



DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017 - 2021

Index

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.	MUNICIPALITY DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFILE.....	2
3.	DOMESTIC ANIMAL STATISTICS.....	3
3.1	Current Statistics.....	3
4.	DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE.....	4
4.1	Organisational Structure.....	4
5.	OFFICER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT.....	5
5.1	Current Qualifications:.....	5
5.2	Planned Programs and Development.....	6
6.	IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION.....	10
6.1	OUR PLANS.....	11
7.	NUISANCE - ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP.....	12
7.1	OUR PLANS.....	13
8.	DOG ATTACKS.....	14
8.1	OUR PLANS.....	16
9.	DECLARED, DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS.....	18
9.1	OUR PLANS.....	19
10.	OVER POPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA.....	20
10.1	OUR PLANS.....	21
11.	DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES.....	22
11.1	OUR PLANS.....	23
12.	OTHER MATTERS.....	24
12.1	OUR PLANS.....	25
13.	ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING.....	26
13.1	OUR PLANS.....	26

1. INTRODUCTION

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requires all Victorian Councils to prepare a four yearly Domestic Animal Management (DAM) Plan. The legislation requirements that a DAM Plan outline the programs, services and strategies that Council intends to pursue in relation to domestic animal issues.

Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* states the following with regards to domestic animal management plans

Section 68A Council to prepare a domestic animal management plan

- (1) *Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries), prepare at 4 year intervals a domestic animal management plan.*
- (2) *A domestic animal management plan prepared by the Council must:*
 - a) *set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and*
 - b) *outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in Council's municipal district; and*
 - c) *outline programmes, services and strategies which Council intends to pursue in its municipal district:*
 - (1) *to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and*
 - (2) *to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and*
 - (3) *to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and other animals; and*
 - (4) *to address an over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and*
 - (5) *to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and*
 - (6) *to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and*
 - (7) *to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and*
 - d) *provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relates to Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and*
 - e) *provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Councils municipal district that it thinks necessary; and*
 - f) *provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlines under the plan.*
- (3) *Every Council must—*
 - a) *review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and*
 - b) *provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and*
 - c) *publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.*

An extensive assessment of Council's DAM Plan 2013 /2017 found that it had performed well with the Animal Management Team achieving high levels of success in a number of areas. Due to the successful operation of the plan, it has been brought forward and used as the platform of the new DAM Plan 2017/2021.

The DAM plan has been enhanced to promote the services relevant to animal management by focusing on customer service, public safety, community harmony,

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

education, prevention and enforcement. This plan is designed to continue supporting an environment, which is safe for both animals and public by ensuring appropriately skilled Officers are available to perform the increasingly complex and demanding role of animal management.

The development of guidelines, work processes, educational services and assistance with respect of all domestic animals will continue to expand over the term of this plan.

Identified improvements and benefits attributable to the DAM Plan 2013 /2017 include:

- Creation of an Animal Management Operational Instructions Manual
- Enhanced Work Instructions providing greater resolution and reduced time lines.
- Review and implementation of Councils General Purposes Local Laws 2015
- Early intervention in response to all complaints
- Entering into a new contract with the Lost Dogs Home with an emphasis on reduction of reclaim rates
- Promoting benefits of pet registration which provides quicker reunion of pets to their owners
- Changing cat management service delivery from part time contractor to a full time employee delivering consistency, shorter response and resolution times
- Refresher training of all Authorised Officers
- Reduction in costs to animal management for Council

2. MUNICIPALITY DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFILE

The City of Maribyrnong is an inner-western municipality of approximately 31.2 square kilometres in area making it the smallest and most densely populated municipality in the Western Region. It comprises nine suburbs: Braybrook, Footscray, Kingsville, Maidstone, Maribyrnong, Seddon, Tottenham (industrial precinct), West Footscray and Yarraville.

The City's population has grown approximately 3% each year as a result of the trend towards inner suburban living and is estimated at 82,288 residents making up in excess of 35,000 Households.

Maribyrnong is a largely populated multi cultural environment with 40% of the City's population being born overseas from 135 different countries and speaking more than 80 languages. This has placed a greater emphasis on the plans education of responsible pet ownership.

A high percentage of new residents are now accommodated in multi level apartments and multi residential dwellings. This has created new demands on Council as a result of higher intensity living coupled with increased popularity of owning domestic animals.

3. DOMESTIC ANIMAL STATISTICS

The figures provided in the tables below are comparative to the commencement of the previous Animal Management plan.

3.1 Current Statistics

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN	2013/17	2017/21
Population for Maribyrnong City Council	75,297	82,288
Area in square kilometres	32	32
Approximate number of residential properties	32601	35988

DOGS (figures average per year 2013/17)	2013/17	2017/21
Number of registered dogs	6990	6621
Registered dangerous dogs	1	1
Registered restricted breed dogs	0	0
Registered guard dogs	7	7
Enforcement - Dogs at large not confined	420	170
Enforcement - Not registering Dog	217	102
Enforcement - Dangerous dog not confined	3	0
Enforcement - Non serious injury	13	4
Enforcement – Serious injury	2	2
Enforcement - Dog rush	2	0
Impounded dogs	420	192
Dogs euthanised	62	19

CATS (figures average per year 2013/17)	2013/17	2017/21
Number of registered cats	2437	2993
Number of stray cats impounded	499	445
Number of Cats euthanised	370	267

DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES	2013/17	2017/21
Number of registered businesses	6	8
Permits withdrawn by Council due to Breaches of Domestic Animals Act	0	1

4. DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE

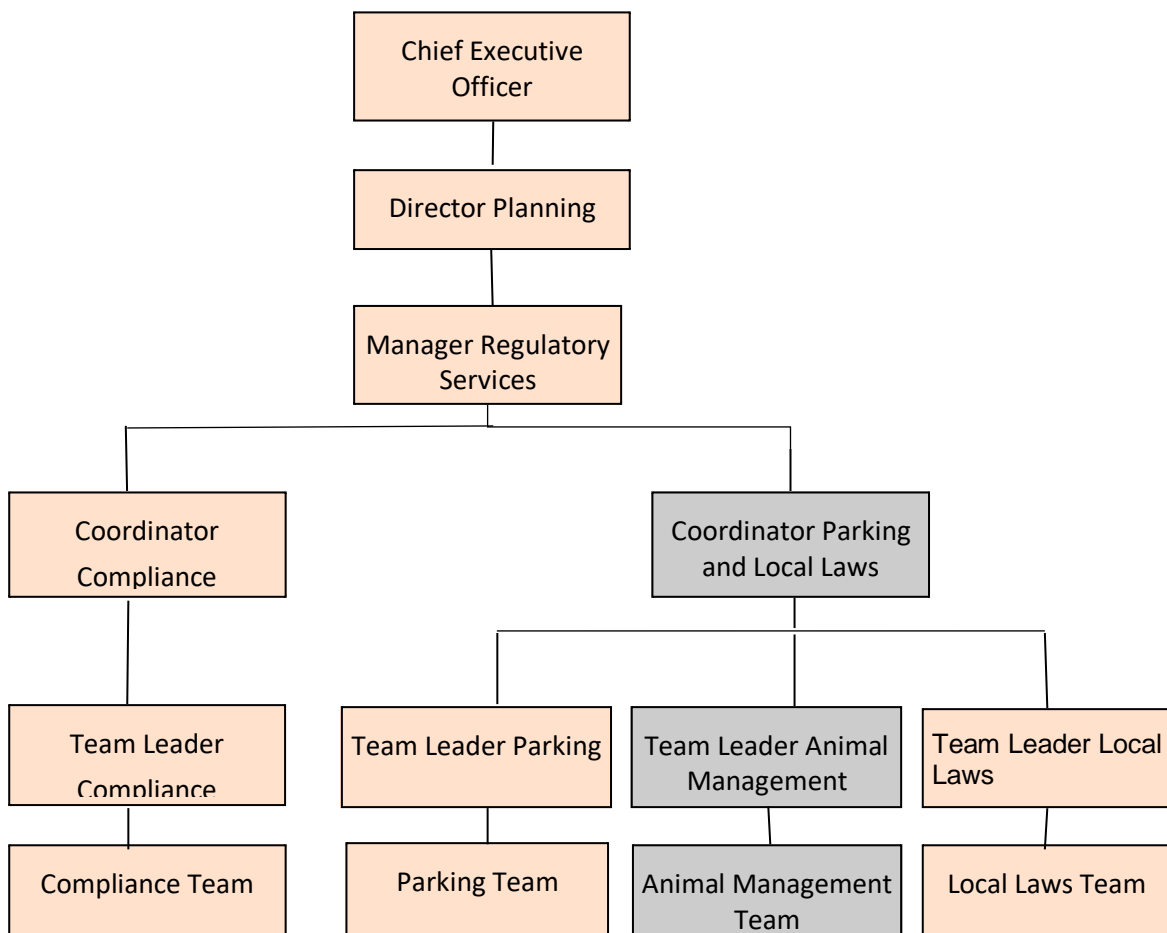
4.1 Organisational Structure

The Animal Management Team forms part of the Regulatory Services Unit under the Director Planning Services. The direct line control falls with the Coordinator Parking and Local Laws which enables transparent and immediate support, advice and transfer of information and resources between all areas of operation including Animal Management, Local Laws, Parking and Compliance.

The Animal Management team consists of 1 x Team Leader, 3 x Animal Management Officers and contracted arrangements for pound operations, after hour's service and specific events and programs throughout the year.

Councils' annual review identified the need to improve service delivery of cat management services and pound operations. Consequently an additional full time cat management Officer was employed to replace an on call contractor. This change increased accountability, transparency, consistency and reduced complaint resolution time frames.

Council is committed to ongoing process improvement and animal management work instructions are constantly reviewed and amended with the aim of striving for excellence and best practice. The animal management team hold regular workshops to identify opportunities to enhance service delivery. When agreed, operational work instructions are updated accordingly.



5. OFFICER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Requirement

68(A)(2)(b) Outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district.

Objective:

To ensure that all Staff involved in animal management have the training, knowledge, skills and qualifications necessary to carry out their work in a safe and legislatively compliant manner.

Maribyrnong City Council also have access to a rich pool of Authorised Officers performing Local Laws and Parking who are qualified in animal control. These Officers are available to perform relief duties and assist the full time Animal Management Officers as required.

Councils' structure of Regulatory Services as outlined in Section 4 facilitates communication and resource sharing between individual units which provides valuable back up in times of emergencies and at other times when necessary.

The annual review of this plan has identified further training requirements in respect of emergency response management, conflict management and refresher training in animal handling.

5.1 Current Qualifications:

Officers	Description
Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV Investigations • Authorised in accordance with Domestic Animals Act • Safe animal handling training • Induction training / Equal Employment Opportunity training • Occupational Health and Safety training • Bullying in the workplace prevention training • Conflict management training • Customer service training • 20 years Vic Police including 12 years prosecutions experience • 21 years Local Government experience in Animal Management
Animal Management Officer 1 (AMO 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 1V in animal control and regulation • Safe animal handling training • Induction training / Equal Employment Opportunity training • Occupational Health and Safety training • Bullying in the workplace and Conflict resolution training • Customer service training • DNA Collection
Animal Management Officer 2 (AMO 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorised in accordance with the Domestic Animals Act • Safe animal handling training • Induction training / Equal Employment Opportunity training • Occupational Health and Safety training • Bullying in the workplace and Conflict resolution training • Customer service training

Animal Management Officer 3 (AMO 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 1V in animal control and regulation • Safe animal handling training • Induction training / Equal Employment Opportunity Training • Occupational Health and Safety Training • Bullying in the workplace and Conflict resolution training • Customer service training • Animal Handling training
-------------------------------------	--

5.2 Planned Programs and Development

The following objectives have been chosen as important aspects of animal management development and continuous improvement for Council and the community needs.

OUR PLANS

Although Council's Animal Management Team are small, they possess a strong motivation and passion to ensure they perform to the highest standard possible. Through continued training and self development opportunities the Officers will maintain the highest standard of performance and motivation

Objective 1: Review current training programs that support minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by Authorised Officers to enhance their skills in performing their role.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Team Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response training • Positive Leader Programme • AIAM Conference • DEDJTR Seminars • Maddocks Legal Seminars • Council e-learning opportunities 	Dec 2017 Nov 2017 Dec 2017 Aug 2017 as offered ongoing	Training undertaken will be challenged during desktop exercises periodically each year through Emergency Management development.
AMO 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response Training • DEDJTR Seminars • Safe animal handling refresher • Statement taking • Evidence gathering • Council e-learning opportunities 	December 2017 August 2018 Jun 2018 December 2017 December 2017 Ongoing	Training undertaken will be challenged during desktop exercises periodically each year through Emergency Management development In field assessments of animal handling will be conducted by Team Leader with feedback provided during performance reviews. Checking of briefs of evidence will be undertaken to assess the development of Officers in statement writing and evidence gathering

<p>AMO 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response Training • Safe animal handling refresher • Statement taking • Brief Compilation • Evidence gathering • Council e-learning opportunities 	<p>December 2017 December 2017 December 2017 November 2017 November 2017 Ongoing</p>	<p>Training undertaken will be challenged during desktop exercises periodically each year through Emergency Management development</p> <p>In field assessments of animal handling will be conducted by Team Leader with feedback provided during performance review.</p> <p>Checking of briefs of evidence will be undertaken to assess the development of Officers in statement writing and evidence gathering</p>
<p>AMO 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response Training • Safe animal handling refresher • Evidence gathering • Statement taking • Brief compilation • Court procedure • Council e-learning opportunities 	<p>Dec 2017 Dec 2017 Nov 2017 Nov 2017 Nov 2017 Dec 2017 Ongoing</p>	<p>Training undertaken will be challenged during desktop exercises periodically each year through Emergency Management development</p> <p>In field assessments of animal handling will be conducted by Tel Leader with feedback provided during review process.</p> <p>Checking of briefs of evidence will be undertaken to assess the development of Officers in statement writing and evidence gathering</p>
<p>ANIMAL MANAGEMENT TEAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct internal review of work instructions and policies relevant to Animal Management and daily activities. 	<p>July 2018</p>	<p>Development and submission of updated policies for checking and approval by management</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify additional training opportunities to ensure highest standard of performance is maintained by each officer. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Monthly discussion on training opportunities with immediate implementation of training programs or future planning specific to budget requirements.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresher conflict management training to ensure minimisation of conflict and reduction of risk to Officers. 	<p>October 2018</p>	<p>Review of work performance and feedback from staff along with review through monthly OH&S meetings.</p>

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

Objective 2: Maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Enhance current Animal Management Training Register. Listing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current qualifications • refresher training undertaken • proposed future training • higher duties undertaken • performance reviews conducted. 	December 2017	Register is in place and updated as required. Discussed at monthly meetings to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • input of training completed • recognition of qualifications achieved • workshops attended • higher duties performed • quarterly review of training register to ensure annual target is achieved.

Objective 3: Ensure all Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify and prioritise immediate training requirements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction training • OH&S training • Workplace bullying • Customer Service • Conflict Management. 	Within 3 months of appointment	Ensure completion of induction training and minimum subjects within 3 months of appointment. Register to be assessed monthly to ensure training is completed including refresher training.
Identify minimum training requirements role specific tasks such as : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe animal handling • Cert IV in Animal Control and Regulation. 	Within 12 months of appointment	Ensure all job specific training requirements are successfully completed. Monthly review of register to ensure training is completed including refresher training.

Objective 4: Offer at least 2 opportunities for additional training each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Provide opportunity for performance of higher duties in area of Team Leader and Coordinator roles</p> <p>Provide support and opportunity to perform higher duties</p>	July 2018	<p>Ensure all Officers undertake preparation training for higher duties throughout the year.</p> <p>Ensure that opportunities for higher duties are offered to staff to assist in development and learning.</p> <p>Record all training and higher duties conducted is recorded in register.</p>
<p>Provide additional training in area of report writing and brief preparation in order to create higher standard of prosecution outcomes.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Annually – review how many officers undertook training that was in addition to their minimum requirements.</p> <p>Meet objective of providing (number) additional training opportunities annually.</p>
<p>Offering of additional training opportunities each year to ensure a continuous improvement and motivation of staff enhanced skills.</p>	Annually	<p>Ensure at least 2 training opportunities are offered each year and recorded in the training register.</p>

Objective 5: Undertake a review of all policies, procedures and work instructions including working within the confines of General Purpose Local Laws.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Identify opportunities for introduction of policies and procedures which will enhance laws relating to animals within the General Purpose Local Laws.</p>	July 2018	<p>Ongoing review of General Purpose Local Law and recommend amendments as appropriate in relation to specific issues relating to animal management.</p> <p>Engage with members of the public and other key stakeholders, to gauge community concerns and attend workshops, meetings, discussions and reviews conducted during review period to ensure opportunities are realised.</p>
<p>Conduct internal review of work instructions and policies relevant to Animal Management and daily activities.</p>	ongoing	<p>Review of operational work procedures and updating to ensure ongoing process improvement to service delivery.</p>

6. IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

Requirement:

68A(2)(c)(v) Outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats - also addressing 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

Objective:

To identify and register all domestic animals. This has also been identified during our consultation process as an area of residential concern.

Current situation

Council has introduced a new IT platform (Authority) which has enhanced the capability of animal management including accurate data recording of animal registrations, maintenance and enhanced reporting tools.

The new platform has enabled greater flexibility and accuracy in record keeping, updates and changes whilst providing an improved Customer Service experience for pet owners.

Data/Statistics:

Referred to in Section 3.1.

General Purpose Local Laws

Council's General Purposes Local Law 2015 deals specifically with the keeping of animals and clearly outlines the number of animal types permitted on a property before the need for a planning permit.

Council Policies and procedures

- Registration fees determined by Council annually
- Delivery of pet registration renewal notifications prior to 10 April each year
- Compulsory registration of impounded animals prior to retrieval by owner
- Door knock and enforcement protocols with respect to enforcement of owners of animals found unregistered.

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Promotion of responsible pet ownership through bi-annual Pet Expo
- Annual Micro chipping days
- Periodical campaigns through various media outlets
- Mobile street patrols and foot patrols of parks to promote visible presence of Officers.

Our current Compliance Activities

- Delivery of pet registration renewal notices, text messages and door knocks prior to enforcement action against owners of unregistered animals
- Active patrols of parks and inspections of animal's registration tags during period of April each year with enforcement action taken where appropriate
- Enforcement action on all owners retrieving impounded unregistered animals
- Follow up all pet adoption notifications and fail to renew registrations
- Maintain cat nuisance and stray enforcement is specialised with implementation of designated Cat Management Officer

6.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

Whilst registration of pets remain steady, a strong emphasis will be placed on media campaigns to increase pet registrations. Animal Management Officers will be actively engaged in promoting registration of all pets, including door knocks, maintaining of a visible presence, education and enforcement to encourage registration and ensure renewals of registrations.

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

Activity	When	Evaluation
Improve accuracy of Council pet registration database by contacting microchip registries to obtain details of dogs and cats in the municipality that are micro chipped.	Ongoing	Demonstrate Council's pet registration database can be accurately cross referenced with microchip registries.
Check all animals are also listed on Council's pet registration database, and follow up those that are not registered	Ongoing	Demonstrate increase in numbers of pets registered with Council following microchip registry cross referencing exercise.
Encourage provision of email addresses for pet owners to enable future email notifications of applicable anniversary dates	Ongoing	Higher response to registration renewals prior to expiry date

Objective 2: Increase dog and cat registration numbers by 10 % each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release.	Prior to every release	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Review number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded who are not registered to their owner.
Conduct annual door knocking of 100% of the previously registered animals not renewed each year.	ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcement of owners found with unregistered animals Review annual increase in registration numbers Review number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded who are not registered to their owner Records of number of unregistered and un-identified animals picked up during door knocks.
Identifying those animal registrations not renewed due to no longer being in municipality therefore removing from registry.	ongoing	

Objective 3: Undertake review of Pet Registry to ensure accurate records are maintained.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct door knock of addresses applicable to all unregistered animals to confirm that the animal has either left the municipality or is deceased.	November 2018	Review registry and ascertain reduction in unregistered animal records. Reduction in follow up activities specific to doors knocks.

7. NUISANCE - ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

Requirement:

68A(2)(c)(vi) Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance - also addressing 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

Objective:

To encourage responsible pet ownership in order to protect the health and welfare of animals, maximise the companionship benefit of pets and to minimise potential for nuisance or harm to others.

Current situation

In November 2015 Council endorsed the new General Purposes Local Law 2015. A 12 month assessment and review of the Laws resulted in an updated and enhanced set of Laws which compliment today's community expectations.

In addition, the creation and introduction of Councils Animal Management Operational Instructions Manual has improved a number of processes and streamlines work practices when dealing with complaints or investigations.

Examples of process changes which have had a positive effect on residents is the early intervention process to ensure complaints are actioned within 24 hours to minimise the conflict which can occur between neighbours.

Processes specific to barking dogs has been introduced and resulted in excellent outcomes and a reduction of time lines. 90% of barking dog complaints are now resolved within seven days with 99% of complaints being resolved within 10 days.

Data/Statistics:

Referred to in Section 3.1.

General Purpose Local Laws

Council's *General Purposes Local Law 2015* supports the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* in the controlling of animals. Specifically:

- *Clause 44 Keeping of Animals*
- *Clause 46 Animal Shelters*
- *Clause 47 Animal Excrement*
- *Clause 48 Animal Noise.*

Council Policies and procedures

- Animal Management Operational Instructions are in place to ensure a consistent approach to animal management issues.
- Procedures in dealing with animal noise have been further enhanced resulting in a reduction of timelines to resolution
- Cat trapping is now undertaken by Council employed staff with new processes designed to return cats to their owners rather than impounding of cats causing trauma on the pets and unnecessary stress for the owners

Our current Education/Promotion Activities

- Educating and enforcement of owners responsible for removal of excrement produced by pets. This will be subject of media campaigns in order to reduce this unacceptable behaviour
- The replenishment of litterbags by Officers during patrols has impacted on the reduction of excrement within parks and will continue as part of an education program.
- New vehicles, enhanced patrols of parks and high pedestrian traffic have been implemented in order to create a greater visible presence of Officers in all public places
- Conducting annual micro chipping days involving educational discussion by Vets, Lost Dogs Home staff and animal management staff.

Our current Compliance Activities

- Visible presence of staff conducting mobile patrols within suburban streets and foot patrols throughout all parklands
- Where appropriate, educational discussions pertaining to collection of litter and off leash issues
- Enforcement of litter and other offences pertaining to legislative breaches
- Investigation of complaints through Service Requests pertaining to nuisance issues such as barking dogs and welfare issues
- Cat management specialised enforcement programme
- Inspections of domestic animal businesses and enforcement of any breaches detected

7.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

Nuisance animals can have a serious negative effect on the amenity and peaceful enjoyment of property for residents. Noise issues in particular can cause sleep deprivation, stress, domestic issues and disputes between neighbours.

Objective 1: Provide best practice enforcement to ensure residents maintain community harmony and peaceful enjoyment of their properties

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure that highest standard of information is supplied to Officers investigating nuisance issues.	Ongoing through monitoring of intra unit service level agreements	Review annual Service level agreement between Customer Service staff and Regulatory services.

<p>Continued personal contact with complainant within 24 hours of reporting of issue to instil confidence in response timeliness and action.</p> <p>Maintaining communication with complainant throughout investigation including resolution of complaint.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spot check contact with complainants seeking feedback on staff interaction • Monitoring of response by AMOs to Service Requests by Team Leader • Daily discussion with AMOs to ensure consistence application of work instructions • Ensuring feedback during and at completion of investigation is undertaken and recorded.
--	----------------	---

Objective 2: Promote responsible cat ownership and curfews.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners</p>	<p>Ongoing, during visits to residences and at Council community events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of booklets distributed • Reduction in impounded cats • Reduction in complaints in relation to stray cats
<p>Undertake an extensive marketing and media campaign based on responsible pet ownership and security of cats within their yards.</p>	<p>Oct 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in complaints • Reduction in impounded cats • Increase in cat registrations
<p>Develop a Strategy and Policy dealing control the containment of cats within owners property</p>	<p>Nov 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community consultation • Conduct a review of legislation • Develop a policy in relation to the requirement for cats to be contained on owner premises •

8. DOG ATTACKS

Requirement:

68A(2)(c)(iii) Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

Objective:

To ensure Council Officers are taking appropriate and immediate action to reduce the risk of injury to members of the public and other animals, including investigation, identification of owners, seizing of dogs and prosecution of offenders.

Current situation

Dog attacks remain the most critical process for Officers. All attacks are treated as urgent to ensure the response to complainants are acted upon immediately.

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

Experience has shown that outcomes have a greater success of resolution if acted upon immediately with a higher standard of evidence and more accurate statements obtained which assist in the investigation and prosecution.

Ongoing training of Officers in the area of investigations is to occur over the next 12 months including an enhanced interaction and partnership with R.S.P.C.A. to allow for investigatory techniques of staff to be exchanged and developed.

Data/Statistics:

Referred to in Section 3.1

General Purpose Local Laws

Council's General Purpose Local Law supports the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* in the controlling of animals which can impact on dog attacks. Specifically:

- *Clause 44 Keeping of Animals*
- *Clause 46 Animal Shelters*
- *Clause 48 Animal Noise.*

Council Policies and procedures

- Animal Management Operational Instructions Manual
- Initiation of investigation into dog attacks
- Appropriate seizure of dogs involved in attack
- Agreement with Victoria Police to take over and deal with all serious dog attacks to ensure the highest standard of investigation and appropriate prosecution occurs
- Assist Victoria Police in investigations when required
- Communication with Complainants
- Restricted Breed Dogs Investigations
- Dog Attack
- Dangerous or menacing dogs
- Barking dogs
- Wandering/stray dogs
- Contained stray dogs
- Stray cats
- Nuisance Cats
- Domestic animal patrols
- Surrendered dogs
- Pound Operations
- Issue of infringements
- Domestic animal businesses
- Pet registration checks

Our current Education/Promotional Activities

- Promoting responsible removal of excrement produced by pets
- Encouragement of removal by placement of litterbags and dispensers throughout all parkland
- Maintaining a visible presence of Officers in and around parklands
- Conducting annual micro chipping days involving educational discussion by Vets, Lost Dogs Home staff and animal management staff
- Conduct Bi annual pet expo

Our current Compliance Activities

- Visible presence of staff by mobile patrols within suburban streets and foot patrols throughout all parklands
- Enforcement of all dog attacks when responsible person can be identified
- Enforcement of dogs at large and off leash

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

- Investigation of complaints pertaining to nuisance, including barking dogs, dogs at large or off lead

8.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

Dog attacks nationally over recent years have been highlighted creating a genuine fear by residents of the potential outcome of serious or fatal injuries. Further education and promotion of responsible pet ownership is a critical tool in reducing the risk of dog attacks.

Animal Management staff understand the seriousness of dog attacks and the devastating impact placed on victims. Proactive patrols and regular discussions with community members goes toward the minimisation of dog attacks. In addition, the response to these complaints and early investigations concerning any reports of aggressive dogs can have a positive outcome.

Objective 1: Promote and support the reporting of dog attacks in the community.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote responsible pet ownership and consequences of dog attacks. Promotion through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper promotions • Council website information • Community Letter drops\ • Electronic media such a facebook • Educational visits to schools 	November 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and evaluate all reported dog attacks • Promote reported dog attacks through media outlets to increase community awareness • Provide ongoing support to victims of dog attacks to ensure full support of prosecution where appropriate • Evaluate number of reported attacks pre and post promotional program.
Inform the community of outcomes of dog attacks prosecuted in Court.	November 2018	Feedback from media reports.

Objective 2: Prevent the opportunity of dog attacks resulting in a reduction of reportable incidents.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and promote key dog attack prevention messages such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of off leash areas • Responsible animal handling and control techniques • Promotion of dog obedience training • Community awareness of dealing with aggressive dogs 	November 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate number of reported attacks pre and post promotional program • Community feedback surveys conducted through mail outs and Pet expo's dog attack prevention programme • Record type and number of education materials distributed.

Objective 3: Enhance investigation process to ensure prosecutions are conducted in a timely manner to minimise impact on victim and witnesses.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all reports are acted on immediately or within 24 hours	ongoing	Review of Councils customer complaints data
Set key performance indicators for Officers to complete dog attack investigations within a 6 week timeframe.	ongoing	Review investigations monthly to evaluate percentage completed within timeframe.
Further training of Animal Management Officers in area of investigation techniques and victim support skills .	ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the quality of reports and briefs of evidence post training Discuss incident and obtain feedback from victims and witnesses regarding the interaction and support provided by investigating officer.

Objective 4: Enhanced patrols of parklands and designated reserves as listed in Council Orders specific to off leash areas

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide increased foot patrols of parklands to ensure compliance with off leash time restrictions.	Ongoing	<p>Review of staff activities and log books confirming attendance and patrol of parklands.</p> <p>Review enforcement activity specific to dog at large offences .</p>
Review current Orders specific to listed parklands pertaining to off leash areas as to suitability and applicable time restrictions currently in place.	Ongoing	Consult with residents and dog owners including relevant Council Departments impacted on by current Orders.

9. DECLARED, DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

Requirement:

68A(2)(c)(vii) Outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

Objective:

Ensuring that all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are identified and lawfully kept by owners to minimise the risks of dog attacks in the community.

Current situation

All officers regularly discuss issues around the identification and processing of restricted breed dogs. City of Maribyrnong has no restricted dogs registered.

A collaborative approach to neighbouring Councils has been utilised to support investigators in identifying restricted breed dogs in the past and will be a focus over the next 12 months with changes to legislation expected.

Data/Statistics:

Referred to in Section 3.1

Council Policies and procedures

- Revised General Purposes Local Law 2015
- Process for ensuring database correctly identifies all known dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs
- Policy for identifying and declaring
 - Dangerous dogs
 - Restricted breed dogs
- Process associated with the identifying and recording of dangerous dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry
- Assist Victoria Police in investigations where appropriate dangerous or restricted breed dog is involved.

Current/Ongoing Activities:

- Continuous support by providing advice and information about dangerous and declared dogs with respect control in public places as well as home security
- Dealing with complaints with respect to reports of dangerous or purported declared dogs in the community.

Our current compliance activities:

- Systematically visit non residential properties within the Municipality including outside “normal business hours” to identify possible “dangerous dogs”
- Ensure all declared dogs premises are audited on an annual basis for compliance regarding security and housing
- Ensure all reports of a dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dog are treated as a high priority with prosecution undertaken where appropriate
- Seizure of identified restricted breed dogs as appropriate
- Declaration of restricted breed dogs when detected.

9.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

As a consequence of the recent trend by some to own dogs which have the potential to be a danger to the community Councils' animal management Officers make regulation of these dogs the highest priority.

Animal Management Officers conduct daily patrols in public places to detect and investigate any stray, dangerous or restricted breed dogs. In addition any report concerning suspected dangerous or restricted breed dog is responded to as a matter of urgency.

Officers maintain a highly visible presence in streets and parks throughout the municipality and any report of a stray or dangerous dog is responded to urgently. This not only protects the animal from traffic but the community from any aggressive or frightened dog.

Animal Management Officers have a close working relationship with outdoor staff including park Rangers and maintenance crews. These staff members regularly notify location and description of any animal management issues. By developing and encouraging inter departmental communication and cooperation the reporting of and responding to potentially dangerous dogs is greatly enhanced. During the course of the previous domestic animal management plans significant reductions in stray dog numbers has been achieved. It is now unusual to sight a stray dog or a dog off lead in any public place throughout this municipality.

Objective 1: Identify and register all declared dogs found within the Municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all Animal Management Officers have completed training in correct identification of restricted breed dogs.	ongoing	Ongoing testing of Officers at Lost Dogs Home by testing on a range of similar and confirmed restricted breed dogs.
Identify registered animals with Council which are potentially restricted breed dogs	ongoing	Attend addresses and reassess grown dogs for potential restricted breed dogs.

Objective 2: Ensure correct housing and exercising of restricted/Dangerous breed dogs by owners.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Any restricted breed dogs registered with Council must be housed correctly to ensure security and confinement	ongoing	Attend registered address and assess the premises to ensure compliance of security and confinement of restricted breed dogs.
Ensure that all restricted breed dogs comply with legislative requirements outside the home.	ongoing	Discuss with dog owners and advise and enforce requirements when these dogs are outside their premises.
Attending registered properties to ensure compliance with housing requirements.	Ongoing unannounced	Attend properties and inspect security levels and discuss concerns with owners if deficiencies are found.

10. OVER POPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

Requirement:

68A(2)(c)(iv) Outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

Objective:

To develop strategies and educational opportunities to address the overpopulation of dogs and cats in order to minimise the euthanasia rates.

Current situation

Euthanasia is a community concern with a great deal of work being done to reduce the current rate. Feral cats remain a very difficult issue to resolve and result in a higher than acceptable euthanasia rate.

In comparing euthanased animals with statistics from the 2013/17 Domestic Animal Management Plan, there has been a 45% reduction of impounded cats euthanased and significant reduction of 79% of impounded dogs euthanased.

A smaller reduction for cats is due to the continued problem of feral cats and the continual issue of breeding and containment issues around cats. Unfortunately the majority of impounded cats are feral, sick or not suitable for rehoming which contributes to the high euthanasia rate.

A significant issue has arisen recently in relation to the priority by some Councils to reduce their euthanasia rates by rehoming of problem dogs only to find these dogs go on to continue to be a nuisance or aggressive in the area they were relocated.

Maribyrnong Council does **not** rehome unsuitable animals which would likely go on to cause nuisance or danger to other residents either within or outside our municipality. This policy prevents dog attacks and nuisance to owners both within and without our borders.

Council in partnership with the Lost Dogs Home recently initiated a new website for impounded animals at our contracted pound being the Lost Dogs Home. This new website has become active on 15 August 2017 and residents can now check our pounds website for any lost pet. It is envisaged this facility will further reduce time of return and euthanasia rates of impounded animals in future.

For access to this site reference is <https://dogshome.com/lost-dogs/>

Data/Statistics:

Refer to in Section 3.1

General Purpose Local Laws

Council's General Purposes Local Law 2015 supports the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* in the controlling of animals which can impact on stray animals and reducing the possibility of impounding and euthanasia. Specifically:

- Clause 44 Keeping of Animals
- Clause 46 Animal Shelters.

Council Policies and procedures

Procedures for

- Communication with complainants
- Restricted breed dogs
- Dog attacks
- Dangerous or menacing dogs
- Barking dogs
- Wandering stray dogs
- Confined stray dogs
- Stray cats
- Nuisance cats
- Domestic animal patrols
- Surrendered dogs
- Issue of infringements
- Domestic animal businesses and
- Cat trapping

Current/Ongoing Activities:

- Dedicated full time Officer now performing duties specific to cats
- Promote and enforce cat curfews
- Promote and encourage de-sexing of all pets
- Promotion and education of responsible pet ownership through media and annual microchipping days and bi annual Pet Expo.

Our current compliance activities:

- Systematically visit non residential properties within the Municipality outside “normal business hours” to identify possible “dangerous dogs”
- Ensure all declared dogs premises are audited on an annual basis for compliance regarding security and housing
- Ensure all reports of a dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dog are treated as a high priority with prosecution undertaken where appropriate
- Seizure of identified restricted breed dogs
- Declaration of restricted breed dogs where identified
- Encouragement of re-homing of suitable animals only program by Lost Dogs Home to minimise the need for euthanasia.

10.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

In order to reduce the over population and potential euthanasia of unwanted pets, desexing and rehoming of suitable pets most effective.

Objective 1: Promote desexing of animals.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Actively encourage desexing of pets to reduce the over population of unwanted animals. Promotions through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web sites • Media outlets and mail drops with registration renewals 	ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through notification of desexing of pets by owners • Reduction in impounded , animals which require re-homing or euthanising • Higher number of animals retrieved or re homed prior to euthanizing.

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discount vouchers at pet expo and micro chipping events. 		
--	--	--

Objective 2: Promote Registration and micro chipping of animals to ensure impounded animals are retrieved.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Actively encourage registration and re-registration of pets to ensure return of impounded pets to rightful owners as expeditiously as possible. Promotions through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web sites Media outlets and mail drops with registration renewals Discount vouchers at pet expo and micro chipping events. Annual door knocks 	2017 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase of registered pets annually Increase of re-registration of pets annually Reduction in impounded, unregistered pets. Reduction in number of euthanised pets

11. DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

Requirement:

68A(2)(c)(ii) Outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f).

Objective:

To ensure that all domestic animal businesses comply with planning requirements through unplanned inspections to ensure compliance and welfare of animals under their control.

Current situation

Data/Statistics:

Maribyrnong City Council currently has 8 Domestic Animal Management Businesses operating within its municipality.

General Purpose Local Laws

Council's General Purpose Local Law 2015 deals with the keeping of animals and the requirement to have appropriate permits:

- Clause 44 Keeping of Animals
- Clause 46 Animal Shelters
- Clause 48 Animal Noise.

Council Policies and procedures

- Requirement to have all businesses registered
- Policy regarding actions taken when non compliance occurs
- Policy on conducting of periodical inspections
- Animal Management operation work instructions

Current/Ongoing Activities:

- Promote support and attendance at Pet Expo and annual micro chipping days
- Respond to Customer Service Requests relating to complaints
- Perform proactive animal management patrols
- Undertake inspections with respect to renewal process of permits.

Our current Compliance activities:

- Conduct regular planned and irregular inspections regarding compliance and welfare of animals
- Conduct after hours inspections to ensure compliance with planning permits
- Regularly communicate with Vets and other stakeholders to ensure community feedback is received and provided
- Undertake investigations and prosecute, withdraw permits and prosecution of noncompliant businesses.

11.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

Council will work in partnership with all domestic animal businesses to ensure the services provided to community members comply with legislative requirements and that the welfare of the animals under their control is maintained at the highest possible standard.

Objective 1: Promote compliant domestic animal businesses in the Municipality. The review of previous plans revealed animal management prioritising education and monitoring of businesses achieves a high standard of legislative compliance. During the 2012 to 2016 plan one domestic animal business had its permit suspended prior to closing down. During the 2012 to 2016 plan another domestic animal business was prosecuted and convicted of breaches to the legislation and this business also closed down operations.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct unplanned visits and inspections to registered domestic animal businesses.	ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a minimum of 2 inspections each year of all registered businesses • Present feedback to operators of Inspection outcomes.
Educate and advise proprietors on any adverse findings from these inspections.	ongoing	<p>Evaluate the findings from inspections and provide feedback to proprietors to ensure improvements.</p> <p>Undertake further inspections to confirm corrective action has been taken to eliminate previous adverse findings.</p>
Investigate continued breaches of legislation through non compliant operation of business.	ongoing	<p>Educate proprietors in order to negate adverse findings.</p> <p>Where appropriate, prosecute proprietor for breaches and withdrawal of permit.</p>

12. OTHER MATTERS

Requirement:

68A(2)(e) Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of animals in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary.

Objective:

To provide a service to the community involving all animal types' which require management, including support to animal owners where appropriate.

Current situation

Whilst this plan is not aimed at animals such as poultry, there is a growing community involvement in the housing and keeping of poultry which requires the support and assistance from Council.

Poultry are being recognised in this plan to highlight a growing trend including Councils support to the community in the management of poultry. This may take Officers away from normal activities associated with dogs and cats, but is recognised as an important community service.

Council has a responsibility to support the community and provide assistance in the area of response and recovery resulting from critical incidents where community members are displaced from their usual place of residence. This can include the need for care of pets which cannot be taken to temporary accommodation by their owners.

Whilst response to emergency situations are controlled by Councils Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO), Animal Management Officers will undertake training to understand the processes and needs when responding to such incidents.

Further discussions are underway with Councils Pound Services to set up an MOU for housing displaced pets as a result of Critical Incidents to ensure the pets are cared for and that access to the pets by their owners is afforded wherever possible.

General Purpose Local Laws

Council's General Purpose Local Laws deals with the keeping of animals and the requirement to have planning permits:

- Clause 44 Keeping of animals
- Clause 46 Animal shelters
- Clause 47 Animal excrement
- Clause 48 Animal noise.

Council Policies and procedures

- Inspection of properties as to suitability for housing of poultry
- Policy in providing exemptions where appropriate to Clause 44.3.
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Current/Ongoing Activities:

- Promote support the keeping of poultry
- Provide assistance, education and guidance in proper management of poultry
- Reviewing policies and procedures with respect to keeping of poultry through consultation and involvement of community members.

Our current compliance activities:

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

- Investigate complaints specific to breaches of Local Laws
- Provide advice to community members who are in breach of Local Laws in order to become compliant with requirements
- Conduct inspections of properties where requests for exemptions are made
- Enforce local law as appropriate

12.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

The keeping of poultry is becoming very popular within the community and has created a greater involvement of Animal Management Officers. Council strongly supports the keeping of poultry and as such involves Officers in the process of educations, advice and assistance in the correct management of poultry by residents

Response to Critical Incidents can have distressing and emotional impact on affected residents. Training of Officers to ensure the highest possible customer service and empathy to the affected resident is critical.

Objective 1: Develop guidelines specific to the safe keeping and correct management of poultry.

Activity	When	Evaluation
In consultation with Community, develop guidelines which clearly assist community members and Council in suitable poultry management.	ongoing	Outcomes and feedback from community consultation process. Evaluate the complaints received pertaining to poultry after adoption of guidelines.

Objective 2: Ensure staff are trained to the applicable level to assist residents during Critical Incidents.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide training of all staff to be able to deal with Critical Incidents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Emergency Management • Psychological First Aid and support in emergencies • Working in an Emergency Relief Centre 	Ongoing up to July 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of training • Assessment through desktop exercises • Scenario based training exercises to assess response to critical incidents. • Toolbox talks

13. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

Requirement:

68A(3) Every Council must:

- a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan
- b) provide the Department of Primary Industries' Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan
- c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

Objective:

To undertake an annual review of Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan, modify the plan to suit current trends or enhancements and provide appropriate reporting for Council's annual report.

13.1 OUR PLANS

Summary

The Domestic Animal Management Plan has been developed as a working reference document for Council and its Authorised Officers dealing with animal management. The success of the DAM Plan 2013/17 has resulted in it being the platform of this DAM Plan 2017/21. The continued review of the document and any modifications to objectives will be critical to its success and purpose.

During the period of the current DAM Plan 2013/17 Maribyrnong City Council has introduced significant improvements in service delivery and in so doing has achieved significant reductions in euthanased animals, greatly improved timeliness in response and resolution of complaints, reduced dog attack incidents and most importantly a happier and safer community.

By emphasising service, responsibility, education and strict enforcement when required, Council has reduced costs associated with its operation.

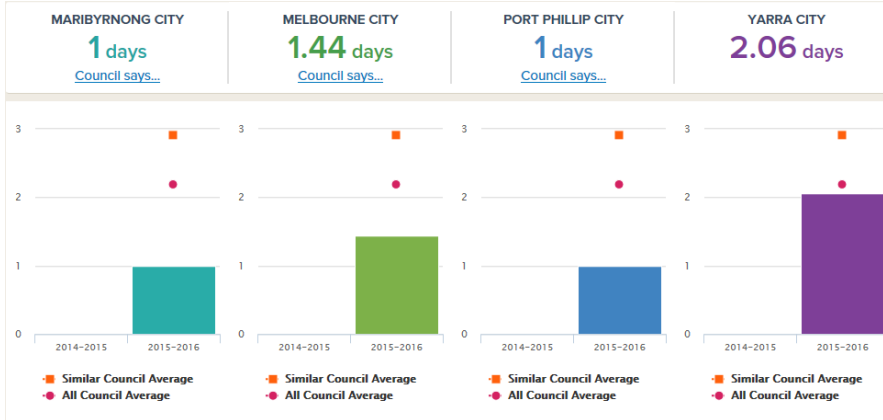
Council is required to provide statistics on performance of Animal Management reporting on results in the "*Local Government Performance Reporting Framework*" (LGPRF).

(LGPRF) reports on performance of:

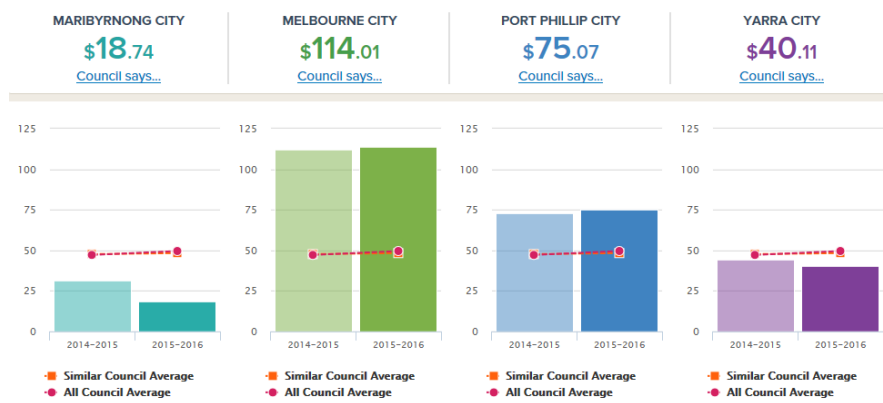
- Time Taken to action animal management requests
- Cost of Animal Management services per registered animal
- Number of animal management prosecutions
- Animal reclaimed from Council

Outcomes from 2014/15 and 2015/6 are produced below and will form part of the annual assessment and reporting of this plan. Comparison with three other partners within the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Councils are shown.

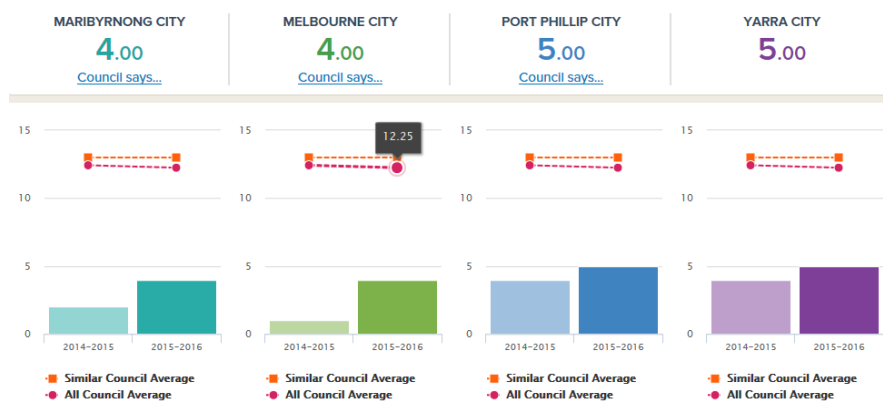
Time taken to action animal management requests



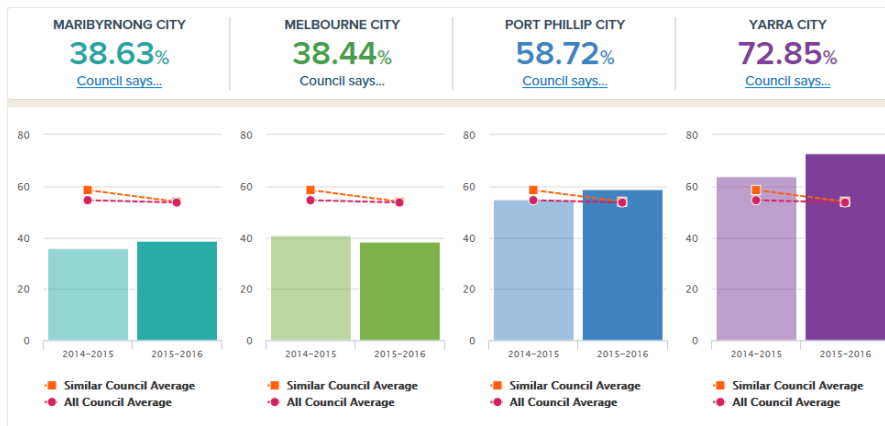
Cost of animal management services per registered animal



Number of animal management prosecutions



Animal reclaimed from Council



The previous plan introduced specific animal management strategies with an emphasis on timeliness, openness and accountability has delivered a safer community, community harmony and higher levels of employee satisfaction.

As a consequence Maribyrnong City Council has sought to build on the proven policies and processes outlined previously which have been incorporated into this 2017/2021 Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Objective 1: Evaluate the plan annually.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Work toward achieving all objectives in place by the due date	November of each year of the Plan	Review of objectives and acknowledgement of achieving outcomes.
Modify objectives where necessary to meet requirements	November of each year of the Plan	Outcomes as a result of modifications to objectives.
Review of Plan prior to anniversary and report amendments to Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries	November of each year of the Plan	Response to submitted amendments.