



Moreland
City Council



Domestic Animal Management Plan

2021 - 2025

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Moreland Language Link

廣東話 9280 1910	عربي 9280 1913	हिंदी 9280 1918	All other languages 9280 1919
Italiano 9280 1911	Türkçe 9280 1914	普通话 9280 0750	
Ελληνικ 9280 1912	Tiếng Việt 9280 1915	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 9280 0751	

1. Introduction & Context

1.1 Purpose of Domestic Animal Management Plan

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 (the Act) requires councils in Victoria to develop a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP), every four years. The DAMP must outline council services, council programs and policies established to address the administration of the Act, and councils' management of cat and dog issues in their community. Councils must review their DAMPs annually and publish an evaluation of the implementation of the past year's actions in their Annual Report.

DAMPs should cover the following issues:

- Ensure that people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation
- Minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals
- Address overpopulation and high euthanasia rates for cats and dogs
- Encourage the registration and identification of cats and dogs
- Minimise the potential for cats and dogs to create a nuisance
- Effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulation
- Provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of cats and dogs in the municipal district are desirable
- Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of cats and dogs in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary
- Provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

The benefits of pet ownership for people's health and wellbeing are well established. Whilst Domestic Animal Management Plans are concerned primarily with the management of cats and dogs within the community, it is important to note that pet ownership has a range of positive outcomes for the ongoing physical and mental health of community members, including:

- preventing loneliness
- motivating people to exercise regularly
- creating opportunities to meet people and make new friends
- teaching responsibility, as pets require ongoing care
- Pets are often viewed as extended members of the family and can provide great companionship, affection and joy.

1.2 Process Applied in Developing the Plan

Moreland City Council's DAMP was developed through a sector-leading approach in partnership with two neighbouring Councils, Darebin and Whittlesea. An inter-organisational working group was developed to encourage partnerships and lead best practice. The development of the DAMP was driven by the working group and through four specific stages.

Stage 1: Background Research and Analysis

A detailed background report was developed which outlined: an overview of the local government area; relevant state and local policies; an analysis of Council's current DAMP; emerging issues in domestic animal management; internal staff consultation and current animal management statistics.

Stage 2: Community Consultation

A comprehensive community engagement program was delivered to encourage the community to have their say on domestic animal management issues. Approximately 1,624 people who live, work or visit the Cities of Darebin, Moreland and Whittlesea provided feedback. Feedback was gathered through three methods: a detailed online survey which was available through a dedicated project webpage; community pop-ups held at key venues and locations across the local government areas; and telephone interviews conducted with key stakeholders.



Online Survey

1255

surveys completed

1763

unique comments received



15 Community Pop-ups

369 participants

1286 unique comments received



Key Stakeholder Interviews

10 key stakeholders interviewed

The feedback received from community members has been used to inform the priorities and actions outlined in the DAMP. A full engagement report which outlines the community feedback is also available. The key themes found across the engagement program are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Key themes across the engagement program

DAMP Theme	Key sub-theme
Responsible pet ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving owner behaviours and control of animals • Increasing community education and training
Dog attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving safety at dog parks
Overpopulation of cats and dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing cat desexing • Reducing stray cats
Registration and identification of cats and dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing registration fees • Providing free/reduced microchipping • Reviewing the ease of registering a pet • Allowing vets and Council to check pet's microchip before taking animal to the pound
Protection from nuisance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing dog poo in public places • Addressing cat poo in private properties • Addressing excessive noise from dog barking and cat fighting • Increasing the provision of dog poo bags and bins • Addressing stray cats to protect wildlife • Introducing a cat curfew
Dangerous and restricted dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving signage • Addressing aggressive dogs in off-leash parks • Addressing needs of specific breeds of dogs
Review of Council services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving/increasing relevant signage • Increasing patrols and officer visibility • Increasing community education • Reviewing dog off/on-leash areas • Improving safety of Council parks • Improving and maintaining fencing at fenced dog parks • Increasing fines for people doing the wrong thing • Reviewing service practices of Council's pound provider
Training for Authorised Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing training to encourage positive interactions with the community

Stage 3: Joint Council planning

Relevant Council officers from Darebin, Moreland and Whittlesea participated in a joint Council planning session to analyse the community feedback, determine appropriate actions for their respective DAMPs and identify opportunities for partnerships and cost saving.

Stage 4: Public exhibition

A draft DAMP was developed and presented to the 8 September 2021 Council meeting where it was endorsed for public exhibition. The public exhibition period was held from 10th September to 8th October 2021. Council received 60 submissions relating to the following topics:



The public exhibition period included:

- Engagement through our website Conversations Moreland
- Social media posts to promote the public exhibition period.

Some minor changes to the final DAMP were made as a result of community feedback obtained through this public exhibition.

1.3 Demographic Profile of Council

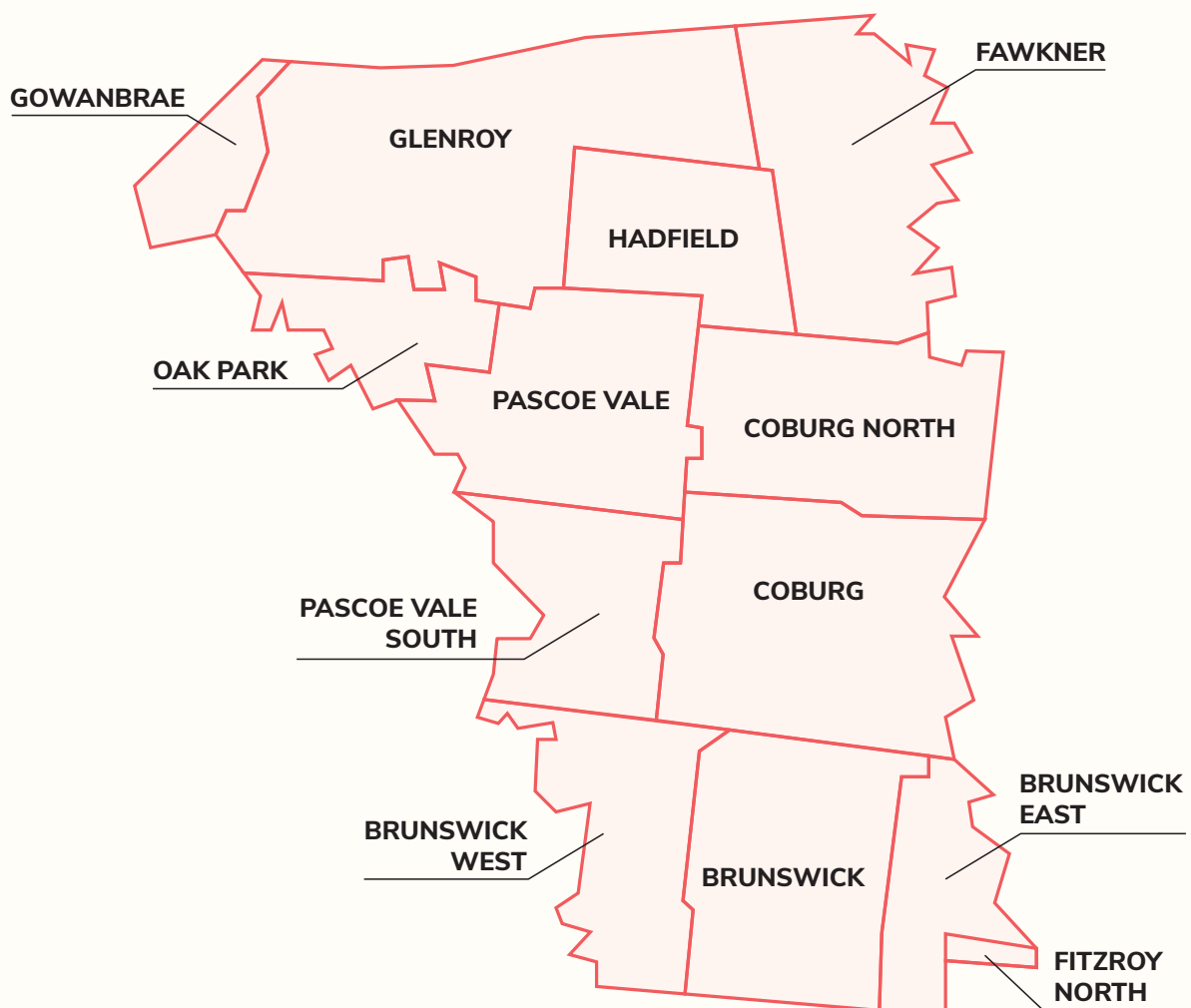
Moreland City Council is located in the inner north of Melbourne, about 4km from the Central Business District (CBD). It covers approximately 50.9 square kilometres and is made up of the following suburbs:

- Brunswick
- Brunswick East
- Brunswick West
- Coburg
- Coburg North
- Fawkner
- Glenroy
- Gowanbrae
- Hadfield
- Oak Park
- Pascoe Vale
- Pascoe Vale South
- Fitzroy North (part)

The estimated population of Moreland for 2020 is 188,762, and is expected to grow to 228,000 by 2036. The community is slightly younger than average, with the largest age group being 25-29 years (11%), compared to 8.1% throughout Greater Melbourne.

Moreland is a multicultural municipality, where in 2016 over 38% of local residents spoke a language other than English at home. The most common languages spoken other than English are Italian, Arabic and Greek.

Figure 1: Map of the City of Moreland Municipality



1.4 Context and Current Situation

Council's role in animal management

The purpose of Moreland City Council's animal management service is to:

- implement Council's responsibilities under the Act and the General Local Law
- promote the welfare of cats and dogs
- inform and educate the community about the benefits associated with pets, responsible pet ownership and the needs of companion animals
- respond to issues raised by the community about nuisance animals, e.g. barking dogs
- provide programs and services to support the community to be responsible pet owners, such as free desexing programs, education campaigns and park patrols
- provide animal welfare services through the Epping Animal Welfare Facility in partnership with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea.

A high-level summary of the current population and service numbers for domestic animals in Moreland is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Current population and service numbers for domestic animals

Program/Service:	Service Level:
Identification & Registration	12,191 dogs 6,656 cats
Identification & Registration campaigns	Annually
Domestic animal complaints	Acknowledge in 2 business days
Dog attack and dog at large complaints	Immediate response
Routine street, park, reserve and creek patrols	Daily
Epping Animal Welfare Facility (EAWF)	Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11am - 7pm Tuesday and Thursday 7am -3pm Saturday and Sunday 9am - 4pm
Micro-chipping and/or desexing programs	Free cat desexing, microchipping, immunisation and first year registration program offered annually to Health Care and Pensioner Concession Card holders. Reduced fee voucher to cover part of the cost of desexing your cat or dog available to Health Care and Pensioner Concession Card holders.
After hours emergency service	Undertaken by Melbourne Pet Ambulance

1.5 Domestic Animal Statistics

Currently there are 18,847 registered pets in Moreland, 12,191 dogs and 6,656 cats. There has been a 32% increase in pet ownership since July 2017. There are a total of nine declared dogs, three declared dangerous, six declared menacing in the municipality. Moreland has eight registered Domestic Animal Management Businesses, two pet shops, five boarding establishments and one day care facility.

In 2020/2021 there were 1283 animals brought into the Epping Animal Welfare Facility, where 330 have been reclaimed by owners, 639 were rehomed and 321 were euthanised.

The Animal Management team responded to 214 barking dog complaints, 500 domestic animal pick up, 99 dogs at large, 266 cat cage requests, 68 dog rushes, 129 dog attack reports and 414 animal violations including unregistered cats and dogs, defecating, off leash in on leash areas in parks and reserves and excessive animal complaints.



2. Training of Authorised Officers

In order to deliver animal management services that meet the requirements of the Act to the level that the community expects, it is crucial to ensure that all Authorised Officers are appropriately trained through participation in a robust training program.

The community engagement program illustrated a growing community expectation that Council officers should be fostering partnerships, supporting community education initiatives and facilitating positive interactions with the community.

2.1 Context and Current Situation

Moreland's Animal Management Team is made up of two full-time Animal Management Officers, one full-time Animal Collections Officer and one full-time Local Laws and Animal Management Officer. It is preferred that all Animal Management officers have a Certificate IV in Government Statutory Compliance and a Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation (or substantial industry experience). It is a requirement that all Authorised Officers undertake all Council required training programs as outlined in Table 3. Table 3 shows the current numbers of Authorised Officers whose training has been completed and those whose training is in progress.

Each officer has an individual annual performance plan which includes a section related to training and development. Plans are reviewed regularly with training requirements and suggestions being updated at those times. Responsibility is shared between the individual officer and their supervisor for ensuring that the nominated training is completed.

Table 3: Authorised Officer training status - completed and in progress

Authorised Officer Training	No. Authorised Officers	
	Completed	In Progress
Industry training – animal handling, animal assessment, statement taking, prosecution	4	0
OH&S training – dealing with aggressive customers	4	0
OH&S training – Baton training	3	0
Cert IV in Government Statutory Compliance	3	0
Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation	3	0
Hands-on animal handling training	4	0
Council e-learning modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraud Awareness • Privacy Awareness • Cyber Security • Anti-discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity • Sexual Harassment in the Workplace • Work Health and Safety • Risk Management 	3	1

2.2 Our Planned Training for Authorised Officers

Moreland City Council has planned a thorough training program for Authorised Officers to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the requirements of the Act and to deliver service in a manner that the community expects. Table 4 shows the planned training for 2021-2025 and the expected timeframe of each.

Table 4: Planned training of Authorised Officers for the 2021-2025 period

Planned Training (2021-2025)	Expected Timeframe
OH&S <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with aggressive customers • Defensive driving • Occupational violence prevention • Baton handling 	Annually or as required
Industry Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal handling • Animal assessment • Statement taking • Evidence gathering 	Annually or as required
Restricted Breed Dog Identification	Every 2 Years
Council e-learning opportunities	Annually
Customer Service	As required
Cert IV in Animal Control and Regulation	As required
Cert IV in Local Government (Regulatory Services)	As required
Australian Institute of Animal Management	As they are provided
Management seminars/conference	As they are provided
Animal Welfare Victoria seminars	As they are provided

2.3 Our Plan

Table 5 and 6 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 2 Objective 1 and 2.

Table 5: Activities under Section 2 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop a training policy that clearly identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by animal management officers		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements by consultation with management and staff	Year 1	Documentation to be finalised
Identify additional training requirements by consultation with management and staff	Year 1	Documentation to be finalised

Table 6: Activities under Section 2 Objective 2

OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure animal management officers have the skills necessary to support the community and effectively perform their regulatory role		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore opportunities for ongoing training in partnership with the City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea	Ongoing	No. of training programs undertaken
Explore a standard induction process with the City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea and share an induction template	Year 1	Induction process developed
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to hold an Animal Team Development Day	Annually	No. Animal Management team days delivered
Maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training	Annually	Review of training register
Develop an induction process for new staff members	Year 1	Reviewed induction process

3. Programs to Promote and Encourage Responsible Pet Ownership and Compliance with Legislation

In order to deliver animal management services that meet the requirements of the Act to the level that the community expects, it is crucial to ensure that all Authorised Officers are appropriately trained through participation in a robust training program.

The community engagement program illustrated a growing community expectation that Council officers should be fostering partnerships, supporting community education initiatives and facilitating positive interactions with the community.

3.1 Context and Current Situation

Council provides information and advice to the community regarding responsible pet ownership and has a number of initiatives and programs in place to encourage responsible pet ownership and to address compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements. Some of these programs include:

- Educating the community about responsible pet ownership, including the benefits of desexing, registration and microchipping
- Providing an annual free cat desexing program and an ongoing voucher scheme to reduce the cost of cat and dog desexing for concession card holders
- Temporarily accommodating pets at the Epping Animal Welfare Facility to support those experiencing family violence
- Providing cat traps to residents for free and facilitating the collection of trapped cats
- Maintaining, promoting and patrolling the on and off-leash dog parks and fenced in dog parks across Moreland
- Comparing Council's database of registered animals against microchip registries to ensure breeds align
- Following up on unpaid animal registration renewals to ensure pets are registered as per legislation
- Investigating alleged breaches of the Domestic Animals Act and the General Local Law, issuing infringements for breaches of legislation, pursuing unpaid infringements and prosecuting matters in court as required.



The following parks within Moreland have designated off-leash areas:



Coburg

Mc Donald Reserve
DeChene Reserve
Bridges Reserve
Anderson Reserve
Campbell Reserve
Shore Reserve
Egan Reserve
Bowden Reserve

Coburg North

Cash Reserve
*Richards Reserve
Hosken Reserve
Parker Reserve

Brunswick

Clifton Park
A G Gillon Oval
*Gilpin Park
Reaburn Reserve
Fleming Park
Balfe Park
Methven Park
Roberts Reserve

Brunswick East

Jones Park
Phillips Reserve
Sumner Park
Abrahams Reserve
Kirkdale Park

Brunswick West

Sheils Reserve
Holbrook Reserve
Braddy Reserve
Wylie Reserve
Dunstan Reserve
Fraser Reserve

Fawkner

Charles Mutton Reserve
Moomba Park Reserve

Glenroy

Sewell Reserve
Rupert Wallace Reserve
Gervase Ave Reserve
Fran Street Reserve
Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve

Pascoe Vale

Joyce Reserve
Raeburn Reserve
Austin Crescent Reserve
Hallam Reserve
Cole Reserve
Rayner Reserve

Pascoe Vale South

Esselemont Reserve
Brearly Reserve
Morris Reserve

Oak Park

J P Fawkner Reserve

Hadfield

Martin Reserve
Tony Mommson Reserve

*indicates a fenced dog park

Table 7: Number of cats and Dogs registered In Moreland

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Dogs	10,652	10,700	11,130	12,191
Cats	5,152	5,221	5,849	6,656
Total	15,804	15,921	16,979	18,847

* The periods above relate to the 'animal registration year' of 10 April – 9 April each year.

COVID-19 has had significant impacts on the community, and this extends to cats and dogs in the Moreland community. There has been an unprecedented demand to purchase, foster and adopt pets during stay at home orders as people seek companionship in their homes. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of cats and dogs registered and dogs exercised in many of Moreland's shared open spaces.

With many community members acquiring or adopting puppies, many dogs and their owners have missed opportunities to attend training/obedience classes and have missed crucial opportunities to socialise with other dogs or humans, especially children. This has resulted in a significant increase in reports relating to the behaviour of dogs in public places.

Table 8: Cat and dog infringements issued

Offence Type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Dog at large daytime	323	177	133	142
Dog at large night-time	53	12	1	2
Dog not under effective control	30	19	13	111
Fail to register dog/cat	166	114	103	227
Fail to renew registration dog/cat	15	2	1	35
Dog attack non-serious injury	8	15	12	17
Fail to collect and dispose faeces	0	0	0	10
Other	192	0	18	20

There has been a steady increase in registrations since 2017, as shown in Table 7. This increase is also reflected in the service demands on the animal management team.

There has been a significant increase in the number of dogs not under effective control (98) and failure to register a dog or cat (124), failure to renew the registration of a dog or cat (34) and dog attack non-serious injury (5) as seen in Table 8.

Moreland responded to the increase in pet registration by developing and implementing an online 'Top of the Class' campaign and responsible dog ownership videos focusing on keeping dogs secure in their owner's property, safely walking and exercising dogs and picking up after their dogs. To help dog walkers easily identify on and off leash areas and remind them to pick up after their dogs, Council developed and rolled out decals and new signs in open spaces across Moreland.

Council increased their park patrols in an effort to further educate the community about responsible pet ownership as well as in response to feedback received from the community and officer observations. Park patrols were undertaken daily including the weekends and at various times of the day, in vehicles and also on e-bikes along the creeks and waterways, parks and reserves. Using e-bikes allowed officers access to areas in the municipality that vehicles could not reach.

The increased visibility and presence of animal management officers provided opportunities for responsible pet ownership education and the issuing of infringements for breaches of legislation.

With the increased number of cat and dog registrations there has been an increase in the number of service demands on the animal management team. In the 2020/21 year there has been a 26% rise in the number of animal violations, including unregistered dogs and cats, defecating, off-leash in parks/reserves and excessive animals (refer to Table 18). The education campaigns and increased park patrols has been a direct response to these service demands

Compliance activities:

- Enforcement using Notices to Comply, infringement notices, Animal Management Agreements and, where required, court prosecution
- Officer visits to properties of non-renewed pet registrations
- Random inspections of properties of declared dogs
- Follow up of notifications from pet welfare agencies of claimed or rehoused pets which are housed within the municipality
- Provision of cat traps to complainants in cases where education and advice has failed to prevent cat trespass
- Impoundment of dogs or cats found wandering. Unregistered and/or unidentifiable dogs or cats are brought to the EAWF. Registered and identifiable cats and dogs are reunited with their owners
- Complaint investigation
- Patrols of dog parks, sporting fields and reserves, creeks and waterways to educate and remind owners of their responsibilities, and where required, issue infringement notices
- Social media posts around the registration/renewal period and the Top of the Class campaign about responsible pet ownership.
- Bike patrols and increased park patrols during COVID-19.

3.2 Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures



Orders:

- Section 26 Domestic Animals Act 1994 – Moreland Council requires dogs to be kept under effective control while in a public place including in designated off-leash areas.



Local Laws:

- General Local Law 2018 Part 5 - Moreland requires residents provide responsible care and management of animals.



Policies and Procedures:

- Process for issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution
- Standard Operating Procedure
- Enforcement Guidelines.



3.3 Our Plan

Tables 9, 10 and 11 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 3 Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Table 9: Activities under Section 3 Objective 1

Objective 1: Promote responsible cat and dog ownership		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Run a social media campaign to highlight the need for dogs to be socialised and receive training as required	Quarterly	Social media reach
Run a social media campaign about picking up after your dog	Quarterly	Complaint numbers Reach of social media campaign
Audit the existing dog parks in terms of safety including current fences and signage and making required improvements	Annually	No. recommendations and improvements
Attend Council run festivals and events where residents can meet the team and receive information on responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	No. participants
Run a campaign about the importance of responsible pet ownership, sending information or QR codes for information out with renewal notices	Annually	No. nuisance complaints
Explore the development of webinars/educational videos in partnership with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea and stakeholders on responsible pet ownership topics	Year 2	No. participants
Explore hosting an annual event in partnership with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to bring together pet stakeholders (vets, rescue groups, shelters and dog trainers) to share information and services with the community	Year 3	Review findings of feasibility research
Partner with the City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea and local dog training businesses to encourage puppy/dog training and behaviour correction	Ongoing	Resources developed and shared on Council website

Table 9: Activities under Section 3 Objective 1 *Continued*

Objective 1: Promote responsible cat and dog ownership		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop Responsible Pet Ownership School information sessions	Year 1	No. children being educated
Educate the community about their responsibilities if they find a lost animal	Annually	Social media reach

Table 10: Activities under Section 3 Objective 2

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop engaging fact sheets and web content regarding legislative obligations	Year 1	Fact sheets completed and distributed



Table 11: Activities under Section 3 Objective 3

Objective 3: Ensure adequate access to infrastructure/amenities for dogs		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the need for additional dog parks as part of the refresh of the Moreland Open Space Strategy (MOSS)	Year 2	Review completed
Review Council order (on/off leash dog areas) as part of the refresh of the Moreland Open Space Strategy	Year 2	Review completed
Review the number of waste bins located in highly frequented dog use areas and implement more as required	Year 1	No. waste bins pre and post
Identify suitable locations for dog poo bag dispensers	Year 1 and ongoing	No. poo bag dispensers pre and post



4. Programs to Address Overpopulation and High Euthanasia Rates

The overpopulation of cats and dogs is an issue that presents challenges in the community such as impacts on wildlife, people and other cats and dogs. There are also impacts on the welfare of cats and dogs if they are stray, semi-owned, or malnourished due to limited capacity of owners to care for them. In particular, the overpopulation of cats leads to challenges with high rates of euthanasia within the stray cat population due to low rehoming rates.

During the community engagement program, the community and key stakeholders expressed concern regarding euthanasia rates, as well as a desire to explore mandatory desexing to address overpopulation issues.

4.1 Context and Current Situation

The population and euthanasia rates are demonstrated in Table 12. There has been a slight increase in the number of cats impounded between 2019/20 and 2020/21 (51), and a corresponding slight increase in cats euthanised (19) and returned to owners (5). There has been a significant increase in cats rehomed (60). Almost one third of impounded cats were euthanised in the 2020/21 period, similar to the previous year.

Table 12: Numbers of cats and dogs impounded and subsequent outcomes

	2017/18*	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Cats				
Impounded (brought into EAWF by the public, surrendered by owner or brought in by Authorised Officers)	687	995	1011	1062
Returned to owner	38	43	54	59
Euthanasia (feral or unsafe to rehome)	200	377	278	297
Rehomed (adopted)	207	549	531	591
Dogs				
Impounded (brought to EAWF by the public, Authorised Officers or surrendered by owner)	316	289	199	221
Returned to owner	233	203	127	132
Euthanasia (feral or unsafe to rehome)	16	20	21	24
Rehomed (adopted)	46	55	38	40

* Data from October 2017-June 2018

Note: this data does not capture animals transferred to rescue groups or foster networks

The number of impounded dogs in 2020/21 increased from the year prior, however was noticeably lower than the two years previous. Numbers of impounded cats have steadily risen each year between 2017/18 to 2020/21.

Rates of dog euthanasia are much lower due to the higher rates of rehoming and reclaiming of dogs as compared to cats, 10.8% of dogs impounded in the 2020/21 period were euthanised. More than 50% of impounded dogs were returned to owners in 2020/21 and a further 18% were rehomed.

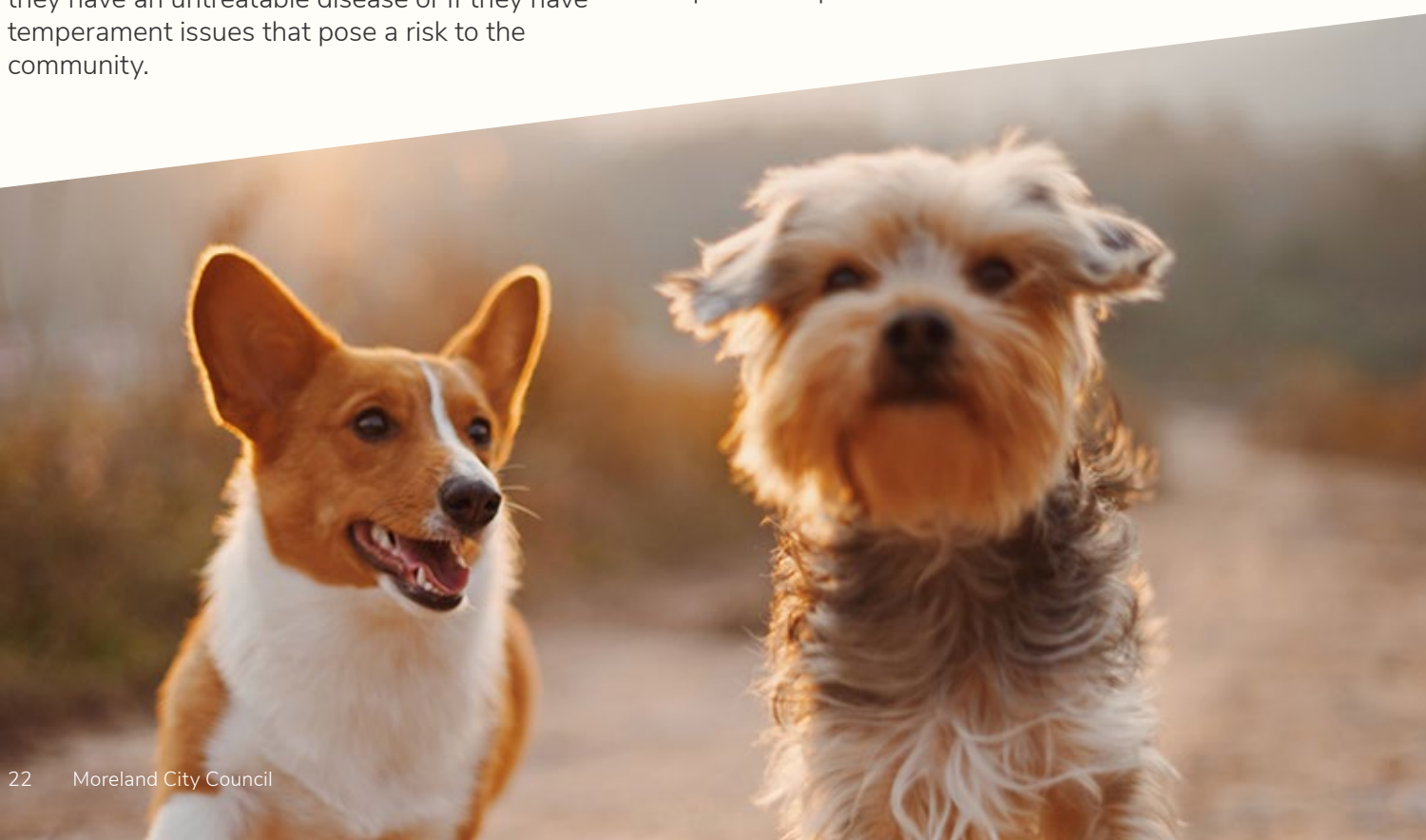
Reuniting domestic animals with their owners is a strong focus for Council and many community welfare organisations. Pets are valued members of the family and it can be distressing for owners and animals when they are missing or being held within the pound. To be able to reunite animals with their owners the pet must be registered and microchipped, this is further explored in Section 5 of the DAMP.

Animals that are not reclaimed are offered for rehoming if they meet temperament and health requirements. Animals may be euthanised if they have an untreatable disease or if they have temperament issues that pose a risk to the community.

Moreland City Council provides the following educational and community awareness activities:

- Print and media campaigns promoting responsible pet ownership
- Cat-trapping service (available to all residents)
- Annual free cat desexing, microchipping and immunisation program for eligible cat owners
- Reduced-rate desexing program for eligible cat and dog owners (ongoing program in conjunction with vets).

In addition, Moreland City Council provides an annual free desexing program in conjunction with the Cat Protection Society. Over the past two years 260 cats have been desexed, microchipped and immunised at no cost to the resident. The program was targeted at vulnerable community members and health or concession card holders or offered to properties where cat hoarding was identified as a problem. The program will continue in 2021/22 and has been bolstered by the injection of a State Government grant. This will see an additional estimated 130 cats desexed (to make a total of 270 for the year). The program will provide the added benefit of stimulating the local economy through partnerships with local vets.



4.2 Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures



Local Laws:

- General Local Law 2018 Part 5 - maximum number of animals allowed in a private premises.



Compliance Activities

- Enforcement of registration, microchipping and tag-wearing requirements
- Issuance of infringement notices for cats and dogs found at large
- Investigation of reports of animal hoarding and feeding of community cats.

4.3 Our Plan

Tables 13, 14 and 15 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 4 Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Table 13: Activities under Section 4 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: To decrease the number of stray, abandoned and unwanted cats		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to seek partnership/funding to conduct mobile desexing program	As grant funding is available	No. participants
Provide materials to residents on the impacts of cat overpopulation	Year 1	No. materials produced and distributed
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to develop a strategy to manage cat hoarding	Year 3	Cat hoarding strategy developed
Develop and provide material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners	Year 1	No. complaints

Table 14: Activities under Section 4 Objective 2

OBJECTIVE 2: To minimise the number of animals euthanised.		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Consider extending the roster to cover after hours to reunite owners with their pets, based on data	As required	Hours amended according to demand and need
Encourage partnerships between shelters and rescue groups, through s. 84Y agreements	Ongoing	No. partnerships
Partner with City of Darebin, City of Whittlesea and the EAWF to provide a cat desexing program	Year 1 and ongoing	No. cats desexed
Partner with City of Darebin, City of Whittlesea, rescue groups and animal welfare agencies to provide a neonatal program	Year 1	Program developed No. cats supported

Table 15: Activities under Section 3 Objective 3

OBJECTIVE 1: Promotion of cat containment		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote 'Safe Cat, Safe Wildlife' education material	Year 1	Fewer reports of nuisance cats
Provide educational material to owners promoting the benefits of cat containment to cats, the community and wildlife	Year 1	Fewer reports of nuisance cats
Explore the introduction of a cat curfew giving consideration to budget requirements and links to other relevant strategies e.g. Moreland Nature Plan	Year 1	Findings from internal feasibility research Community support
Run a campaign on social media about keeping cats out of others' properties	Annually	Social media reach

5. Registration and Identification

Registration and the requirement to be microchipped is a legislative requirement which provides Council with an understanding of the level of pet ownership and allows for the development of relevant services and programs. It also assists in the safe and prompt return of lost cats and dogs to their owners.

Key suggestions were provided through the community engagement regarding ensuring the registration process is easy and help is available, increasing education about the benefits of registration and providing cost incentives.

5.1 Context and Current Situation

There are currently 12,191 registered dogs and 6,656 registered cats in Moreland, as shown in Table 16. It is difficult to capture data on the actual ownership population of cats and dogs, as we know that not all cats and dogs are registered. There has been an increase in the number of cats and dogs registered in 2020/21*, 14% in cats and 9.5% in dogs. This could be due to the Covid-19 lockdowns where there was a surge in the demand for pet purchase and adoption.

Concession rates for registration were accessed by 12% of total registrations of dogs and 14% of total registrations of cats.

*'Animal registration year' 10 April 2020 – 9 April 2021

Table 16: Registration and microchipping numbers of cats and dogs

	Dogs	Cats
Registration Numbers	12,191	6,656
New	3,402	2,178
Renewal	8,789	4,478
Concessions	1480	956

Moreland provides the following educational and community awareness activities:

- Providing education on the need to register animals via social media, print material, online, on hold message and officers on patrol
- Providing renewal information and reminders via: postal mail; emails; text messaging; and prominent displays in the community
- Liaising with local veterinary practices to ensure relevant information on responsible pet ownership is available
- Increasing registration education in parks by Animal Management Officers
- Attending council run events and speaking with the community about responsible pet ownership and the need to register
- Providing pro-rata registration for new applications from 10 July each year.
- Following up registrations for cats and dogs purchased from pet shops and shelters, or adopted
- Providing free applications for registered animals moving from another Victorian municipality into Moreland
- Offering online application for new registrations (along with hard-copy application forms available on request and at Customer Service Centres)
- Offering online payment options for renewal registrations
- Ensuring registration application forms are available at all domestic animal businesses
- Comparing microchip registry databases with Council's registration database and writing to dog/cat owners whose pet is microchipped but not registered
- Fawkner Festa and Glenroy Festa stalls to promote responsible pet ownership and registration
- Welcome pack for newly registered animals.
- Free registration for the first year for cats if desexed.



5.2 Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Domestic Animals Act 1994 s10C – requirement of dogs/cats to be microchipped at time of renewal of registration.



Local Laws:

- General Local Law 2018 Part 5 - regulating the number and types of animals a person may keep without a permit.



Policies and Procedures:

- Application for registration and renewal of registration of cats and dogs
- Procedure for seizing and impounding unregistered and/or unidentified cats and dogs
- Process for issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution
- Process for follow-ups on unpaid renewals
- Process for follow-ups of microchipped but not registered pets
- Enforcement guidelines.



Compliance Activities:

- Regular patrols of streets, parks, creeks and reserves including random checks of registration and tag details
- Use of microchip scanners on patrols
- Issuance of a registration renewal notice in advance of the due date each year
- Sending of a reminder text followed by a reminder notice for unpaid registrations after the due date
- Enforcement action if renewal notice is not paid after the reminder.

5.3 Our Plan

Table 17 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 5 Objective 1.

Table 17: Activities under Section 5 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Increase the number of cat and dog registrations		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote registration through annual door knocks and communications e.g. variable message boards, a-frames, decals on vans	Annually	No. door knocks undertaken No. pets registered through door knock
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to provide information on registration and microchipping in multiple languages	Year 3	No. translated resources provided
Partner with vets and key stakeholders to provide information to the community. Consider s. 84Y agreements with Vets to complete registrations	Annually	No. stakeholders engaged
Promote registration discounts for concession card holders for desexed cats and dogs	Annually	No. discounted registrations
Cross-reference microchip databases and Central Animal Records (CAR) information with current Council registration database	Annually	No. cats and dogs registered

6. Nuisance

According to the Domestic Animals Act 1994 a dog or cat is regarded as a nuisance: if it injures or endangers the health of any person; or if it creates a noise (e.g. barking), which persistently occurs or continues to such a degree or extent that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of any person in any other premises.

Community feedback showed several key nuisance themes in the community, particularly relating to barking dogs, cat and dog waste, cat and dog impacts on wildlife, issues with dogs in open space and cats out at night. Council has a role in protecting the community from unnecessary nuisance from cats and dogs through their services and community education.

6.1 Context and Current Situation

Table 18 illustrates the number of complaints received by Council in relation to nuisance caused by cats and dogs. While complaints to Council about barking dogs, domestic animal pickup, dogs at large and cat cage requests have all declined between 2019/20 to 2020/21, dog rushes, dog attacks and animal violations have increased during that time. It could be surmised that the increase in residents working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive impact on cats and dogs while owners are at home during the day; simultaneously, that more residents are walking their dogs in parks and encountering other dogs, leading to an increase in incidents in the last year.

Table 18: Cat and dog complaints to Council from 2018/19 to 2020/21

Nature of Complaint	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Barking dogs	229	266	214
Domestic animal pick up	617	553	500
Dogs at large	163	121	99
Cat cage requests	421	353	266
Dog rush	59	47	68
Dog attacks	128	84	129
Animal violations (includes unregistered dogs/ cats, defecating, off-leash in parks/reserves, and excessive animals)	385	327	414

Moreland's current educational and promotional activities surrounding nuisance include:

- Providing information and advice on methods for resolving nuisance in the community
- Encouraging complainants to speak to the owner of the animal causing the nuisance directly and as early as possible
- Providing signage and decals related to control of dogs in parks
- Patrols of parks, creeks and reserves. Patrols are undertaken on bikes and in vehicles to ensure that officers can access all areas frequented by cats and dogs.

6.2 Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council policies and procedures



Local Laws:

- General Local Law 2018 Part 5- any structure used for housing an animal must be maintained: so as not to cause any nuisance.



Compliance Activities:

- Animal Management Officers investigate nuisance complaints and issue infringements and, when necessary, prosecute.



Officers proactively patrol Council parks, reserves and residential areas.

- Officers actively work with other agencies including the DJPR, Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and Victoria Police on broader nuisance issues.

6.3 Our Plan

Tables 19, 20 and 21 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 6 Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Table 19: Activities under Section 6 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Reduce the number of nuisance complaints that arise in the Municipality.		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Review and adjust frequency of increase patrols as required	Ongoing	No. patrols
Improve and implement better signage about cleaning up after your dog, on/off leash areas and dogs being under effective control	Year 1	No. signs installed
Run a program to promote exercising dogs to reduce barking complaints	Annually	No. barking complaints

Table 20: Activities under Section 6 Objective 2

OBJECTIVE 2: Reduce the number of instances of dog faeces being deposited in public space.		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to develop a responsible pet ownership resource regarding dog waste in the community	Year 3	No. complaints
Review the number of waste bins located in highly frequented dog use areas and implement more as required	Annually	No. waste bins pre and post



7. Dog Attacks

Dog attacks against people and other animals unfortunately do occur in the local area. Community feedback indicated that public spaces are a particular area of concern and that owner behaviours and understanding of responsibilities needs to be addressed.

7.1 Context and Current Situation

Over the past year (2020-2021) Council has responded, or been alerted to 131 dog attack complaints compared to 86 in 2019-2020. Most complaints were reported via the telephone, followed by the after-hours service and e-mail.

Of the 131 dog attack complaints, 26 of these attacks were deemed to be serious with the remainder deemed as non-serious or were in fact a dog rush reported as dog attacks. Non-serious dog attacks are investigated and dealt with by the issuing of infringements and/or placing the animal on an Animal Management Agreement. Serious dog attacks are investigated and dealt with by infringements and/or court prosecution.

A high portion of the injuries sustained as a result of dog attacks were to other animals, followed by injuries to humans and then injuries to both humans and other animals. Most of the attacks occurred on roads or footpaths, followed by off leash parks/ areas, on leash areas and lastly on private property.

The three highest dog group offenders were terriers, working dogs followed by non-sporting dogs. 9 dogs were declared to be dangerous during 2020-2021, due to them attacking an animal or person without provocation.

Current activities undertaken by Council to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals include:

- Providing proactive park and street patrols
- Inspecting properties where dangerous and restricted breed dogs reside
- Responding promptly to complaints about dog attacks
- Investigating dog attack reports and taking an appropriate course of action.



7.2 Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Section 26(2) Domestic Animals Act 1994: Moreland City Council requires dogs to be in effective control in any public place, other than designated off-leash areas, and prohibits dogs from being present in specific areas of the municipality.

Policies and Procedures:



- Collection of stray, abandoned or injured animals
- Capture of dogs at large
- Investigation of dog attacks/rushes
- Regular park patrols
- Recording all dangerous dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and conducting annual audits of their properties
- Prosecution of serious dog attacks
- Information and education programs on effective control of dogs in public places
- Procedures for dealing with dangerous and/or aggressive dogs.

Compliance Activities:



- Issuing official warnings
- Issuing notice to comply
- Issuing infringement notices
- Declaring dogs as menacing or dangerous
- Court prosecution
- Seeking an order for the destruction of a dog/s.

7.3 Our Plan

Tables 22 and 23 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 7 Objectives 1 and 2.

Table 21: Activities under Section 7 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Decrease the number of confirmed dog attacks in the community		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide proactive and visible patrols at dog off-leash parks, creeks and reserves	Ongoing	No. patrols at off-leash parks No. official warnings/PINS issued
Educate children in local schools about the importance of responsible pet ownership	Annually	No. school children educated
Develop a system to capture and analyse the data to gain an understanding of trends relating to dog attacks. Implement strategies to address trends	Year 1 and ongoing	System developed No. strategies implemented.
Educate the community on dog behaviour to help them identify when a dog is stressed or threatened, through educational videos and social media	Year 2	No. educational materials developed
Share case studies for best practice with the City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea	Ongoing	No. resources shared

Table 22: Activities under Section 1 Objective 2

Objective 2: Increase community awareness of how to report dog attacks		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop a community education campaign of what a dog attack is, how to report it and the potential penalty	Year 1	Education campaign developed No. of reports pre and post awareness campaign
Partner with vets to notify Councils when they come across aggressive/risky dogs	Ongoing	No. notifications received

8. Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

The community's understanding of what constitutes a dangerous or restricted dog may not broadly align with the classifications as per the Act, however it was clear from the community engagement program that there was some community concern about dangerous dogs in the community (particularly off-leash dog parks) and poor management by owners.

8.1 Context and Current Situation

Table 24 shows there are currently 14 dogs with restrictions in the City of Moreland. This is an increase from 2017/2018 where there was one registered restricted-breed dog, three registered dangerous-breed dogs and one registered declared-menacing dog.

Council administers and enforces provisions of the Act to identify and control dangerous, menacing and restricted-breed dogs to ensure the safety of the community.

Table 23: Declared dogs in Moreland City Council

Information	Number
Dogs declared dangerous	3
Dogs declared menacing	6
Restricted breed dogs	0
Guard dogs	5
Total	14
Complaints received re: dangerous dogs	0
Prosecutions re: dangerous dogs	1
Audits conducted re: dangerous dogs	Annually

Moreland City Council's current education/promotion activities surrounding declared dogs include:

- Providing fact sheets and Animal Welfare Victoria brochures on dangerous/restricted breed dogs
- Implementing educational activities at local events
- Providing information via the Council website, social media and traditional media.

8.2 Our Current Policies and Procedures

Moreland City Council's registration application and renewal forms require all owners to declare if their dog is a restricted breed, has been declared menacing or is a dangerous dog as required by the Act. Council has procedures associated with the declaration of dogs, accessing and updating the Victorian Declared Dog Registry, Enforcement Guidelines and Animal Management Standard Operating Procedures.



Compliance Activities:

- Annual and unscheduled inspections of properties housing declared dangerous, restricted-breed and menacing dogs
- Patrols by Animal Management Officers of all areas and parks to monitor dog behaviour
- Maintenance of data on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry
- Investigation of reports of restricted breed dogs.

8.3 Our Plan

Tables 25 and 26 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 8 Objectives 1 and 2.

Table 24: Activities under Section 8 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Identify and register all declared dogs in Moreland		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry (VDDR) and the VDDR is kept up to date	Ongoing	No. of dogs recorded
Develop a process to assist decision making regarding refusal of registration/renewal of dangerous and restricted breed dogs	Year 1	Development of policies
Patrol industrial areas for guard dogs	Ongoing	No. patrols

Table 25: Activities under Section 8 Objective 2

OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure all declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct random property inspections of declared dogs to ensure compliance	Ongoing	No. random property checks
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to develop a standard operating procedure for checking property compliance and what to do if non-compliant	Year 1	Procedure developed
Partner with City of Darebin and City of Whittlesea to develop a consistent approach to declarations using the same point scoring matrix	Year 1	Approach developed

9. Domestic Animal Business

All Domestic Animal Businesses must register with their local council. Under current legislation (Domestic Animals Act 1994), local councils have the authority to:

- Refuse registration of a business if they fail to comply with the legislation and relevant code of practice.
- Set special conditions on the registration of any domestic animal business.

9.1 Context and Current Situation

There are 8 registered Domestic Animal Businesses within Moreland, comprising two pet shops, five boarding establishments and one pet day care facility. Table 27 provides additional information about the Domestic Animal Businesses.

Table 26: Domestic Animal Businesses in Moreland

Domestic Animal Business Statistics	No.
Registered Domestic Animal Businesses	8
Identified non-registered Domestic Animal Businesses	0
Prosecutions related to Domestic Animal Businesses	0
Notices to comply related to Domestic Animal Businesses	0

*Complaints relating to noise are captured in nuisance complaints in Table 18

Current educational, promotional and compliance activities surrounding domestic animal businesses include:

- Provide all Domestic Animal Businesses with the relevant Code of Practice;
- Provide Animal Welfare Victoria fact sheets on Domestic Animal Businesses to registered businesses
- Register all Domestic Animal Businesses;
- Conduct annual audits of each Domestic Animal Business
- Follow up any non-compliance as required;
- Regular patrols for new/non-registered Domestic Animal Businesses.

9.2 Our Policies and Procedures

- Standard Operating Procedures for Animal Management processes
- Procedure and audit templates for Domestic Animal Businesses.

9.3 Our Plan

Tables 28 and 29 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 9 Objectives 1 and 2.

Table 27: Activities under Section 9 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify businesses that should be registered Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality and determine their registration status. Partner with Planning department to receive notification when a new animal related business is seeking a permit	Ongoing	No. Domestic Animal Businesses registered (100%)
Investigate any report of unregistered Domestic Animal Businesses	As required	No. reports investigated (100%)

Table 28: Activities under Section 9 Objective 2

OBJECTIVE 2: Annually inspect and audit all registered Domestic Animal Businesses		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct annual audits of all Domestic Animal Businesses within Moreland	Annually	No. audits conducted (100%)
Where required, act promptly to address matters of noncompliance	As required	No. reports investigated (100%)
Investigate and act upon public complaints about Domestic Animal Businesses	As required	No. reports investigated (100%)

10. Other Matters

10.1 Context and Current Situation

The Epping Animal Welfare Facility (EAWF)

EAWF was funded by Whittlesea, Darebin and Moreland Councils and was opened in October 2017. The operation of EAWF is managed by RSPCA, who have significant experience in animal care and welfare.

Impounded cats and dogs are housed at the EAWF and kept for the statutory period at a minimum, during which time the RSPCA is required to make every effort to reunite the animal with its owner. RSPCA is contracted to provide animal management services on behalf of Council at the EAWF.

During the key stakeholder interviews there were concerns raised regarding the current practices of RSPCA at EAWF in terms of euthanasia and re-homing animals. There were suggestions to improve partnerships with community rescue groups to improve outcomes for animals.

Emergency Management

Moreland City Council has its own Municipal Emergency Management Plan for managing natural disasters and emergencies at the local level, this may include: structural fires, flood, storms, extreme heat and pandemic. These events may impact community members as well as domestic animals.

Animal Welfare Boarding Program

Moreland City Council is committed to supporting those experiencing family violence. The decision not to leave a family violence situation may be related to concerns about the ongoing care and welfare of domestic animals. In 2014 the Animal Welfare Boarding Program was developed. The program provides temporary shelter for the pets of Moreland residents leaving situations of family violence. Council provides up to 3 weeks of free housing for domestic pets when the need for urgent relocation is required to remove an individual from a family violence situation. Council partners with welfare agencies such as Safe Steps and Berry Street to raise awareness of the program. In 2020/21 the service was accessed 8 times.



10.2 Our Current Policies and Procedures

The EAWF is operated by the RSPCA therefore their policies and procedures apply with respect to the management of animals impounded to the EAWF.

10.3 Our Plan

Table 30, 31 and 32 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 10 Objective 1, 2 and 3.

Table 29: Activities under Section 10 Objective 1

OBJECTIVE 1: Review the operation of the EAWF to ensure it is achieving best practice		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the rescue, foster and volunteer programs provided	Year 1	No. programs delivered No. animals rehomed or fostered

Table 30: Activities under Section 10 Objective 2

OBJECTIVE 3: Emergency management planning for domestic animals (as part of Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan)		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure animal management staff are involved in Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan	Ongoing	Animal management addressed in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

Table 31: Activities under Section 10 Objective 3

OBJECTIVE 3: Increase community awareness of the Animal Welfare Boarding Program		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote the Animal Welfare Boarding Program to people experiencing family violence and relevant organisations	Ongoing	No. of participants

11. Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

In line with the Domestic Animals Act, Council must review its DAMP annually and amend the plan as needed. The following activities outline how the Council will meet these requirements.

11.1 Our Plan

Table 33 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 11 Objective 1.

Table 32: Activities under Section 11 Objective 1

Objective 1: Comply with Section 68A(3)		
Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan	Year 1 and annually	Copy provided to Secretary
Review the Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan	Annually	Plan reviewed annually
Publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in Council's Annual Report	Annually	Evaluation report published
Council will undertake a major review of the plan after four years	Year 4	Major review undertaken





Moreland Language Link

廣東話 9280 1910
Italiano 9280 1911
Ελληνικ 9280 1912

عربي 9280 1913
Türkçe 9280 1914
Tiếng Việt 9280 1915

हिंदी 9280 1918
普通话 9280 0750
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 9280 0751

All other languages
9280 1919