.2: Improve promotion of pet registration and responsible pet Ownership.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Increase publicity and education regarding animal registration and micro-chipping among Council's non-English speaking residents by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publishing information to CALD communities; • publishing information in Monash University student publications; • publishing information at local vets 	Throughout the year	Review relevant publications to ensure registration is advertised/promoted
<p>Increase publicity and education regarding animal registration and micro-chipping among all residents by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posting information on Council's website and social media, e.g. Facebook & Twitter; • placing temporary signage on vehicles promoting pet registration; and • placing temporary signage in reserves 	Throughout the year	Review relevant media to ensure registration is advertised/promoted

promoting pet registration		
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Objective 4.2.3: Improve compliance with pet registration requirements.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake annual registration door knock program	By 30/09 annually	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Record of unregistered and unidentified animals detected during door knocks. Infringements issued for unregistered animals.
Seize animals that remain unregistered after enforcement action was taken.	Throughout the year	Number of prosecutions undertaken and animals seized

Objective 5.2.1: Reduce cat nuisance complaints by delivering an education program prior to introducing a night time curfew for cats.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and deliver an education program that promotes the well-being of cats and the environmental benefits that arise from them being contained at night.	By 31/12/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media prompts • Information mail-outs to cat owners • Bulletin articles • A reduction in the number of nuisance complaints about cats
Introduce a night time curfew for cats.	By 31/12/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date curfew introduced • Number of nuisance cat complaints prior to and after introduction of curfew

Objective 5.2.2: Reduce and minimise the amount of nuisance dog complaints to council by education and enforcement.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Utilise barking dog complaint/investigation procedure and ensure it is published on the Council website	By 30/06/2018	Updated procedure distributed and information available on website
Continue to roll out the provision of dog faeces disposal bins and bag dispensers in parks within budget constraints	By 30/06/2019	The needs and wants of dog owners and the needs at reserves
Increase awareness of requirement to pick up dog faeces by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> distributing brochures; and using stencilled designs on footpaths in reserves 	Brochure design to be completed by 30/06/2018 Stencil design to be completed by 31/12/2018	Brochure designed and distributed to residents Stencil designed and utilised in reserves
Investigate the feasibility of a dedicated fenced off-leash area	By 31/12/2020	Investigation completed and recommendation made to Council
Include information regarding confinement, barking, dogs at large etc. in registration information packs each year	Ongoing	Review information included annually.

Objective 6.2.1: Reduce and minimise the risk of dog attacks in the community.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc.) through media articles (with a specific focus on the multi-cultural community), website and social media information and targeted patrols.	Ongoing	Compare number of reported dog attack incidents pre and post campaign Number of media articles published Number of patrols conducted.

Objective 7.2.1: Identify and register all Declared Dogs in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review policies on when to declare a dog	By 31/12/2018	Policy must remain current
Cross-reference micro-chip database information with current Council registration database for potential restricted breed dogs	By 30/09 annually	Cross referencing with Councils registration database
Inspect all industrial properties in the municipality for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes	Annually as part of door knock process	Number of guard dogs identified as not registered

Objective 7.2.2: Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annual to ensure they are following the keeping requirements.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct inspections	By 30/06 annually	Review of inspection reports and updates to the registration database

Objective 8.2.1: Reduce the percentage of registered dogs and cats that are currently entire.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Organise discount de-sexing days to encourage pet owners to de-sex their cats	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of animals de-sexed as part of the scheme • Cost to run scheme • Any changes in the longer term regarding proportion of de-sexed animals on pet registration database, proportion of impounded pets that are de-sexed etc.

Objective 9.2.1: Maintain an up-to-date register of all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review all DABs in the municipality and ensure they continue to be registered with Council	30/6 annually	Numbers of DABs that are found non-compliant

Objective 9.2.2: Maintain Domestic Animal Business Compliance.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct compliance inspections on DABs	30/6 annually	Numbers of DABs that are found non-compliant.

Objective 10.4.1: Maintain accurate information in Council's MEMP & Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP).

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review to ensure that the personnel and information contained in the MEMP and EAWP remains current	Half-yearly	The number of changes necessary at each review

Objective 10.4.2: Consider authorisation of officers under POCTA

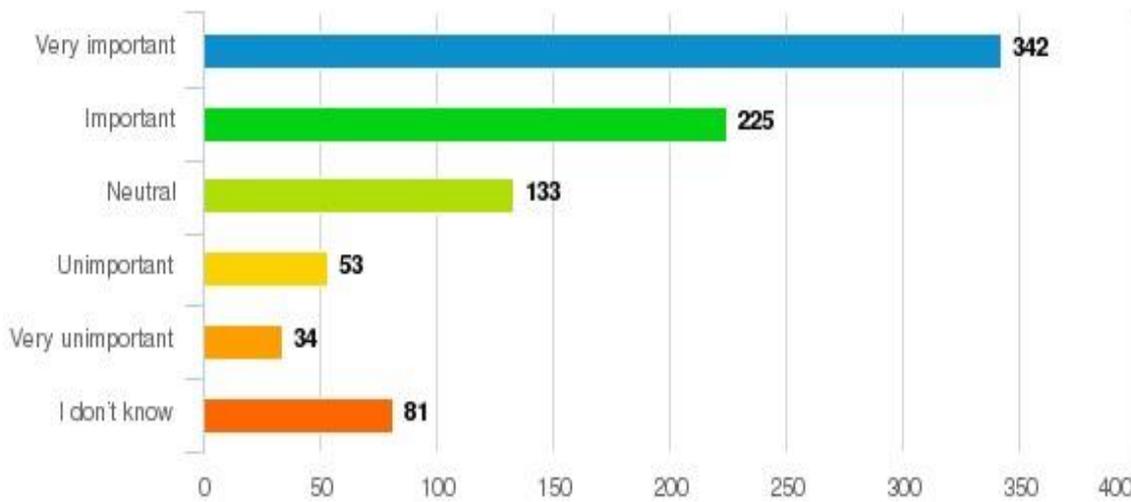
Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate the necessity of authorising Council officers under POCTA	30/06/2020	Investigation completed and recommendation accepted

ANNEXURE 1

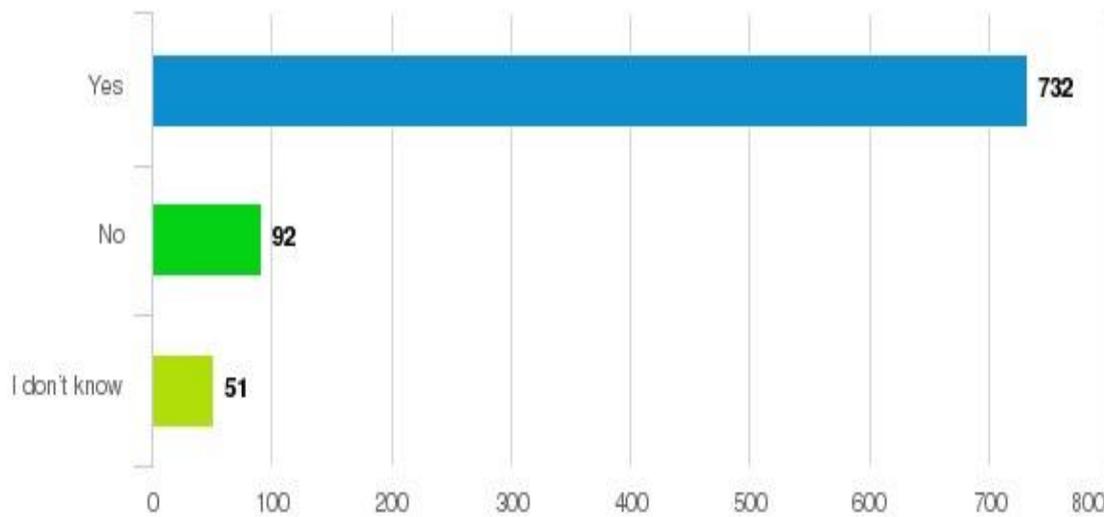
MONASH COMMUNITY SURVEY

A Monash Community Survey was conducted by Council during March 2017. This survey sought coordinated community input on a range of issues, including dog parks, animal registration and nuisance cats. A summary of the questions and responses received is shown below.

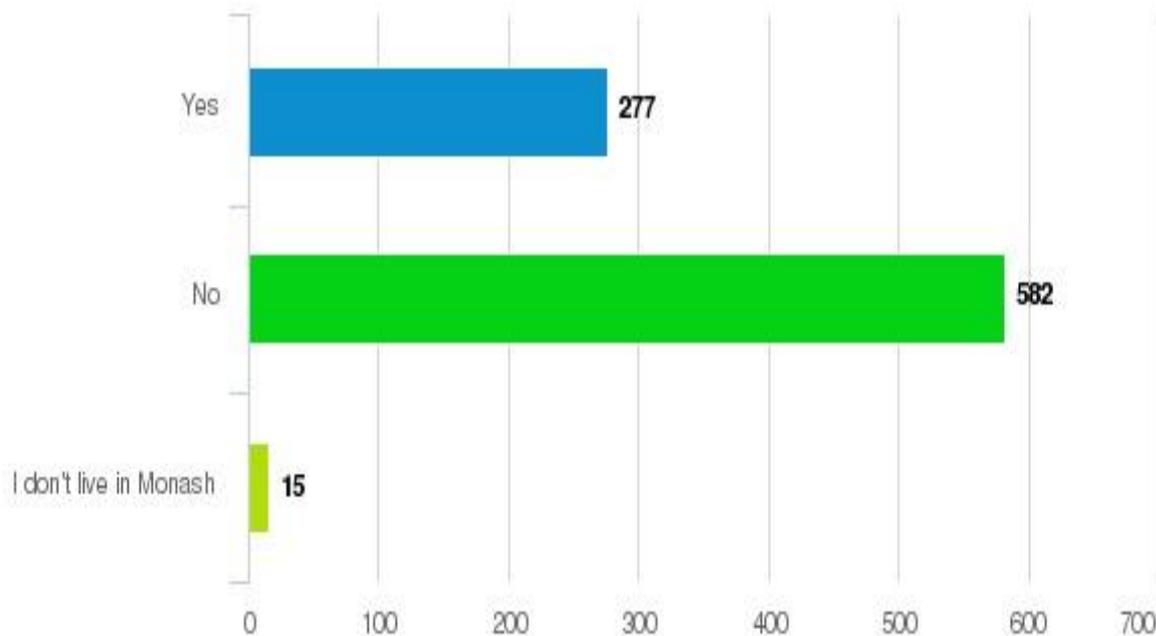
4. How important is it for Monash to have at least one FENCED off-leash area?



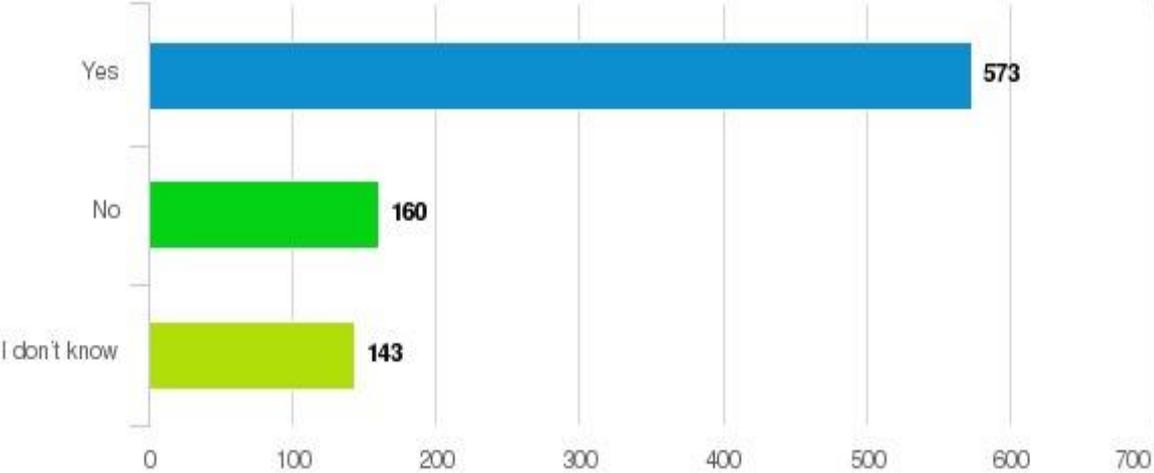
Do you think residents should be fined if they fail to register their dog or cat?



6. Have you been affected by nuisance cats here in Monash?



6a. Council may consider implementing a night time curfew for cats. Would you support this?



ANNEXURE 2

ACTIVITY EVALUATION FLOWCHART

