



# **ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

## **2020-2025**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Barunga West Council (“the Council”) is located on the Top of the Yorke – the northern end of the Yorke Peninsula, - and boasts popular fishing destinations and historic inland townships. Just two hours from Adelaide the key townships include Port Broughton and Bute, and coastal destinations Fisherman Bay and Tickera.

The Council covers an area of 1,590 square kilometres, and has a total of 931 kilometres of roads. It has boundaries with Copper Coast Council, Yorke Peninsula Council, Port Pirie Regional Council and Wakefield Regional Council.

The main industries in the Council area are agriculture, aged-care services, and recreational & commercial fishing. Engineering, mining and tourism are also matters which influence council decision-making.

According to the 2016 Census data, the Council population is 2,544, an increase of 3.6% from the previous 2011 census data. The median age of the population of Barunga West Council is 55 (an increase from 51) compared to the State average of 40 (up from 39) and national average of 38 (up from 37). People aged 65 years and over now make up 32.27% (up from 25.9%) of the population.

The increase in the average age of the population is always a consideration by Council in its planning for the future. The Council area houses several retirement facilities, and these are expanding due to the amenity of life in the area, and the central location of the Port Broughton Hospital and related medical services. The increase in the average age of the population is expected to continue. Council is mindful of the infrastructure necessary to accommodate a growing population of elderly residents, in addition to the more robust needs of the agricultural and tourism sector.

As at 1 July 2020 the Council had 663 dogs and 68 cats registered.

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (“the Act”) requires that revenues raised from the provisions of the Act shall be applied to animal management of the area.

Revenue is derived from two principle sources, from registrations and from expiation fees for breaches to the provisions of the Act. Dog registration fees and expiation fees are set down by the Act and Regulations. Council therefore has little scope to increase revenues from this source other than achieve a high level of registration and monitor the area for breaches of the Act.

The Animal Management Plan 2020-2025’s mission is to create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Barunga West community. This Plan also contains recommendations for a wide range of actions to be undertaken by the Council to achieve these objectives. It provides a sound basis and direction from which it can plan and make future decisions over the next five years, and relates back to the wider Council policy context.

The Council's Five Year Strategy is:

1. To continue to increase dog registrations by reducing the number of unregistered dogs until the registration level per thousand population is the highest in the group of similar Councils by size and location.
2. To continue to increase cat registrations through microchipping and advising that number on the Dog and Cat online (DACO) system, reducing the number of unwanted, feral cats.
3. To fully expend the revenues from the Act on the implementing of Council's responsibilities under the Act.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

The Dog and Cat Management Miscellaneous Amendment Act came into effect on 1 July 2004. This amended the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 in many ways, including introducing a requirement that councils develop animal management plans. (Section 26A). Section 26A states: -

26A—Plans of management relating to dogs and cats

*(1) Each council must, in accordance with this section, prepare a plan relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area.*

*(2) A plan of management must include provisions for parks where dogs may be exercised off leash and for parks where dogs must be under effective control by means of physical restraint, and may include provisions for parks where dogs are prohibited.*

*(3) A plan of management must cover 5 year periods and each plan must be prepared and presented to the Board at least 6 months before it is to take effect.*

*(4) A plan of management must be approved by the Board before it takes effect.*

*(5) A council may, with the approval of the Board, amend a plan of management at any time during the course of the 5 year period covered by the plan.*

### 2.2 MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTLINE

The Council's management of urban animal issues impacts on the health, well-being and lives of the whole community and the welfare of animals in the Council area.

The Animal Management Plan 2020-2025 ('the Plan') is designed for everyone in the Council area, both animal owners and non-owners. Dogs and cats represent by far the most significant number and type of animals and have the most significant impact on our community, environment, health and well-being.

As a result of a review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 several changes have come into effect from 1 July 2018. The Council is required to administer and enforce the provisions of this Act.

The objectives of the Act are to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats, and
- Promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including encouragement for the desexing of dogs and cats).

The Plan's mission is to create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Barunga West community. This Plan also contains recommendations for a wide range of actions to be undertaken by the Council to achieve these objectives. It provides a sound basis and direction from which it can plan and make future decisions over the next five years, and relates back to the wider Council policy context.

It identifies strategies and actions to implement the mission, aims and objectives, including:-

- Educating and promoting responsible pet ownership
- Highlighting the importance of de-sexing of dogs and cats
- Obtaining the right pet and "pet friendly" housing
- Reducing dog attacks and bite avoidance
- Managing dog faeces in public places
- Reducing the numbers of dogs and cats wandering at large
- Promoting the importance of dog socialisation and training
- Reducing dog barking and nuisance
- Reviewing officer image and staff training
- Meeting our Corporate Responsibilities
  - Risk Management
  - Service Levels.

### **2.3 EDUCATION, PREVENTION, ENCOURAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT**

This Plan emphasises the proactive combination of education, prevention, encouragement and enforcement to achieve Council's objectives. Education and promotion are key priorities in changing attitudes to result in an increase in responsible pet ownership in the future.

At the same time Council must be proactive in investigating and implementing preventative measures where possible and by providing encouragement to members of our community to comply with our policies and regulations which is ongoing.

Although it is expected that there will be a progressive decline in complaints and less reliance on enforcement, this will occur over the longer term. At the same time there may be a counter balancing effect due to increasing community expectation, increased profile on the Regulatory Services section and its services and encouragement of reporting (eg. All dog attacks and variables such as impacts from proposed legislative amendments to the Act).

## 2.4 ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN RELATING TO DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT ACT

While some long term planning (5 years) is appropriate, it is anticipated that there will be amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. The Plan will be routinely reviewed to ensure its alignment with the applicable legislation over the life of the Plan.

## 2.5 THE LAW AND GUIDELINES

The responsibilities for dog and cat management in South Australia are prescribed in the Act. Under the Act Councils are required to administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs & cats within its area. Prescribed responsibilities include the appointment of a Registrar, maintenance of a Register, the appointment of an authorised officer and to make arrangements for dogs seized, and its other obligations under the Act. Councils are also able to make By-Laws relating to the management of dogs & cats within its area.

The Act also provides for the appointment of the Dog and Cat Management Board, which has responsibilities to plan, promote, and advise on effective management of dogs and cats in the State, to monitor Councils management of their responsibilities, to issue Guidelines for Councils, to advise and assist Councils to undertake their responsibilities. The Board also has a role to provide advice to the Minister of Environment and Heritage to keep the Act under review, to undertake research into companion animal management and to provide education programs for authorised officers and community awareness information. While these provisions provide the legal framework for the Councils responsibilities and the penalties that can be imposed on dog owners for non-compliance. This Plan seeks to implement a balanced approach that caters to everyone's needs, that will not only benefit dogs, cats and their owners as a group with legitimate needs, but also the wider community as well as those charged with the responsibility of animal management By-Laws.

Substantial changes to the Act were passed in Parliament during July 2016. The main changes relate to:

- Microchipping – introducing a requirement for all dogs and cats to be microchipped by the age of three months from 1 July 2018.
- Desexing – introducing a requirement to desex all dogs and cats born after the proposed date of 1 July 2018 and by the age of six months unless exemptions apply.
- Breeders – introducing a requirement that a person must not sell a dog or cat they have bred unless they are registered as a breeder with the Dog and Cat Management Board from 1 July 2018
- Sellers – introducing a requirement for certain information to be provided to the buyer from 1 July 2018
- Council powers – providing councils, which are responsible for dog and cat management in their local areas, with greater powers to administer and enforce the Act and introducing increased expiation fees and fines from 1 July 2017.
- Assistance Dogs – changing who can accredit animals in this role.

These provisions provide the legal framework for council's responsibilities and penalties that can be imposed on owners for non-compliance of the Act. This Plan seeks to implement a balanced approach that caters to everyone's needs that will not only benefit dogs/cats and their owners as a group with legitimate needs but also the wider community as well as those charged with the responsibility of animal management By-Laws.

## 2.6 BARUNGA WEST COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

The objectives of the Barunga West Council's Animal Management Plan in conjunction with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and the Local Government Act 1999 are as follows, consistent with Council's Strategic Plan:

**GOAL 4:** Create a culture worth having – Creating a culture of excellence in all that Council does will ensure the successful delivery of outcomes for the local community and enable adjustments to be made along the journey

**OBJECTIVES:** Compliance with all existing and new legislative requirements

Council has a responsibility to safeguard community safety and health. To do this, it is necessary to manage the activities of dogs and the numbers of dogs and cats in accordance with Council by-laws. This involves avoiding potential conflict, preventing danger and minimising distress that may be caused to the community.

The Act requires the Council to develop an Animal Management Plan and to ensure that adequate community consultation takes place. The Council is committed to the viability of this process and produced this Plan in partnership with the community and all interested parties to ensure quality of life for dog owners, cat owners, and non-dog and non-cat owners.

The Plan aims to:

- promote responsible dog and cat ownership;
- provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats;
- ensure public safety and enhance the amenity and environment;
- harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership; and
- ensure that the expenditure of registration fees addresses domestic animal issues

## 2.7 MISSION STATEMENT

“To promote and facilitate responsible ownership of dogs and cats, recognising that companion animals are part of the community, focusing on the legitimate needs of pets and their owners whilst recognising the differing needs of all members of the community and at all times protecting and respecting the environment.”

## 2.8 AIM

1. Promote responsible dog and cat ownership.
2. Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.
3. Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.
4. Encourage the enjoyment of and benefits from dogs and cats by people.
5. Ensure public safety and amenity in relation to dogs and cats.
6. Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats.
7. Ensure the expenditure of registration fees addresses the needs of pet owners as well as domestic animal management issues.

## 2.9 OBJECTIVES

1. Enforce provisions of Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and Dog and Cat Regulations 2010.
2. Enforce identification and registration of dogs and cats to enable reunion of lost pets with their owners (and control of un-owned animals).
3. Maintain adequate local impoundment facilities for temporary protection of lost or un-owned animals.
4. Promote de-sexing and micro-chipping of dogs and cats through differential registration fees and incentive schemes.
5. Provide adequate and appropriate areas for off-leash running exercise of dogs.



## 2. STRATEGIES, ACTIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

### STRATEGY 1 LEGISLATION AND IMAGE

Council staff should operate consistently with a clear direction and guidelines, as individuals will often interpret Legislation in differing ways. Council staff rely on the following instruments for direction, The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (primary legislation), By-laws introduced by Council (subordinate legislation) and procedures (mechanisms to implement the Act and By-laws).

Generally most dog and cat owners want to do the right thing. Registration of dogs and general compliance with the Act is relatively high throughout the community. Council must do everything in its power to ensure that residents and visitors understand their obligations to act responsibly with their pets.

#### Strategy:

- 1.1.1 Ensure that Authorised Officers of the Council operate within the provisions of the Act.
- 1.1.2 Ensure that Officers operate within predetermined guidelines in accordance with the Act.
- 1.1.3 Encourage education of dog and cat owners.

#### Actions:

- 1.2.1 Ongoing review of staff training and development to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of animal management issues.
- 1.2.2 Annual performance reviews for all staff involved in animal management.
- 1.2.3 Introduce procedural guidelines for all staff to follow.
- 1.2.4 Update a brochure for all residents and visitors to Barunga West region. The brochure should be distributed through as many outlets as possible including Council buildings, associations and interest groups.
- 1.2.5 Promote Council's website - [www.barungawest.sa.gov.au](http://www.barungawest.sa.gov.au)

#### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 1.3.1 Ensure all staff dealing with dog and cat management matters have appropriate training

## STRATEGY 2 WANDERING DOGS AND CATS

### DOGS

A dog is deemed to be 'wandering at large' when it is in a public place or a private place without the consent of the owner and no person is exercising effective control of the dog by means of a physical restraint no more than 2 metres in length, or if in a park, and no person is exercising effective control by command and the dog being in close proximity to the person and the person being able to see the dog at all times. The owner, or person who is responsible for the dog wandering at large, has committed an offence and is responsible for the prescribed penalties under the Act.

A dog wandering at large can be a threat to members of the public, particularly children and older people and Council is aware that serious attacks can arise in these circumstances. Council will therefore implement strategies to minimise its occurrence in the community.

The township of Fisherman Bay is a unique settlement, and does not have fencing between properties. This is an issue, and one which is regularly monitored.

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

#### Strategy:

##### 2.1.1 Minimise dogs wandering at large

#### Actions:

##### 2.2.1 That owners be made aware of their responsibilities to:

- Register & microchip their dog
- Adequately fence their property to control their dog.
- Train their dog so as to not leave their premises
- To keep their dog under effective control when in a public place.

##### 2.2.2 That Council's authorised officer:

- Conduct random patrols of all public areas and detain dogs wandering at large.
- Respond to calls from the general public of a dog wandering at large & assess the complaint to follow Council's standard operating procedures for dogs wandering at large.
- Return the dog to the owner where possible.
- Impound un-identified dogs in accordance with the Act.
- Ensure that unclaimed dogs are taken to the Animal Welfare League or similar authority or euthanised in a humane manner.
- Encourage compliance by giving warnings for first offences, which are of a minor nature where no harm to a person or property has occurred. Penalties prescribed by the Act may be applied for re-offenders.

#### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

##### 2.3.1 Reduction in dogs wandering at large by 5%

## CATS

Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 a cat must be microchipped. There is community support for greater control of cats and accountability of cat owners for their pets.

Reasons commonly raised to better manage cats include: protection of birds, lizards and native fauna; to minimise disturbance to neighbours from defecation and spraying; to reduce disruption caused by the interaction between dogs and cats; and to manage territorial and other disputes between cats.

Council By-Law no. 6 limits the number of cats allowed per dwelling and regulates the management of cats with the Council area.

Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 an un-owned cat can be trapped when found wandering on private property. If the occupier traps the cat and it is identifiable, the cat must be released unless the cat is more than one kilometre from a genuine place of residence. All unidentified cats are determined to be unowned and therefore can be destroyed.

The Council currently has a number of cat traps available for loan to residents. Liability for the correct use of the traps is with the resident. Residents must dispose of unidentified cats in accordance with the Act. The present system used by Council is working well and continues with the following strategy.

### Strategy:

- 2.4.1 Nominate a facility where seized or impounded cats may be delivered
- 2.4.2 Increase management of owned cats in the local area
- 2.4.3 Educate the community on responsible cat ownership
- 2.4.4 Proactively manage feral cat colonies with the council area

### Actions:

- 2.5.1 Hire out cat-traps to the community so that residents may capture unowned cats and deliver them to an appropriate facility.
- 2.5.2 Work with local vets to re-home or euthanise unowned cats, as appropriate.
- 2.5.3 Keep records of all complaints received about nuisance cats.
- 2.5.4 Educated residents about microchipping and identifying their cats
- 2.5.5 Conduct a resident survey about cats to identify what actions the community believes could be taken on Cat Management.
- 2.5.6 Encourage cat owners to keep their cat inside at night.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 2.6.1 Reduction in number of cat-traps hired by residents
- 2.6.2 Increase the number of registered cats in the area over the 5 years.
- 2.6.3 Reduction on the number of Cat complaints

### STRATEGY 3 ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION/REGISTRATION

Legislation in South Australia requires all dogs and cats over three months of age to be registered & microchipped. The owner of a dog or cat that is microchipped must, in a manner and form determined by the Board, provide the microchip number to the Registrar for the area in which the dog or cat is usually kept. This manner determined is the state government Dogs and Cats Online (DACO) online microchip registry.

Councils cannot expect to obtain an acceptable level of dog management without obtaining maximum registration. This can therefore be seen to be the most important issue at hand and is the key factor controlling all other effective and successful dog management strategies.

Registration of dogs and cats has many purposes other than the obvious one of raising revenue. The purpose of registration includes:

- To provide proof of ownership;
- To allow lost pets to be reunited with their owners;
- To encourage responsible animal management through discounted registration fees;
- To fund animal management programs.

With the implementation of DACO (a state wide online registration system) by the state government that took effect on 1 July 2018. In terms of this new system dog and cat registration will be managed by the state government and councils, in a shared capacity. Councils will still be responsible for the enforcement of dog and cat requirements under the Act and regulations.

Council will continue to promote various issues and programs through local media and its own Newsletter.

#### Strategy:

3.1.1 To continue to promote responsible dog and cat ownership by:

- Enforce legal requirements such as microchipping, identification and registration of all dogs and cats.
- Educate animal owners about community issues such as roaming, nuisance, faeces disposal and environmental damage caused by dogs and cats.
- Promote de-sexing, including contribution to concessional schemes.

#### Actions:

- 3.2.1 Educate the public regarding the correct identification of dogs and cats.
- 3.2.2 Promote micro-chipping of dogs and cats.
- 3.2.3 Enforce mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats.

#### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 3.3.1 Increase number of dogs and cats micro-chipped by 85%.
- 3.3.2 Increase number of dogs and cats returned to owners by 10%.

## STRATEGY 4 ANIMAL EXERCISE AREAS

While the Act provides that a dog can be in a public place provided that it is under the effective control of a person, and effective control is by of a leash not more than two metres in length. The Act also provides that a dog can be in a “Park” if it under effective control by command, this is a dog being in close proximity to the person and the person being able to see the dog at all times.

“Park” as defined by the Act: “A park, garden, reserve or similar public open space, or foreshore area, within the area of a Council”.

Providing suitable on and off leash activity areas is vital to the success of animal management in the area.

Dog owners must have suitable areas to exercise their dogs safely. Equally, other members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs. In areas such as streets, roads, and places the public congregate such as shopping areas, dogs must be restrained effectively.

In parks assessed by Council for their suitability, dog owners should be able to exercise their dogs without restraint providing the owner exercises effective control. On beaches and foreshores many councils have considered restricting dog activities to on-leash only. In all foreshore areas designated times for off-leash activities are considered during daylight saving and unrestricted off- leash activities allowed during the rest of the year.

### Strategy:

- 4.1.1 Council has provided suitable “Park Areas” suitable to be for “Off Leash Areas” and “Park Areas” to be “On Leash Areas” and may also define areas where “Dogs are prohibited”. These areas will be identified as such by means of clear signage. These areas will be identified and discussed with the local area management groups. These areas will be identified and continue to be provided as community requirements change during the period of this plan.
- 4.1.2 Council has recently implemented a Dog Park in Port Broughton for the enjoyment of Residents and tourists.
- 4.1.3 Through newsletters and local media, encourage and educate pet owners that when utilising off lead areas, that on leash control and voice command control must be used when other animals and humans are present and in close proximity to promote good behaviour and socialisation skills in pets.

### Actions:

- 4.2.1 Do not restrict off-leash activities in parks and reserves unless it is deemed unsuitable for the activities.
- 4.2.2 Increase the useage of the ‘dog park’ at Port Broughton and investigate a further park within the Barunga West Council.
- 4.2.3 Provide public information to inform the public of their role and current animal management issues – including “effective control”
- 4.2.4 Explain the role of Authorised Officers and Council’s role in Dog and Cat Management in local media and Council’s newsletter.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 4.3.1 That at least 85% of dog complaints received are followed up within 14 business days of notification to Council.
- 4.3.2 That at least 1 further dog park is installed within the area by 2025.

## ON LEASH, OFF LEASH & PROHIBITED AREAS

*\*\* effective control of a dog – see Section 8 Dog & Cat Management Act \*\**

### PORT BROUGHTON - ON LEASH AREAS

- All residential streets.
- Beach and foreshore areas between Port Broughton Caravan Park to the Bayside Caravan Park

### PORT BROUGHTON - OFF LEASH

- All other foreshore areas (other than described above)
- Golf course areas between 7pm and 9am except when sport is being played, at which time dogs must be on leash.

### BUTE - ON LEASH AREAS

- All residential streets
- Lawned area on Railway Reserve

### BUTE - OFF LEASH AREAS

- All other undeveloped reserves in and surrounding the town of Bute.

### TICKERA - ON LEASH AREAS

- All residential streets
- Reserve area

### TICKERA - OFF LEASH AREAS

- Golf Course (24 hours) except when golf is being played, at which time dogs must be on leash
- All other undeveloped reserves, foreshore areas and oval in and surrounding the town of Tickera

### FISHERMAN BAY - ON LEASH AREAS

- All residential streets
- Foreshore between and including playground and reserve area

### FISHERMAN BAY - OFF LEASH AREAS

- All other areas not detailed above.

### ALFORD & KULPARA

All residential streets dogs must be on leash.  
All other areas are leash free 24 hours.

### DOG PROHIBITED AREAS

All playgrounds (including skate parks) within the Barunga West area as per council by-law no. 5 part 10.  
Bute and Port Broughton Ovals, the grassed playing fields.

## STRATEGY 5 RESTRICTIONS ON ANIMAL NUMBERS

With the new Dog and Cat Management Regulations desexing of dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018 is mandatory.

The maximum number of dogs and cats per in terms of Council By-Laws 5 and 6 respectively, as follows:

- In a township, more than one dog in a small dwelling;
- In a township, more than two dogs in premises other than a small dwelling;
- Outside of a township, more than three dogs (other than working dogs) on a premises.
- The limit on the number of cats to be kept on any premises shall be two cats.

It is possible under certain circumstances to obtain permission to keep more than the prescribed number of dogs and cats with the written consent of Council. In accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (as amended) the registration of breeders is also mandatory.

### Strategy:

5.1.1 Limit the number of dogs and cats per dwelling

### Actions:

- 5.2.1 Assess applications to have more than number of dogs and cats as per council By-laws per dwelling on merit.
- 5.2.2 Ensure compliance with relevant Dog and Cat legislation to ensure dog breeders are registered and the mandatory requirement of the desexing of all dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018.
- 5.2.3 Ensure compliance with relevant by-laws and Development legislation (intensive animal keeping) that control dog and cat numbers that may be kept on a premises

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 5.3.1 Reduction in number of households with more than two dogs and/or two cats.
- 5.3.2 Registration of all dog and cat breeder's/ business

## STRATEGY 6 RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP

There are three factors, which contribute to successful pet ownership. They are:

- a) The *Owner*, who needs to be aware of responsibilities of pet ownership, to ensure that the pet is registered, immunised, and desexed. The owner is also responsible to ensure that the dog is trained, and to be aware of the dogs behaviour at all times, including when away from the home such as at work. The owner is also responsible to ensure that the dog has adequate food, water, shelter and that the dog is regularly exercised. The *Breed* determines the size, and often the temperament of the dog and its susceptibility to genetic defects. When selecting a pet it is important to seek appropriate advice on the soundness of animals being considered, their suitability to the home / yard that the dog will be kept in, and the family that the dog will be joining, particularly if small children are involved.
- c) The *Home environment* is made up of the part of the home that the dog will have access to. In most cases this will include an enclosed yard and possibly part of the house. Important factors are the adequacy of the fencing, whether the dog can see out of the yard through a gate, adequacy of food, water, shelter, and whether there are children, closeness of neighbours, other dogs and access to on/off leash exercise areas are all important factors.

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

As at 1 July 2018 mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats came into effect in accordance with the Dog and Cat management Act 1995 (as amended).

### Strategy:

- 6.1.1 Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- 6.1.2 Promote mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats

### Actions:

- 6.2.1 Encourage people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat to consider the factors affecting the suitability of successful pet ownership in their particular circumstances.
- 6.2.2 Discourage people from obtaining dogs or cat from other than registered breeders, rescues and shelters and encourage them to ensure that the dog or cat is sound from defects, immunised, microchipped and de-sexed.
- 6.2.3 Encourage people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat to become familiar with the responsibilities of dog or cat ownership prior to obtaining a dog or a cat.
- 6.2.4 Encourage people when obtaining a new dog to ensure that it is trained.
- 6.2.5 Encourage prospective pet owners to ensure that the home environment is suited for the pet.
- 6.2.6 Enforce mandatory microchipping of all dogs and cats and registrar notification by registration of Dogs and Cats on DACO.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 6.3.1 Increase in positive feedback from the community in relation to Authorised Officers dealing with dog and cat owners.



## STRATEGY 7 ENFORCEMENT

The Dog and Cat Management Act requires the Council to enforce the provisions of the Act in the area of the Council. The approach of the Council in the first instance will be to encourage people to accept their responsibilities of pet ownership and comply with the provisions of the Act voluntarily.

However, the community requires that public places are monitored to ensure that the provisions of the Act are complied with and that an authorised officer is available to respond to concerns of the community and alleged breaches of the Act. It is Council's responsibility to make arrangements for the provision of these services that are efficient, effective and that employ Best Practice.

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

### Strategy:

7.1.1 Enforce the provision of the Dog and Cat Management Act.

### Actions:

- 7.2.1 Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.
- 7.2.2 Council will continue to enforce the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act in its Council Area.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 7.3.1 Council Authorised Officer's will respond to calls / complaints from members of the public regarding possible non-compliance with the provisions of the Act within 14 days of the complaint lodged. If urgent (Dog Attack) this is to be responded within 24 hours of complaint.

## STRATEGY 8 BARKING DOGS

Barking dog complaints are one of the most difficult and time-consuming areas of Council responsibility. Barking dog complaints are subjective depending on an individual's tolerance for the dog noise. Having said that, Council is obligated to investigate and resolve this type of complaint. In order for Council to resolve the complaint they require the full cooperation from the complainant to collect meaningful evidence suitable to a Court of Law. In order to do this Council's Authorised Officer will develop a standard procedure to be followed for all dog noise nuisance complaints. The complainant must follow these standard procedures, as failure to do so will result in the matter being set aside by Council. On receipt of a complaint Council will provide information to the dog owner as to the owner's responsibility in regards to noise nuisance. If the noise nuisance continues Council Officers will investigate further and supply diaries to the complainant and other relevant neighbours. If and when the diaries are returned, further investigation will follow. Upon substantiation the Council will take the appropriate course of action.

Council has a citronella collar which is available to assist in controlling of barking dogs.

### Strategy:

- 8.1.1 That Council continue with its Policy for the investigation of noise nuisance complaints. That Council continues with the education brochure for the dog owner and complainant to be sent out in the event of a complaint regarding dog noise nuisance.
- 8.1.2 Application to assist with the provision of a citronella barking collar to help control barking dogs.

### Actions:

#### 8.2.1 Steps to a Nuisance Dog (Barking):

Step 1: Authorised Officer liaises with complainant to ascertain nature of problem.

Step 2: Authorised Officer liaises with owner of dog alleged to cause problem.

Step 3: Issue the dog owner with a Barking Problems solved publication.

Step 4: Complainant plus at least two other persons not living at the same premises are required to fill out Dog Barking Diary for 14 consecutive days.

Step 5: If the Dog Barking Diaries are consistent and owner of dog causing problem refuses to remedy situation an expiation notice or a nuisance dog order may be issued (as per the Dog & Cat Management Act).

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

- 8.3.1 Reduction in number of proven problem dogs vs expiation notices issued per year

## STRATEGY 9 DOG HARASSMENT AND ATTACKS

All dog attacks/harassments must be recorded and investigated. In order to reduce the incidents of dog attacks/harassments Council must educate the public to act responsibly. The issue of dog attacks and harassment is of great concern to the general community, particularly in relation to children and the elderly.

Also of great concern is the number of unreported attacks and the fact that the majority of attacks occur on private property.

While a minority of dogs are involved in attacks and harassment, all dogs have the potential to bite, regardless of size, age, breed and temperament, particularly in situations where they are frightened, dominant, protective or possessive. How to avoid being bitten or how to read a dog's body language are important skills on which to educate the public.

### Strategy:

9.1.1 That Council minimises dog harassment and attacks.

### Actions:

- 9.2.1 Council continues to collate statistics related to dog attacks, liaise with local vets to ensure all attacks are reported to council.
- 9.2.2 Educate the public how to be more responsible with effective dog control.
- 9.2.3 Promote the level of risk relating to litigation and public safety.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

9.3.1 Reduction in number of dog attacks by 10%

## STRATEGY 10 ENVIRONMENTAL

The management of dog faeces is an important environmental and health issue. Anecdotally, large amounts of dog faeces pollute our waterways and public places each year and it is an issue on which the community has strong feelings. Although the responsibility lies with the dog owners an increasing number of Councils are providing leadership in this area by providing dog tidy bags to promote the picking up of dog faeces. It is widely acknowledged that Councils who provide faeces removal dispensers dramatically reduce the incidence of discarded faeces in the community. These problems will be reduced by placing dispensers in areas of high visibility such as, sporting ovals, reserves, walking trails and any other area they are considered to be necessary.

### Strategy:

10.1.1 Reduce dog faeces in public places to minimise environmental harm

### Actions:

- 10.2.1 Implement strategically placed signs to encourage responsible dog ownership in the area of faeces removal.
- 10.2.2 Continue providing dispensers and dog tidy bags, as required.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

10.3.1 Reduce the number of complaints about dog faeces received by 10%

## STRATEGY11 ANIMAL SAFETY

Council dog handling facilities are currently of a particularly good standard. A new pound has been constructed at the Port Broughton Works depot site. A second pound is located at Bute, and both are currently used as temporary holding facility.

To ensure that the Council operates its dog and cat handling facilities in accordance with the “Code of Conduct for Pounds and Shelters” as set down by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

### Strategy:

11.1.1 Provide the welfare and shelter for dogs and cats.

### Actions:

- 11.2.1 Ensure that impounded dogs and cats are returned to owners as soon as practical.
- 11.2.2 Ensure that all impounded dogs and cats have clean safe facilities while impounded.
- 11.2.3 Conduct regular reviews of pounds for compliance.
- 11.2.4 Contact made with owner (if known) of deceased dog or cat found on Council Land.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

11.3.1 Reduction in the number of dogs and cats reported to be wandering at large by 10%.



Port Broughton Animal Pound

## STRATEGY 12. BENEFITS OF PET OWNERSHIP

There is a wealth of scientific evidence to support the benefits of owning pets and their use in therapy. However, until recently this evidence has not been considered by local government, which has focused instead on the negative aspects alone.

Evidence of a link between pet ownership and better health has been demonstrated by a range of different studies. More work needs to be done to determine whether this link is causal or merely correlational (ie: do pet owners share some other factor which yields health benefits?), and not all studies demonstrate a link between pet ownership and better health outcomes. However, as the evidence mounts, the public health profession is starting to take note, eg:

- The National Health and Medical Research Council's Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Overweight and Obesity is considering dog walking as one key to getting overweight and obese people moving.
- A public health symposium was hosted by the National Centre for Health Promotion in Sydney in 1998 to generate a research agenda for dog ownership and public health.

Dogs encourage people to enjoy the outdoors. They have been shown to stimulate conversation between strangers in public places and they improve people's sense of security - both in the home and with their owner in public places. Pets are also wonderful companions, in some cases helping combat loneliness and social alienation. These benefits are as important for the elderly and single person households as they are for households with children.

### Strategy:

12.1.1 Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.

### Actions:

12.2.1 Provide new residents and visitors with up to date information regarding the benefits of responsible dog and cat ownership.

12.2.2 Promote the benefits to the community of responsible pet ownership with the Dog and Cat Management Boards publication "Dog Owners Handbook", "Cat Owners Handbook" and "Good Cats play at home".

12.2.3 Promote through council website the benefits of Dog and Cat ownership, eg Health benefits

12.2.4 Encourage local activities to the Barunga West area, eg Paws to Walk

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI):

12.3.1 Overall increase in compliance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 from local companion animal owners.

### **STRATEGY 13. EDUCATION AND PROMOTION**

Education in the animal control area has many facets. It includes education of pet owners as well as training of the pets (usually dogs). Another focus receiving attention is educating other people about how to behave around dogs. Within each category there are further segments, e.g. pet owners may be adults or children; they may also be prospective owners.

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

**Strategy:**

14.1.1 Council will encourage and assist where possible with training programs and obedience training of dogs with public awareness of these groups by free advertising in the Council Newsletter

**Actions:**

- 14.2.1 Promote in the media and in Council Newsletter dogs in public places, on-leash and off-leash areas policies and the need to exercise dogs for successful pet management.
- 14.2.2 Provide information to the media and Council Newsletter on how to act around dogs
- 14.2.3 Provide information to the media and Council Newsletter of dog training classes in the community
- 14.2.4 Provide information to the media and Council Newsletter on the factors of successful pet ownership and where information is available to assist people select the right pet for them.
- 14.2.5 Promote responsible housing of dogs and cats.

**Key Performance Indicators (KPI):**

14.3.1 Reduction in number of complaints received by 10% over 5 years.

## **4 RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Council's Strategic Plan

Council's By-law No. 5 – Dogs

Council's By-law No. 6 – Cats

Dog and Cat Management Act 1995

Dog and Cat Management Regulations 2017

## **5 ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 – On leash, Off Leash & Prohibited Areas Maps





# **Appendix 1 - MAPS**

## **Approved On leash, Off Leash & Prohibited Locations**

Adopted by Council -

2020

# Approved On leash, Off Leash & Prohibited Areas within Barunga West

## Dog on-leash areas

Your dog must be kept on a leash when being walked;

- On roads and streets
- In public places (other than parks/reserves)
- On any park or reserve during times when organised sport is being played

The lead can be a leash, chain or cord up to two metres in length.

## Dog off-leash areas

Provided your dog is under effective control, you can exercise your dog off-leash

Effective control means your dog;

- Is close to you at all times
- Responds to all verbal commands
- Can be seen by you at all times.

If you don't have effective control of your dog, your dog may be deemed wandering at large, which is an offence.

## Dog prohibited areas

Dogs are not permitted within the following areas of Barunga West.

- All playgrounds (including skate parks) within Barunga West area as per council by-law no.5.
- Bute and Port Broughton grassed playing fields

The *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* prohibits dogs from all school grounds, kindergartens, child care centres and preschools without the permission of the person in charge of the site.

## Port Broughton – Off leash

### Golf Course

### Site Specific Conditions

1. Off-leash between 7pm and 9am except when sport is being played, at which time dogs must be on a leash.



## Port Broughton – Off leash

### Dog Park

#### Site Specific Conditions

1. Off-leash free 24 hours / 7 days per week.





## Port Broughton – Off leash

### Beach area – South of Port Broughton Caravan Park

#### Site Specific Conditions

1. Off-leash free 24 hours / 7 days per week.



## Tickera – Off leash

### Tickera Golf Course

#### Site Specific Conditions

1. Golf Course (24 hours except when golf is being played, at which times dogs must be on leash).
2. All other undeveloped reserves, foreshore areas and oval in and surrounding the town of Tickera.



## Fisherman Bay – Off leash

### Site Specific Conditions

1. All other areas not detailed in the on leash areas



## Alford

### Site Specific Conditions

1. All residential streets dogs must be on leash.
2. All other areas are leash free 24 hours.





## Kulpara

### Site Specific Conditions

1. All residential streets dogs must be on leash.
2. All other areas are leash free 24 hours.



## Dog Prohibited Areas

### All playgrounds

1. All playgrounds including skate parks – Dogs are prohibited.

### Ovals

1. Bute & Port Broughton lawned oval area – Dogs are prohibited.