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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this Plan is to guide the direction of the Light Regional Council’s management of dogs and cats for the next five years (2018-2022). This new Plan replaces Council’s existing Dog and Cat Management Plan which expires in 2017.

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 26A of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (the Act) which requires all councils in South Australia to develop a plan of management relating to dogs and cats within their area.

What is this Plan?

This new Plan provides Council with the opportunity to address dog and cat management at a strategic level and implement initiatives to address the legislative changes to the Act.

The aim of this Plan is to:

- Promote responsible dog and cat ownership
- Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats
- Ensure public safety
- Harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership
- Fulfil the requirements of the Act and local laws.

This Plan is a combination of education, encouragement, and enforcement actions to assist with changing people’s attitudes and behaviours towards responsible dog and cat ownership.

Part One of this plan provides background information on the legislation and reforms, current research and directions regarding companion animals, and an overview of Council’s existing animal management services. This part also provides a summary of key dog and cat statistics for the Light Regional Council.

Part Two of this plan contains information on the key focus areas and actions for Council over the next five years. The key focus areas include:

1. Dog registration
2. Desexing & microchipping of dogs
3. Wandering dogs
4. Nuisance barking
5. Pets in communities
6. Community education
7. Breeder registration
8. Cat management.

Each focus area comprises of an objective, series of actions and performance measures. Addressing these focus areas will involve regular monitoring and reporting to Council on the implementation of the actions identified in this Plan.

How was this Plan Developed?

Preparation of this Plan included a review of the existing Dog and Cat Management Plan and incorporated key actions that remain current into this new Plan. It also considered Council’s existing dog and cat management services and statistics and changes to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

This Plan has been developed in association with a Community Reference Group consisting of Elected Members, Council staff, the Town of Gawler, University of Adelaide (Roseworthy Campus) and local animal businesses.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY

Council recognises the value of working with a range of external stakeholders to build partnerships and collaborative projects for the management of dogs and cats in the Light Regional Council.

Some stakeholders identified as having an interest in the management of dogs and cats within the Light Regional Council include:

- Local schools
- Dog and cat owners
- General public
- Veterinary clinics
- Dog training clubs
- Adjoining councils particularly the Town of Gawler
- Animal Welfare League (AWL)
- RSPCA
- Local media
- Sports clubs and park users
- Animal businesses and organisations.
The process for stakeholder and community consultation included:

**Community Reference Group**

A Community Reference Group was established with representation from the following:

- Mayor Bill O’Brien, Light Regional Council
- Councillor Samantha Mitchell, Light Regional Council
- Craig Doyle, Light Regional Council
- Lisa Sapio, Light Regional Council
- Lynn Stevenson, Light Regional Council
- Brandon Elliot, Light Regional Council
- Diane Whatling, Roseworthy Veterinary Health Centre, University of Adelaide
- Mary Anne Murray, Kapunda and Districts Kennel and Obedience Club
- Phillip Hunt, Kapunda and Districts Kennel and Obedience Club
- Mel Lewis, Barossa Veterinary Service
- Lynn Thiele, Barossa Veterinary Service
- Anthony Charvetto, Town of Gawler.

**Elected member feedback**

Elected members were given the opportunity to comment on the draft Plan in December 2017.

**Public consultation**

Community consultation was undertaken from X - X December 2017. Over this period, the draft Plan was available in the following ways:

- Council website
- Hard copy available at Council outlets including libraries and the Council offices at Kapunda and Freeling
- Social media i.e. Facebook.
PART ONE: CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

Part One provides background information on the legislation and reforms, current research and directions regarding companion animals.

It also provides an overview of Council’s existing dog and cat management services.

2.0 Legislation & Reforms

The objectives of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 are to:

• Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership;
• Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats;
• Promote the effective management of dogs and cats.

Council’s Responsibilities for Dog and Cat Management

The responsibilities delegated to Councils under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (Section 26) that are relevant to the preparation of this Plan include:

Dog registration

• Maintain a register of dogs (26 (1) (a))
• Appoint a suitable person to be the Registrar (26b)
• Make satisfactory arrangements for issuing and replacing certificates of registration and registration discs (c)
• Appoint at least one full-time authorised person or make other satisfactory arrangements for the exercise of the functions and powers of authorised persons (26d)
• Make satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized under this Act; (and may make such arrangements for cats seized under this Act) (26e)
• Make satisfactory arrangements for fulfilling other obligations under this Act (26f).

Money received

• Money received by a council under this Act must be expended in the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this Act relating to dogs and cats (26 (3))

Payment into Fund

• A Council must pay into the Fund the percentage fixed by regulation of the dog registration fees received by the council (26 (5))

Setting of fees

• Council has the responsibility for setting and reviewing registration fees each financial year.

Establishing By-laws

• Councils can pass a by-law for the control and management of dog and cats within their area (Section 90). The Light Regional Council has introduced both a dog and cat by-law.

Plans of Management relating to dogs and cats

• Under the Act, each Council must prepare a plan relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area (26A 1).
• These plans 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 (26A 2).
• The Board must approve the plan of management before it takes effect.

Dog and Cat Reforms

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 has undergone a major review with significant changes to take effect from 1 July 2018. Significant changes that will impact on Councils, dog and cat owners and dog and cat breeders and sellers include:

Mandatory microchipping and desexing

As of 1 July 2018, it will be compulsory for:

• All dogs and cats to be microchipped before 12 weeks of age
• All new generations of dogs and cats (i.e. born after 1 July 2018) to be desexed before 6 months of age with exemptions for working dogs and registered breeders.
Breeder and seller registration

- As of 1 July 2018, breeders and sellers who breed dogs and cats for sale must register with the Dog and Cat Management Board of SA as a breeder.

- Any person who breeds or trades companion animals must also abide by the new *South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals* which took effect from August 2017.

- A new requirement for dog and cat sellers will be to provide certain information in advertisements (i.e. Breeder Registration Number) and to the buyer.

Changes to registration

**Dog and Cat Online (DACO)**

From 1 July 2018, a new state-wide registration system known as ‘Dog and Cat Online or DACO’ will be replacing the dog registration system that Council’s currently use with a centralised system to be managed by the Dog and Cat Management Board of SA.

This new system will combine a number of existing data bases such as dog and cat registrations, microchip and breeder information to provide a central resource. This means registration fees will be paid online through a central website.

The Dog and Cat Management Board will be responsible for issuing the dog and cat registration renewals, reminder notices and registration discs.

**New Dog registration categories**

As of 1 July 2017, the dog registration categories in South Australia were simplified to two categories:

- Standard Dog - a dog that is both microchipped and de-sexed
- Non-standard Dog - all other dogs.

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1The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Animal Welfare Unit administer the Guidelines, regulated under the Animal Welfare Regulations 2012, and enforced by the RSPCA.
“A higher proportion of us live in households with a dog and/or cat than a child. 50% of Aussies live in a household with at least one cat or/and dog in it, whereas 35% share their household with at least one child aged under 16.”

(Roy Morgan, 2015, n.p.)
3.0 The Big Picture

This section presents current research and directions about pets in communities. It highlights the benefits of pet ownership and the need to plan for companion animals. It also summarises best practice in animal management relevant to local councils.

Benefits of Pets

Australia has one of the highest pet ownership rates in the world with 38% of households owning a dog (Animal Medicines Australia, 2016). Companion animals such as dogs and cats play a significant role in the lives of many Australians.

Pets can enrich our lives, provide physical and mental health benefits and companionship, and help facilitate social interactions within the community.

There is research (ACAC, n.d. and PIAS, 2010) that demonstrates the benefits of pet ownership including:

**Pets are good for our general health and well being**
- People with dogs and cats make fewer visits to the doctor
- People with pets are at lower risk of cardiovascular disease than non-pet owners

**Pets are good for an ageing population**
- Pets can boost activity levels in older people, helping to improve overall health
- Pets provide companionship for older people living alone

**Pets are good for children**
- Young children with pets are more likely to exercise
- Children or adolescents with pets have shown to have higher self-esteem

**Pets are good for the community**
- Pets can help people build social connections in communities
- People with pets are more likely to initiate conversations with other people.

Planning for Pets

As block sizes get smaller and dwellings extend closer to fence lines and property boundaries, there is less private outdoor space available for companion animals leading to a greater demand for dog access to public open spaces.

Almost a quarter of Australians live in medium to high-density housing. With this trend expected to continue, there will be new challenges as we learn to live in smaller spaces and compete for valuable public open space while accommodating the needs of dogs and their owners in the planning and design of communities.

Planning for pets (particularly dogs in public spaces) is a key consideration for local councils given dogs are the most popular pet in Australia. The quote below draws attention to the importance of planning for pets.

“A higher proportion of us live in households with a dog and/or cat than a child. 50% of Aussies live in a household with at least one cat or and dog in it, whereas 35% share their household with at least one child aged under 16.” (Roy Morgan, 2015, n.p.)

Dogs in Public Places

Research shows that there is a trend towards casual, unstructured activities with dog walking being in the top 10 activities.

“Adults are moving away from structured sports to casual activities with dog walking being number three of the top 10 activities in Australia” (One Eighty, n.d.; p. 23).

When taking dogs out into public places, a key consideration is for dogs to be under effective control and not cause a nuisance to people, or other dogs and animals. It is important for dogs and their owners to be trained in how to deal with real-life experiences, such as walking down a street, visiting an outdoor cafe or exercising a dog at a local park.

Dog training that teaches real-life skills is fundamental if dogs are to be taken out and about with their owners in public places. Basic etiquette skills and respect for all users sharing the space (i.e. people, dogs and wildlife) is an important part of being a responsible dog owner.

Best Practice in Animal Management

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) recommends the use of positive reinforcement dog training methods as the preferred method of training (and handling).
The use of positive reinforcement is the most humane and effective training method as it avoids undesirable behavioural side effects. Positive reinforcement makes training more enjoyable and helps improve the bond between the trainer and the pet” (AVA 2017).

The Dog and Cat Management Board also “believes a commitment to positive reinforcement training is an aspect of being a responsible dog owner. The Board does not condone training methods that cause a dog to feel pain, fear, aggression or anxiety” (DCMB 2017).

The AWL also promotes the use of positive reinforcement methods for training of animals. The RSPCA (SA) promotes the use of Force-Free¹ dog training methods and have developed a list of Force-Free Dog Trainers in SA (RSPCA, 2017).

Disaster Planning and Pets
As disasters (i.e. fires, floods, storms and cyclones) are becoming frequent in Australia, there is a need to not only plan for people, but also for pet dogs and cats.

The need to plan for pets in natural disasters and emergencies is an important consideration for the Light Regional Council given the recent Pinery Fire on 25th November, 2015.

To help owners plan for their pet’s safety during a natural disaster, council can play a role in providing emergency preparedness information to the community and assist with managing lost pets through existing pound and shelter facilities, and accessing registration databases (PIRSA, 2017). There are several organisations in Australia who have developed resources to help plan including:

- AVA – Keeping your pet safe in a natural disaster: cyclone and floods
- RSPCA SA – Pets in Emergencies.

The consideration of disaster and emergency planning applies to pet owners, commercial animal businesses (i.e., boarding kennels and catteries, pet shops) veterinary clinics and local councils.

¹Force-Free is defined as ‘No shock, No pain, No choke, No fear, No physical force, No physical moulding, No compulsion based methods are employed to train or care for a pet’ (RSPCA SA, 2017).

How to be a good dog or cat owner
Owning a dog or cat is a big responsibility. As a responsible pet owner you should:

- Select a pet suitable to your family and lifestyle
- Procure your dog or cat from a responsible source, eg breeder registered with the DCMB, AWL or RSPCA
- Register your dog annually and identify your dog with a registration disc and contact details
- Desex your dog or cat
- Microchip your dog or cat
- Keep your dog safe and secure in your yard
- Socialise and train your dog
- Provide your dog or cat with a healthy diet and medical care
- Make sure your dog or cat is not a threat or nuisance to others
- Pick up after your dog in a public place
- Provide your dog or cat with an enriching environment
- Supervise your dog in public places
4.0 The Local Picture

The Light Regional Council is located to the north of the greater metropolitan area of Adelaide, South Australia. The Council area is located between the Barossa and Clare Valleys, covering an area of some 1,278 square kilometres incorporating the main townships of:

- Freeling
- Gawler Belt
- Greenock
- Kapunda
- Roseworthy
- Wasleys, and
- the suburb of Hewett.

The Council area is bounded by eight local government councils including the City of Playford, Town of Gawler, Barossa Council, Mid Murray Council, Goyder Regional Council, Wakefield Regional Council, Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council and the Adelaide Plains Council.

As of 2016, the Light Regional Council had an estimated resident population of 14,736 (ABS QuickStats, 2016).

Overview of Dogs

In 2016/17, there were 3978 registered dogs in the Light Regional Council. The townships with higher numbers of registered dogs are listed below¹:

- Kapunda: 912
- Hewett: 772
- Freeling: 687
- Roseworthy: 319
- Gawler Belt: 308
- Greenock: 265
- Wasleys: 205

The top 10 registered dog breeds (including cross breeds) in the Light Regional Council included²:

- Australian Kelpie: 532
- Maltese: 440
- Border Collie: 341
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier: 269
- Jack Russell Terrier: 246
- Labrador: 220
- Australian Cattle Dog: 217

Table 1 - Registered Dogs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Registered Dogs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>3863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>4153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>4058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>4210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>4152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>3978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2016/17, the total number of registered dogs within the Light Regional Council was 3978. Over 2011/12 to 2016/17 the number of registered dogs has increased by 115 or 3%.

Of the dogs registered in 2016/17, 1946 or 49% were both desexed and microchipped.

Table 2 - Registered Businesses with Dogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Registered Dogs</th>
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<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of registered businesses with dogs has remained relatively stable since 2011/12. Registered businesses include dog kennels or dog keeping which are subject to a Development Application.

¹These figures are based on 2015/16 data, as 2016/17 data was not available at time of analysis.

²These figures are based on 2015/16 dog registration data.
### Table 3 - Dog Complaints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog harassment to humans</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog attacks to humans</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog harassment to animals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog attacks to animals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barking (nuisance)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs wandering</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>206</strong></td>
<td><strong>197</strong></td>
<td><strong>219</strong></td>
<td><strong>275</strong></td>
<td><strong>294</strong></td>
<td><strong>368</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2016/17, there were 368 complaints registered with the Light Regional Council with wandering dogs accounting for 84% of all complaints, followed by nuisance barking with 10%. It is noted that the number of dogs wandering has increased over the last two years due to Council expanding their recording sources for complaints.

### Table 4 - Dogs Collected by Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dogs collected and returned to owner before impounded</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs impounded</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs impounded and subsequently returned to owner</td>
<td>27 (45%)</td>
<td>14 (26%)</td>
<td>36 (52%)</td>
<td>57 (76%)</td>
<td>50 (86%)</td>
<td>19 (76%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2016/17, 76% of dogs impounded were returned to their owner, which is an increase of 31% from 2011/12.
Council makes every effort to return lost dogs as soon as possible to the owner if the animal can be identified (i.e. via a registration disk or microchip). In 2016/17, Council returned 240 lost dogs to their owners before impoundment.

Under current arrangements, dogs not returned to their owner are transferred to the Town of Gawler holding facility at Paxton Street Depot, Willaston. If a dog is not claimed within 72 hours the dog is transported to the Animal Welfare League at Wingfield for the owner to collect. All dogs impounded can only be released to the owner if the dog is registered and the impounding fee is paid.

**Current Animal Management Services**

The responsibility for the control and management of dogs and cats rests with Council’s Department of Strategy and Development. The Compliance Coordinator is the appointed Registrar as per the requirement under the Act (Section 26).

There is a total of 1.4 full-time equivalent authorised persons.

Council’s dog management services are funded by a combination of general rate revenue, dog registrations, and expiation fees for breaches of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

Dog registration fees collected in 2016/17 totalled $127,780.00. Ten per cent (10%) of the fees are transferred to the Dog and Cat Management Board, and the remaining funds are allocated to a range of dog services including:

- Reuniting lost dogs with their owners
- Helping neighbours resolve dog related issues
- Providing after-hours callout services
- Investigating incidences of dog attacks and harassment
- Investigating nuisance barking complaints
- Providing funds to support impounded dogs at the Animal Welfare League
- Educating and liaising with pet owners about their responsibilities.

On a day to day level, Council administers, monitors, and enforces the provisions under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

Council has adopted four standard operating procedures (SOP’s) for the following areas:

- Dogs wandering
- Dog attacks and harassment
- Dogs barking complaints
- Destruction and control orders.

The Compliance Coordinator annually reviews these procedures.

**Partnerships**

Council works in partnership with some of the neighbouring councils regarding management services and detention facilities including:

- A rotating weekend after-hours General Inspectorate service between the Light Regional Council and Barossa Council.
- Use of the Town of Gawler holding facility at Paxton St Depot, Willaston.

**Dog By-Law No. 5**

In 2015, the Light Regional Council passed Dog By-Law (No. 5 of 2015) for the management and control of dogs within the council area. This By-law includes provisions for:

- Dog on-leash, off-leash and dog prohibited areas
- A limit on the number of dogs per property (i.e. one dog per small property or two dogs for other premises) unless permission is granted from Council.
Overview of Cats

The number of owned cats in the Council area is unknown as cats are not required to be registered within the Light Regional Council.

In 2016/17, there was a total of 26 formal cat complaints relating to stray or feral cats and cats wandering into neighbouring properties.

Table 5 – Cat Complaints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Complaints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2016/17, 19 cat traps were hired out to residents in the council area for those cats causing a nuisance.

The process for trapping a nuisance cat in the Light Regional Council includes the following steps:

- **Hire of cat traps** - Council hires out cat traps to residents for a fee and supplies information on how to trap cats humanely.

If a trapped cat is:

- **Identified** - If a cat is identified by either a collar, identification tag or an “M” tattooed in his/her ear, it must be released or returned to the owner as it’s an offence under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 to detain an owned, identified cat.

- **Unidentified** - If a trapped cat is not wearing a collar or identification, the person who has trapped the cat can either take him/her directly to the Companion Animal Health Centre (CAHC) at the Roseworthy Campus, University of Adelaide or the Animal Welfare League, Edinburgh North.

  - No fee is charged by either the vets or the Animal Welfare League for taking a cat to them when using a Council supplied cat trap.

**Cat By-Law No. 6**

In 2015, Council passed Cats By-Law (No. 6 of 2015) for the management and control of cats in the Council area. This by-law includes provisions for:

- Limit on the number of cats per property (i.e. maximum of four cats unless permission is granted by Council)
- Notice to owners regarding compliance.
PART TWO: FOCUS AREAS, OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

Part Two provides detailed information about each of the key focus areas and actions that will guide the implementation of Council’s dog and cat management over the next five years.

It outlines the objectives, actions, and performance measures.

5.0 Focus Areas & Actions

There are eight key focus areas to guide the implementation of this Dog and Cat Management Plan.

The focus areas include:

1. Dog registration
2. Desexing & microchipping of dogs
3. Wandering dogs
4. Nuisance barking
5. Pets in communities
6. Community education
7. Breeder registration
8. Cat management.

Each focus area is made up of:

• Objective
• Actions
• Performance measures.

Performance indicators or measures have been developed in this Plan to track progress towards the objectives and actions.

This Plan includes a combination of qualitative and quantitative performance measures. The overall quantitative measures are outlined in the next column.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

• Increase percentage of registered dogs over time
• Decrease number of expirations issued annually for unregistered dogs
• Increase percentage of microchipped and desexed dogs over time
• Decrease percentage of dogs wandering over time
• Increase percentage of dogs collected by Council and returned to owner before impoundment
• Increase rate of dogs reclaimed from the Animal Welfare League over time
• Increase percentage of nuisance dog barking complaints resolved at stage 1: via mediation, education, and awareness
• Decrease percentage of nuisance dog barking complaints resolved at stage 2: via formal investigation
• Decrease percentage of dog attacks to other animals
• Decrease percentage of dog attacks to humans
• Reduce the number of expirations issued for non-compliance with breeder registration over time
• Increase percentage of microchipped and desexed cats over time
Focus Area 1: Dog Registration

Context

In 2016/17, the total number of registered dogs in the Light Regional Council was 3,978. The townships with higher numbers of registered dogs included Kapunda, Hewett and Freeling.

Dogs are valued family members, so when they go missing it can be a stressful time for both the pet and the owner. If a dog is registered, Council can easily identify a lost dog, ensuring a quicker return to the owner.

Dog registration provides Council with a better understanding of the number and distribution of dogs in the area which is a useful tool in planning for off-leash exercise areas.

Existing Initiatives

Council’s existing initiatives to promote dog registrations include:

- Door knock campaign to follow up unregistered dogs
- Registration rebates for dogs that are microchipped and de-sexed
- Registration discount for trained dogs
- Web-based Information Sheet: Dog Registration.

DID YOU KNOW?

All dogs aged three months or over must be registered with the Light Regional Council each year.

Objective: Increase percentage of registered dogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Continue to identify unregistered dogs and undertake regular door knocks.</td>
<td>Number of registration uptakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Promote the benefits of dog registration and implications of having an unregistered dog.</td>
<td>Information posted on social media and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Promote the Dog and Cat Management Board’s information on the new state-wide dog registration system ‘DACO’.</td>
<td>Promotional information posted on social media and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Continue to display dog registration signs in prominent locations within the Council area to advertise due date for registration.</td>
<td>Signage displayed at prominent locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Review dog registration fees.</td>
<td>Review process completed and new fees promoted to community annually.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Area 2: Desexing & Microchipping of Dogs

**Context**

The desexing of all new generations of dogs (and cats) by six months of age is a key change under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, which will come into effect from 1 July 2018. Under the Act, a desexed animal means “to permanently render an animal incapable of reproducing”.

There are many benefits of desexing a dog including:

- Reducing the tendency for aggressive behaviours towards people and other dogs
- Reducing territorial behaviour such as spraying inside
- Reducing the dog’s tendency to wander
- Reducing anti-social behaviours like leg mounting and urine marking
- Reducing the likelihood of cancer and other diseases of the reproductive organs
- Increasing the likelihood of a dog enjoying a longer life (DCMB 2014).

While this new desexing requirement only affects dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018, all dogs and cats before 12 weeks of age must be microchipped by this date.

**Existing Initiatives**

Council's existing initiatives to encourage microchipping and desexing of dogs include:

- Reduced dog registration fees for microchipped and desexed dogs
- Promotion of discounted microchipping events in the Council area
- Web-based information on microchipping.

**Objective: Increase percentage of microchipped and desexed dogs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Promote the Dog and Cat Management Board's information on mandatory microchipping and desexing.</td>
<td>Promotional information posted on social media and other formats. Information distributed to local animal agencies/businesses and via rate notices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Facilitate discounted microchipping events for dog (and cat) owners. These events could be undertaken in collaboration with shelters, veterinary clinics, adjoining councils and other animal related organisations.</td>
<td>Number of dogs (and cats) microchipped at subsidised event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Promote the National Desexing Network (NDS) including National Desexing month (i.e. July) for low cost desexing of dogs and cats.</td>
<td>Provide a related link to NDS on Council’s website.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Area 3: Wandering Dogs

Context
Wandering dogs have been Council’s top complaint for the last five years. In 2016/17, wandering dogs accounted for 84% of all dog complaints.

Dogs that are wandering without an owner can “cause a nuisance, are often distressed and may attack or harass people or other animals. In some cases they cause road accidents resulting in injury to the dog and on occasion to vehicle occupants and may cause property damage – all of which becomes the responsibility of the owner of the dog” (DCMB, 2014).

Dogs escape their yards for a variety of reasons including:

- Poorly maintained or inappropriate fencing to contain a dog
- Gates left open or not properly secured
- Dogs getting under the roller door when the owner is going in/out
- Dogs being spooked or frightened by loud noises such as thunder and fireworks.

In 2016/17, Council reunited 240 dogs to their owners that would otherwise have been directed to the Animal Welfare League at Wingfield.

A quick return of a dog causes less stress to the dog and the owner, making the process simpler and preventing the animal being impounded at an unfamiliar location. Under current arrangements, dogs not returned home are transferred to the Town of Gawler holding facility at Paxton Street Depot, Willaston for a maximum of 72 hours for collection, otherwise the animal is transferred to the Animal Welfare League.

Existing Initiatives
Council’s existing initiatives to manage wandering dogs include:

- Patrons to target wandering dogs
- Listing of impounded dogs on Council’s website
- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for wandering dogs
- Web-based information on roaming dogs and secure fences.

Objective: Decrease the percentage of dogs wandering at large

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Develop a campaign to encourage dog owners to keep their dogs safe and contained in their yards. This could include: • Analysing data and targeting areas with high numbers of wandering dogs • Raising awareness to new residents of the implications of dogs wandering into paddocks with livestock.</td>
<td>Targeted campaign developed and implemented. Information posted on Council’s website and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Conduct patrols in public areas to detain dogs wandering at large.</td>
<td>Targeted patrols implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Continue to investigate the feasibility of a temporary holding facility or permanent pound including a suitable location, costings and funding sources.</td>
<td>Investigation completed and next steps determined.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DID YOU KNOW?
In 2016/17, Light Regional Council returned 240 lost dogs to their owners, avoiding impoundment.
Focus Area 4: Nuisance Barking

Context

In 2016/17, the Light Regional Council received 25 dog complaints relating to an expressed concern of nuisance barking. Nuisance barking was the second most frequent complaint reported to Council.

Although barking is a natural behaviour for dogs, nuisance barking can be annoying to their owners and to neighbours. The causes of dogs barking can range from boredom or frustration, being left alone, physical discomfort or pain, or reacting to an external stimulus such as a bird or someone passing by the fence.

If excessive barking is to be managed effectively, the trigger for the barking needs to be identified.

“... Dogs bark for a variety of reasons and it is important to work out why your dog is barking excessively. Once the underlying cause and ‘triggers’ for the barking are identified, training techniques can be used to treat the excessive barking.” (RSPCA, 2015a online)

Sometimes, dog owners don’t know their dog is barking excessively or know where to go for help. For those owners who need assistance with dog behavioural issues such as nuisance barking the RSPCA Force-Free Trainers list is a good resource to find a qualified dog behaviour trainer.

Existing Initiatives

Council’s existing initiatives to manage excessive barking includes:

- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Noise Nuisance
- Web-based Information Sheet: Keeping your Dog Happy
- Help Kit for aggrieved residents to assist in negotiations with neighbours.

Objective: Reduce the impact of excessive barking on the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Promote the RSPCA List of Force-Free Trainers to dog owners as a resource for dog behavioural issues such as excessive barking. This list could also be used as a resource to assist Council with public queries relating to dog training and behaviours.</td>
<td>Provide a related link to the RSPCA Force-Free list on Council's website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Develop an education brochure on barking for online and suitable for download.</td>
<td>Monitor take up and amend as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Monitor implementation of Help Kit relating to nuisance barking for aggrieved residents.</td>
<td>Monitor take up and amend as required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Area 5: Pets in Communities

Context
The Light Regional Council provides a range of public open space for dogs and their owners including on-leash and off-leash exercise areas, sports ovals, walking trails and shared paths. There are also designated areas where dogs are prohibited such as fenced children’s playgrounds. Refer to Appendix A for a detailed list of off-leash, on-leash and dog prohibited areas within the Light Regional Council.

A new challenge that Council is having to consider is natural disaster and emergency planning for dogs and cats given the recent Pinery Fire in 2015.

As disasters (i.e. fires, floods and cyclones) are becoming frequent in Australia, there is a need to have emergency plans in place for people and their pets.

Existing Initiatives
Council’s existing initiatives for pets in communities include:

- Designated on-leash and off-leash areas
- Supporting amenities such as doggy bags and dispensers in areas of high visibility
- Standard Operating Procedure for Dog Attacks and Harassment.

Objectives: Decrease the percentage of dogs wandering at large

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Develop strategies to assist the community to plan, respond and recover dogs and cats in natural disasters and emergencies. This could include: • Providing related links on Council’s website on how to prepare for natural disasters and emergencies e.g. AVA - Keeping your pet safe in a natural disaster and RSPCA (SA) - Pets in Emergencies. • Developing reminders to prepare for emergencies on social media and other formats • Sharing notifications regarding emergency warnings • Providing assistance to reunite pets after disasters.</td>
<td>Strategies developed and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Investigate the development of a pet care support program to promote the benefits of pet ownership. A useful resource for this investigation is the RSPCA (SA) publication ‘Companion Animals Program Toolkit’.</td>
<td>Investigation completed and next steps determined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Develop accessible information to promote on-leash, off-leash and dog prohibited areas within the council area. This could include an interactive map and online brochure suitable for download.</td>
<td>Information developed and posted on Council’s website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Encourage the community to report dog attacks and harassment incidents to Council. This may include the provision of dog attack forms at medical centres and veterinary clinics.</td>
<td>Number of dog attacks/harassments reported.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Area 6: Community Education

Context
Education supported by enforcement of legislation plays a key role in the effective management of pets in the community. This includes educating existing and prospective dog and cat owners, children and the wider community.

Education can take the form of school-based programs, online resources, practical demonstrations, seminars or presentations on responsible pet ownership.

There are several agencies in South Australia who offer educational programs and resources including:

• Dog and Cat Management Board of SA - Living Safely with Pets;
• RSPCA SA - Empathy Education Program;
• AWL - Education and Awareness Programs; and
• AVA - Pets and People Education (online)

Existing Initiatives
Council’s existing community education initiatives include:
• Web-based information and related links to other organisations.

Objective: Promote responsible pet ownership through community education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Investigate working with other organisations and individuals to deliver education programs on responsible pet ownership. This could include collaborations with the RSPCA, AWL, dog trainers, veterinary clinics and University of Adelaide, Roseworthy Campus.</td>
<td>Investigations completed and next steps implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Develop a series of ‘Did you Know’ messages to promote responsible pet ownership e.g. yearly calendar of key messages</td>
<td>Information developed and posted regularly on social media, on-hold messages and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Investigate collaborative projects and events with the University of Adelaide to support responsible pet ownership.</td>
<td>Investigation completed and next steps determined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Develop a campaign to raise awareness of Council’s animal management role.</td>
<td>Information developed and posted on social media and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Provide more accessible information on responsible pet ownership including: dog selection; environmental enrichment; importance of puppy socialisation; dog bite prevention, safe interactions between dogs and children; good etiquette for dogs in public spaces; local laws in simple language; legislation and reform updates.</td>
<td>Information developed and posted on Council’s website, social media and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Investigate strategies to promote the Living Safely with Pets school based program in the council area.</td>
<td>Investigation completed and next steps implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Review all Council information sheets in response to legislative changes.</td>
<td>Information sheets updated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Area 7: Breeder Registration

Context

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 has undergone a major review with significant changes to take effect from 1 July 2018. Some of these changes will impact on those who breed and sell dogs and cats including:

- Sellers of dogs and cats will be required to provide certain information in advertisements such as their breeder registration number and provide the buyer with relevant paperwork
- Any person who breeds or trades companion animals must also abide by the new South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals Standards.

These Guidelines are administered by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Animal Welfare Unit and enforced by the RSPCA.

Existing Initiatives

This is a new initiative to be introduced in 2018.

Objective: Educate and enforce compliance with the breeder registration requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Promote the Dog and Cat Management Board's new requirements for dog and cat breeders and sellers.</td>
<td>Promotional material posted on social media and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Advise all business registrations for dog and cat breeding that they must register as a breeder with the Dog and Cat Management Board.</td>
<td>Mail out completed. Reduction in the number of expiations issued for non-compliance with breeder registration over time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Area 8: Cat Management

Context
Cats are companion animals for an estimated 29% of Australian households. Cats can be valuable family members providing companionship and affection, but they can also cause a nuisance in the community. Cats can stray from their property, defecate in neighbouring properties and cause environmental damage by attacking and harassing wildlife.

In South Australia, there are around half a million unowned cats with thousands of stray cats and kittens euthanized in animal shelters every year (DCMB 2017, website).

In 2016/17, there were 26 cat complaints formally recorded with the Light Regional Council relating to stray or feral cats and cats wandering into neighbouring properties.

Existing Initiatives
Council’s existing initiatives for cat management include:

- Hire of cat traps to residents, provide advice and assistance in the removal of cats
- Web-based Information Sheet: You and Your Cat promoting the confinement of cats at night.

Did You Know?

From 1 July 2018, all cats will be required to be microchipped by 12 weeks of age.

Objective: Encourage responsible cat ownership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Develop an information sheet on the process of trapping cats.</td>
<td>Information sheet developed and posted on Council’s website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Promote the Dog and Cat Management Board's information on the new mandatory desexing and microchipping requirements for cats.</td>
<td>Information posted on social media and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Continue to promote the hire of humane cat traps and nominated facility for delivery of captured unidentified cats.</td>
<td>Information posted on Council’s website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Provide more accessible information on responsible cat ownership including:</td>
<td>Information posted on Council’s website and other formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmental enrichment for cats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Examples of cat containment options e.g. enclosures, cat runs, and cat fencing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cat bylaw in plain language including the number of cats per property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References

• ABS Quick Stats, 2016.
• Australian Companion Animal Council, ACAC (2009) The Power of Pets, the benefits of companion animal ownership.
• Light Regional Council (2015) By-law No. 5 – Dogs.
• Light Regional Council (2015) By-law No. 6 – Cats.
• Light Regional Council (2011-2017) various dog and cat data collected and supplied by Council.
• Light Regional Council (2011-2017) Cat complaints.
• Light Regional Council (2011) Community Profile.
• PIRSA (2017) Managing Animals in Emergencies: A Framework for South Australia, January
Appendix A: On-Leash, Off-Leash and Dog Prohibited Areas

The Light Regional Council has three types of provisions for dogs in public places:

- On-leash areas (at all times)
- Off-leash areas (at all times)
- Dog prohibited areas (at all times) including enclosed/fenced children’s playgrounds.

**On-leash areas**

An on-leash area means a dog must be restrained by a leash no more than 2 metres in length.

- In an on-leash area a dog must be restrained by a leash no more than 2 metres in length. This is a requirement under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
- Dogs must be on-leash during times when formal sport is being played. This is a requirement under Council’s Dog By-law.
- Dogs must be on-leash on all public roads, footpaths and carparks. This is a requirement under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

**Off-leash areas**

An off-leash area means the handler/owner must have the dog under effective control at all times. Effective control means the dog must:

- Respond to a command [or cue] e.g. come (recall), sit, wait
- Be in close proximity to the responsible person/handler
- The responsible person must be able to see the dog at all times.

**Dog Prohibited Areas**

A dog prohibited area means dogs are not allowed in the public area.

- Dogs are prohibited within a fenced children’s playground
- Dogs are prohibited within five metres of an unfenced children’s playground (except an assistance dog).

On-leash, off-leash and dog prohibited areas in the Light Regional Council

**Freeling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Reserve</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>On/Off-leash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freeling Recreation Park (Sports oval)</td>
<td>Hanson Street</td>
<td>Off-leash, unless formal sports are being played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeling Wetlands</td>
<td>Schuster Street</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCallum Road Park (includes unfenced playground)</td>
<td>Stollberg Road</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattiske Park (includes playground and public toilets)</td>
<td>Corner of Rogers &amp; Peak Streets</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Range Reserve</td>
<td>Fiddlewood Drive</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedler Boulevard Park (includes playground)</td>
<td>Pedler Boulevard</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Reserve</td>
<td>Gray Street</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Greenock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Reserve</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>On/Off-leash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenock Creek</td>
<td>George Angus Drive</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenock Centenary Park (includes fenced playground in park)</td>
<td>Martin Street</td>
<td>Off-leash (Dogs prohibited in fenced children's playground)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh Walk (Shared path)</td>
<td>Off George Street</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Hewett

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Reserve</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>On/Off-leash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hewett Shared Use Path</td>
<td>Various locations along North Para River</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park (includes playground)</td>
<td>Osprey Parade/Songlark Grove</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Osprey Parade/Brolga Way</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Lorikeet Grove/Songlark Grove</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Rosella Circuit</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>McKinlay Square</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Teal Court/Kingfisher Drive</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear Park</td>
<td>Expedition Drive/Burke Parade/Oaklands Circuit</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Wasleys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Reserve</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>On/Off-leash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Wasleys Reserve</td>
<td>Forster Street</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Mullen Mudla Wirra Road (includes Road reserve with historic monument)</td>
<td>Mudla Wirra Road</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasleys Oval Recreation Grounds (includes unfenced playground in reserve)</td>
<td>Station Street</td>
<td>Off-leash (Dogs prohibited within 5 metres of unfenced children's playground)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Kapunda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Reserve</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>On/Off-leash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kapunda Trotting Club &amp; Track</td>
<td>Hancock Road</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapunda Oval (includes enclosed children’s playground in reserve)</td>
<td>Coghill Street</td>
<td>Off-leash (Dogs prohibited in fenced children’s playground)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Swann Path (Kapunda Rail Trail)</td>
<td>Between Hill Street &amp; Coghill</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill Street Park (Enclosed children’s playground)</td>
<td>Hill Street</td>
<td>Dogs Prohibited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davidson Reserve (Duck Pond)</td>
<td>Willow Drive</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map the Miner</td>
<td>Thiele Highway</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Street (Drainage line)</td>
<td>Solomon Street</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapunda Mine Site (Walking trail)</td>
<td>Mine Street</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gundry’s Hill Lookout</td>
<td>Hawke Street</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Roseworthy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Reserve</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>On/Off-leash</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shamrock Way (Lagoon)</td>
<td>Near treatment plant</td>
<td>Off-leash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Terrace (includes playground in park)</td>
<td>Opposite post office</td>
<td>On-leash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>