



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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CAULFIELD
ELSTERNWICK
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ORMOND
ST KILDA EAST

GLEN EIRA DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017-2021



ATTACHMENT I:

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-21

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The aim of this *Domestic Animal Management (DAM) Plan* is to facilitate the co-existence of pets, pet and non-pet owners in addition to providing Glen Eira with a strategic framework that delivers policy culminating in an Action Plan for quality animal management over the next four years, including satisfying statutory legislation. The legislation does not deal with every aspect of animal management and neither does this *Plan*.

Benefits of companions

There is a wealth of research that points to the benefits of pet ownership. A four legged friend can provide hours of fun, relaxation, happiness and unconditional love.

Pets also improve psychosocial wellbeing. Studies show family pets actually help in facilitating child development, reducing loneliness and depression and facilitating social support and interaction with other humans. They can also provide stress relief, boost self-esteem and improve health and wellbeing. Social support of a dog or cat is critical and that Council embraces these trends proactivity, including adopting emergency management plans for pets.

The tag of a dog being man's best friend is age old and is as relevant today as ever.

Culturally, we are coming to terms with the move away from the quarter acre block, the trend towards medium to high density housing is one that will change our perception on the way pets are integrated into our community.

Exercising your pet is also exercising you and is a sure fire way of interacting with others. The dog is often the catalyst for striking up conversations with strangers, be they other dog walkers or simply other park users. This all helps in community building harmonious relationships and is to be encouraged.

The general trend to an increasing proportion of single person households coupled with Glen Eira's ageing population only strengthens the values of pets as companions and friends.

The virtues of pet ownership are taken as a given in this *DAM Plan*. The content of the *DAM Plan* closely follow a prescribed format which concentrates on legislative compliance. This should not be interpreted as undervaluing pets in our community.

Glen Eira is gradually changing. Our population is slowly increasing and there is a trend to more compact housing to match smaller households. Smaller private open spaces (backyards) are becoming the norm. This places greater importance on public spaces like parks for both residents and their pets to exercise and socialise. Compact housing and high rise apartments introduce new challenges, such as amenity considerations and evacuation plans for our companions.

The point is, any existing pet management issues that exist now have the propensity to only increase unless strategies can be put in place to better address the issues.

So what are the existing animal management issues in Glen Eira? They include:

- dogs at large or not under effective control;
- complaints about dog attacks on people and other pets;
- cat over population;
- part owners of cats — I don't own the cat, I only feed it;
- cat euthanasia rates;
- feral cat population;
- barking dogs (nuisance);
- dog waste (droppings) in public places;
- less than full registration and microchipping rates; and
- increased rates of non desexed dogs and cats (particularly un-owned cats).

Council places prime importance on public safety so of significance is the prevention of dog attacks.

Many, if not most, of the issues are inter-related. For example, Council's free service of returning lost dogs directly to their owners can only happen if the dog can be identified through microchipping or registration. Dogs quickly returned to their owners reduce the prospects of dog attack. Added benefits are obvious like improving the dog's safety and relieving the owner's stress of a lost pet.

Council's current *DAM Plan* has been instrumental in addressing our animal management issues head on and promoting responsible pet ownership. It provides a sound base for this *DAM Plan*.

The task of this *DAM Plan* then becomes one of building on the success of the previous plan and strengthening Council's animal management practices in line with current housing growth and needs, education, service delivery, support services and reasonable laws reasonably enforced.

Pet ownership is to be applauded and encouraged. Our aim is to ensure responsible pet ownership will continue to flourish in Glen Eira.

In summary, the focus of this *DAM Plan* is to:

- demonstrate that Council is satisfying its legislative responsibilities; and
- set strategic directions for Council to follow in the advancement of responsible companion pet welfare. The *Action Plan* provides a pathway to successful pet management.

Format

The Bureau of Animal Welfare requires all Councils to provide their DAM Plans in a format specifically outlined in their guidelines.

This *plan*, as required by the Bureau of Animal Welfare, addresses the following key categories:

- training of authorised officers;
- registration and identification;
- nuisance;
- dog attacks;
- dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs;
- overpopulation and high euthanasia;
- domestic animal businesses; and
- other matters.

The Bureau of Animal Welfare has also provided, in an effort to assist Councils, some suggested activities for inclusion under the “Our plans” section of each of the abovementioned topics. This is to provide consistency across Councils. Glen Eira has included the suggested activities that are considered relevant to Glen Eira. Examples of the activities that were suggested but not included are:

- Put in place a dog order associated with restraint of dogs in public places (already in place);
- Provide dog poo bag dispensers in parks (already in place);
- Run an education campaign directed at farmers regarding dogs (not relevant); and
- Ensure working dogs are muzzled at saleyards and showgrounds (not relevant).

Council’s orders, local laws, policies and procedures

Council has many policies, procedures and incentive schemes that are designed to foster responsible pet ownership and respond to Glen Eira’s key animal management issues.

Some of these address more than one of the categories listed above. An example is Council’s incentive scheme for owners of obedience trained dogs. This one incentive scheme is designed to increase registration and prevent nuisance and dog attacks and therefore covers three of the abovementioned categories.

To avoid repetition, details of Council’s orders, local laws, policies and procedures are included as Appendix I.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

Under Section 68A of the Domestic Animals Act, every Council must prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan, as follows:

68A Councils to prepare *Domestic Animal Management Plans*

- (1) Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (*of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources*), prepare at 4 year intervals a *Domestic Animal Management Plan*.
- (2) A *Domestic Animal Management Plan* prepared by a Council must—
 - (a) set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this *Act* and the regulations; and
 - (b) outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this *Act* in the Council's municipal district; and
 - (c) outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—
 - (i) to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
 - (ii) to ensure that people comply with this *Act*, the regulations and any related legislation; and
 - (iii) to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
 - (iv) to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
 - (v) to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
 - (vi) to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
 - (vii) to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this *Act* and the regulations; and
 - (d) provide for the review of existing orders made under this *Act* and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
 - (e) provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and

- (f) provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.
- (3) Every Council must—
- (a) review its *Domestic Animal Management Plan* annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
 - (b) provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
 - (c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Section 68(A)(2)(b) of the *Domestic Animals Act* states that Councils must 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.

Context

Glen Eira covers 38.7 square kilometres in inner south-east metropolitan Melbourne.

It includes the suburbs of Bentleigh; Bentleigh East; Carnegie; Caulfield; Caulfield South; Caulfield North; Caulfield East; Elsternwick; Gardenvale; Glen Huntly; McKinnon; Murrumbeena; Ormond; and part of St Kilda East.

Glen Eira's total population is estimated to be more than 149,012 people across 54,731 households. As at July 2017 there are approximately 12,000 registered dogs and 5,000 registered cats.

Glen Eira has 12 registered domestic animal businesses which consist of eight cat boarding establishments, three pet shops and one dog training establishment.

Current and planned training

Historically, animal management was part of the duty of a more generalised local law officer.

Since 2004, the need for trained specialist Animal Management Officers (AMOs) has been recognised. Glen Eira has 3.5 AMOs (EFT). However, all of Council's eight Civic Compliance Officers are multi-skilled and trained across both animal management and local laws areas.

Officers dress in a non-military style uniform and the encouraged culture and mindset is focused on a friendly, educative approach as distinct from being law enforcers. Council's AMOs see themselves as providing a community service.

The Council's current AMO training and development activities include:

- participation in the Certificate IV in Animal Control & Regulation;
- participation in the Certificate IV in Government (Statutory Compliance);
- service delivery training in accordance with the principles of continuous improvement;
- specific training related to animal management;
- participation in Council-wide staff training programs such as conflict management and other courses relevant to the organisation as a whole;
- ongoing training in relation to occupational health and safety;
- provision of specialist equipment and training such as the safe and correct use of animal catchpole's; and
- participation in training related to the correct collection of evidence for possible court proceedings.

Our plans

Objective

Identify minimum training requirements and any additional training needs to be undertaken by authorised officers. Ensure training requirements are undertaken.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum and additional training requirements by consultation with management and staff.	By December 2017	Documentation to be finalised, approved and incorporated into induction/training process.
Ensure Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements.	Ongoing – bi-annually	Training register reviewed and updated.
Ensure Authorised Officers undertake additional training opportunities.	Ongoing – bi-annually	Each officer to undertake two (2) additional training opportunities annually. Training register reviewed and updated.

REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

Section 68(A)(2)(c)(v) of the *Domestic Animals Act* states that Councils outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats. Registration also underpins and addresses Sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d) and (f).

Registration of dogs and cats within Glen Eira is one key element of responsible pet ownership. It enables lost pets to be returned to their owner/s. Registration also enables Council to provide important services to the community including public education, park patrols and investigation of dog attacks.

To this end, registration reminder notices are sent each year to pet owners. Regular dog and cat registration doorknocks are conducted to encourage maximum registration of domestic animals and accuracy of information.

There are financial incentives (1/3 maximum amount) for owners of registered pets if desexed or obedience trained.

CURRENT SITUATION

Registration data

Indicator	2015/16 year	2016/17 year	Variation
Dogs registered	11,953	12,091	+138
Cats registered	5,116	5,078	-38
Dog desexing rate (% of registered dogs)	78.2%	79.1%	+0.9
Cat desexing rate (% of registered cats)	92.7%	93.2%	+0.5

Council, in August 2009, introduced a scheme which aimed to increase the registration rate of dogs and cats and at the same time encouraged voluntary desexing of dogs and cats.

The scheme has been largely successful in that there has been an increase in the number of dogs registered and the percentage of dogs and cats desexed, this has remained stable over the past years.

Animal Census

Historically, estimating the number of dogs and cats within the municipality has been done using broad figures. For example, in 1998 dog/cat numbers were estimated based on an average provided in a report by BIS Shrapnel. Their broad figures were that 40 per cent of Australian households own one or more dogs and 26 per cent own one or more cats. Based on these percentages, Glen Eira, at that time, would have had 30,400 dogs and 20,100 cats.

However, in 2012 Council was able to significantly refine these estimates by undertaking a full Animal Census (following on from a partial census undertaken in 2006). This involved visiting 33,000 properties to gather data on the actual number of dogs and cats in the municipality. The properties targeted were those that Council records indicated did not have a dog or cat registered.

The outcome of the census revealed that Glen Eira has significantly lower dog and cat numbers than previously thought. The revised estimates after the latest census are:

- dogs approximately 14,000; and
- cats approximately 6,000.

Despite the animal census being a data gathering exercise as opposed to an enforcement opportunity, Council has seen an increase in registration levels of both dogs and cats. That is, a voluntary upswing in both dog and cat registrations accompanied the census.

Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

Summary

Over the last four years our registered dog population has gradually increased, largely due to the incentive schemes in place since 2009. We have also seen an increase in the number of registered dogs and cats that have been desexed.

However, during the animal census activity many unregistered animals were still detected. This indicates that educating the community on animal registration is for some not being heeded. However, as evidenced by an increase in registrations after the animal census was undertaken, face-to-face engagement with the community is a way to get the message through. It is for this reason that Council plans include carrying out annual door knocks and following up on unregistered dogs and cats.

Our plans

Objective 1

Increase dog and cat registration numbers each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release	Prior to every release	Annual review of number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded which are not registered to their owner. Review of registration records to ensure these animals are subsequently registered.
Follow-up of unregistered dogs and cats.	Annual door knocks conducted between May and July each year.	Review registration records to ensure previously detected unregistered dogs and cats are now registered.
Continue to offer incentive scheme that encourages early/initial registration and desexing of dogs and cats.	Ongoing	Annual review of incentive scheme to evaluate effectiveness.

Objective 2

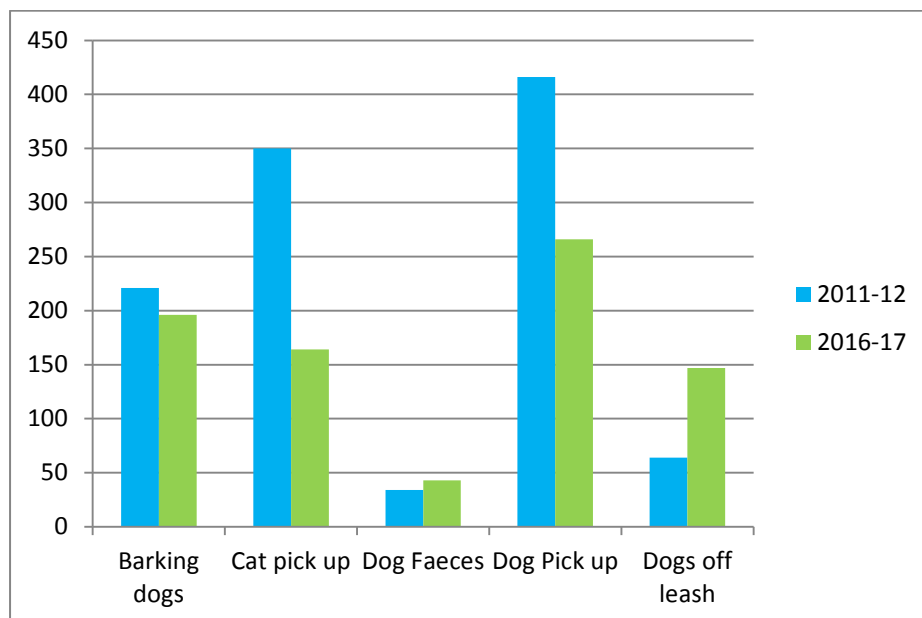
Improve the accuracy of Council data for analysis and identify trends.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review existing reporting framework to enable better analysis of registration data	By June 2018	Upgrade existing database to improve efficiency and accuracy of data collection
Develop new reports to identify registration trends especially relating to the success or otherwise of Council's desexing and registration incentive scheme.	By June 2018	New reports developed and finalised depicting registration/identification trends.

NUISANCE

Section 68(A)(2)(c)(vi) of the *Domestic Animals Act* requires Councils to outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance — also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

CURRENT SITUATION



The above data is taken from Council's customer complaints system. It is a reflection of the difference between complaints prior to the commencement of Council's DAM Plan (2013-2016) and after.

Pleasingly, a reduction in complaints in the areas of barking dogs and pick-up of wandering cats and dogs is evident. This may be due to Council's procedure for dealing with barking dog complaints. The procedure involves a combination of investigation, education and the gathering of evidence. However, one of the actions of this *DAM Plan* is to review the procedure to determine whether any further improvements can be made in this area.

Issues around off-leash areas and dog faeces have increased. This is despite concentrated efforts in education and park patrols. It is apparent from recent community consultation that continued effort is needed with zero tolerance, especially where sporting groups occupy off leash ovals.

Council has increased officer patrols in parks where these issues remain a problem. Council officers hand out plastic bags for the disposal of dog faeces and, as part of its education campaign, post cards and stickers.

The recent introduction of Electronic Message Boards into our Parks will further assist Council in getting the message across. These signs run late into the night and early morning before staff are deployed.

Signage at parks reminds dog owners of their responsibilities.

Council introduced an incentive scheme in 2009 to encourage dog owners to have their dogs trained and under effective control when exercising them in off leash parks. An owner who has a dog that has successfully completed a Government approved dog obedience course is entitled to one year's free registration which is applied to the second year. A 50 per cent discount then applies to subsequent years for the life of their dog. There have not been many dog owners who have qualified for this incentive. Council intends to monitor this take up and advertise this offer more fully in the future.

The scheme's aim is worthwhile as it is thought to lead to better controlled dogs in off leash areas and should help reduce nuisance complaints.

Orders, local laws, council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

Summary

Whilst all nuisance complaints will continue to be monitored and addressed, it is apparent that particular attention needs to be paid to dog litter and dog off leash areas. Nuisance issues are not unique to any specific location. There are however general factors that contribute to dogs and cats becoming a nuisance including:

- neighbourhoods that have higher density living. This can lead to an increase in sensitivity to barking dogs due to smaller property sizes; and
- open spaces and parklands are limited in size and must be shared. A careful balance must be achieved for all park users not only pet owners.

Council has tried to address the issue of sharing parks by introducing time share arrangements where for certain stipulated times of the day owners can exercise their dogs off-leash.

Our plans

Objective 1

Reduce cat nuisance complaints progressively each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Assist residents dealing with cat trespass/nuisance problems by purchasing additional cat cages	By January 2018	Additional cat cages purchased as required.

Activity	When	Evaluation
for use by local residents as required.		
Review current cat nuisance data, procedures and actions.	By March 2018	Review undertaken and identify 1 initiative for improvement.
Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners in registration information packs each year.	Ongoing	Material produced and distributed as part of registration.

Objective 2

Develop a strategy to address dog litter issues in Council parks.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review current education and enforcement strategies and develop new strategies.	By July 2018	Review undertaken and new Strategy developed.
Review location and number of dog litter bag dispenser and disposal bins in parks	By July 2018	Review undertaken and recommended actions implemented.
Review location and number of dog litter signage in parks	By July 2018	Review undertaken and recommended actions implemented.
Undertake appropriate education through articles in <i>Glen Eira News</i> and on Council's website.	Ongoing	At least four articles each year.

Objective 3

Develop a strategy to address dog barking issues.

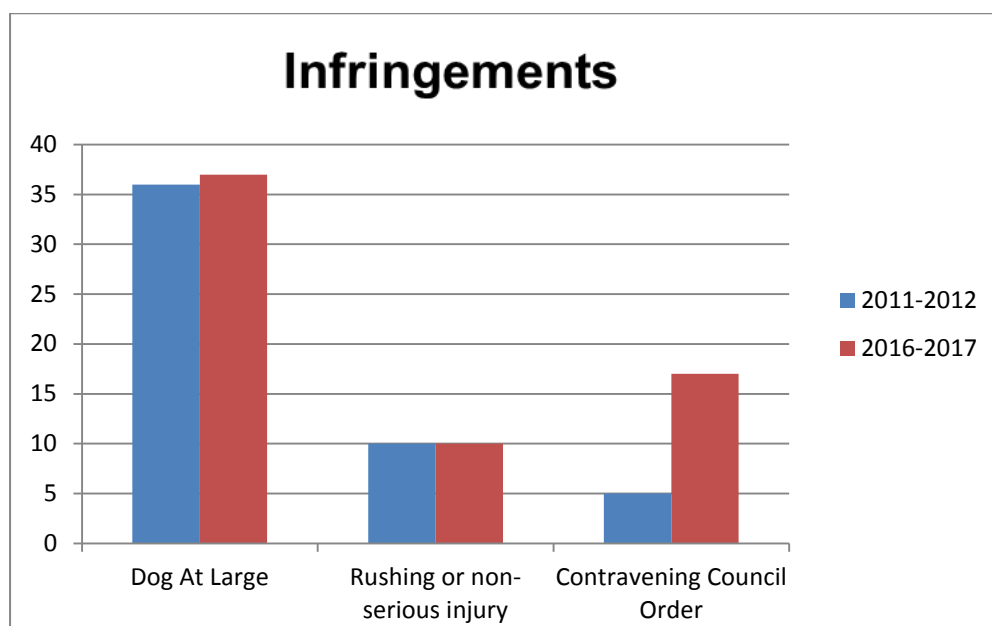
Activity	When	Evaluation
Review current dog barking complaint data, procedures and actions.	By August 2018	Review undertaken and recommended actions implemented.
Prepare new Glen Eira specific log book and booklet to address barking dogs.	By February 2018	Booklet prepared.
Investigate new technology products available to assist pet owners with their barking dogs (such as collars and barking meters, & use of Animal Behaviourist). Educate/inform residents about the availability of these resources.	By March 2018	Investigation undertaken including consideration of use by Council officers. <i>Glen Eira News</i> article and information on Council's website.

DOG ATTACKS

Section 68(A)(2)(c)(iii) of the *Domestic Animals Act* requires Councils to 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) and (f).

CURRENT SITUATION

	2011-2012	2016-2017
Reported Dog Attacks	64	82



The increase in the number of infringements issued for contravening the Council Order is due to a dedicated enforcement campaign in response to an increase in the number of complaints regarding dogs off leash.

Council has adopted an Order under Section 26(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act* (see Appendix 4) that requires a dog to be on leash at all times when in public places (other than designated off-leash areas). The Council Order places certain responsibilities on the dog owner when in off-leash areas and in all cases the dog must still be under effective control.

All dog owners are required by law to confine their dogs to their property unless they are under effective control such as on a leash. Dog socialisation and education is encouraged via obedience training schools. These schools introduce basic training which helps the owner understand his/her responsibilities and hence minimise any aggressive tendencies in their dogs.

Dogs that wander at large are obviously not under any control. These dogs contribute to a significant proportion of dog management problems. It is essentially these dogs that lead to the majority of dog attacks. Inadequate confinement of dogs sees them at large.

The concept of effective control is perhaps one of the least understood concepts of responsible pet ownership. Unfortunately some owners still interpret leash free as meaning my dog can run randomly to his/her heart's content while I chat on my mobile phone or to a fellow dog owner. Such dogs are clearly not under any control, let alone effective control. This is an area of continued intense education by Council's Animal Management Officers (AMOs). Additionally, the Order states that dogs are not to roam within (20m) of playgrounds, sporting activities and schools. Again, this places additional responsibility on dog owners to control their dogs.

AMO's place a high importance on dogs being on-leash or confined to their property in order to minimise risk to the community. However, it also needs to be recognised that regular exercise, including in off-leash areas, is important for reducing the incidence of aggression in dogs and can assist to socialise dogs. Responsible pet ownership is the key to a healthy relationship between dogs and the wider community in which they live.

Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

Summary

Dog attack is the critical animal management issue. Dog attacks occur predominately in and around the family home (including the pavement in front of the home). Public areas where people and dogs congregate such as parks also create risk.

Where serious injuries have occurred to a person or another animal as a result of a dog and the evidence is thought to be sufficient enough for prosecution, Council will have the matter heard in the Magistrates Court.

One court case involved the prosecution of a dog owner who had their dog on a leash when it attacked a child. The attack resulted in serious facial injuries. The offending dog despite being on a leash was obviously not under effective control. The remorseful dog owner voluntarily euthanized the dog. The fines issued by the Magistrate (including costs) exceeded \$4,000.

Council will consider increasing awareness of the impacts of dog attacks, and the benefits of confining a dog to their property as the key to preventing dog attacks. Targeted education will continue over the next few years, including raising awareness about the need to check fencing and gates for potential escape routes for their dog/s.

Our plans

Objective 1

Improve reporting of dog attacks

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review existing complaint system for response times and data gathering information	By April 2018	Review undertaken and recommended actions implemented.
Improve public awareness of what constitutes a dog attack and how to most effectively report dog attacks.	By February 2018	Review current education campaign and develop new tools such as media articles, public notices in parks, Council website etc.

Objective 2

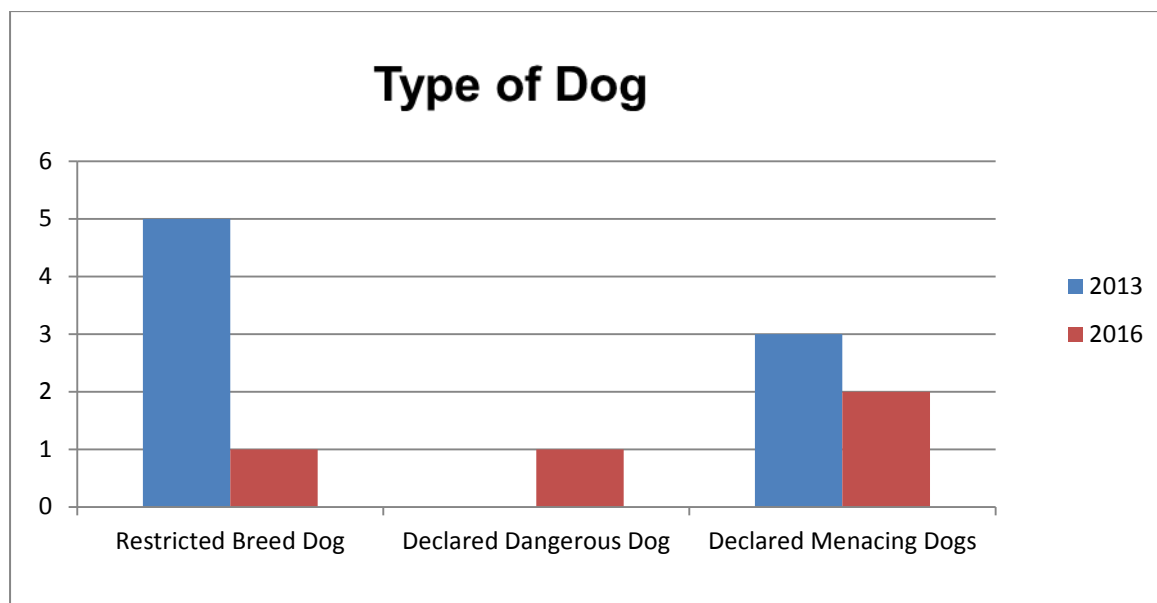
Improve awareness of safety around dogs.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages	Ongoing	Develop publication material and distribute via mail outs, media articles, handouts during park patrols.
Promote dog obedience training, responsible pet ownership and We Are Family programs	Ongoing	Information added to Council website; at least 4 media articles published.

DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) of the *Domestic Animals Act* requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs 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).

CURRENT SITUATION



Council currently only has one registered restricted breed dog and two declared menacing dogs and one declared dangerous dogs registered in Glen Eira.

Restricted breed dog

Legislation indicates that restricted breed dogs pose a potential risk. Restricted breed dogs have controls placed on them due to the increased potential of an aggressive nature of the breed in general.

A restricted breed dog is any one of the following breeds:

- (a) Japanese Tosa;
- (b) fila Brasileiro;
- (c) dogo Argentino;
- (d) Perro de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario); and
- (e) American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier).

However, there are many dogs that have been registered as a cross breed or registered as another breed of dog possibly in order to avoid a restricted breed designation. It is an offence to falsely sign a declaration of breed type when registering a dog.

Menacing or dangerous dog

If a dog exhibits certain behaviours and/or there is an incident then Council has the power to declare that dog either a menacing dog or a dangerous dog. Dogs must be declared by Council and do not just become menacing or dangerous just because they may be aggressive.

A dog can be declared as menacing if it has rushed at or chased a person or it bites any person or animal causing injury that is not in the nature of a serious injury.

A dog can be declared as dangerous if it has caused the death of or serious injury to a person or animal by biting or attacking that person or animal; or if the dog is a menacing dog and its owner has received at least two infringement notices in respect of the offence in Section 41E (restraint of menacing dog).

Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

Summary

It is evident from the data that the list of dangerous, restricted breed or menacing dogs in Glen Eira is diminishing. This may be because the owner has moved or the dog has died. Legislative prohibitions on registering dangerous, restricted or menacing dogs are designed to reduce the prevalence of these dogs and it would seem that the legislation intent is having the desired effect.

Due to the low number of restricted breed, dangerous and menacing dogs in Glen Eira, the ongoing inspection and control of these dogs is manageable.

Our plans

Objective 1

Identify and register all declared dogs in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Prepare inspection program for the assessment and identification of dogs suspected of being a restricted breed, dangerous or menacing dog.	December 2018	Inspection program prepared and inspections commenced. Record details of inspections carried out.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Cross-reference microchip database information with current Council registration information for potential restricted breed dogs.	July 2018	Record details of dogs identified.
Identify and inspect all industrial properties for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes.	July 2018	All industrial properties inspected.
Educate the community about what is a declared dog.	Ongoing	Update information on website and 1 <i>Glen Eira News</i> article per annum.

Objective 2

Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are following legislative requirements.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure compliance with legislative requirements	Yearly	Audit inspections carried out and details recorded.

OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) of the *Domestic Animals Act* requires Councils to address any overpopulation and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats — also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

Total Impoundments

Animal	2011-2012	2016-2017	Variance
Dog	542	266	-259
Cat	225	164	-92

Euthanased (% of total impoundments)

Animal	2011-2012	2016-2017	Variance
Dog	3%	1%	-2%
Cat	40%	28%	-11%

Reclaimed/Returned/Sold (% of total impoundments)

	2011-2012	2016-2017	Variance
Dog	97%	92.9%	-4.1%
Cat	60%	70.7%	+10.7%

It is pleasing that the number of dogs and cats being euthanased has continued to be low. However, whilst the rates of cats being euthanased has dropped, Council will continue to strive to see this figure decrease.

Council will continue to offer a free service to return animals to their owners whenever possible. As part of this free service AMOs also educate the owners on adequate fencing to ensure their animals are kept safe.

Impounded animals that cannot be identified when picked up by Council officers are taken to the RSPCA shelter in Burwood. The RSPCA holds animals for a number of Councils as well as animals surrendered by members of the public making any direct comparisons between Glen Eira figures and those reported by the RSPCA misleading and distorted.

Desexing Rates (% desexed/total registered)

Animal	2011-2012	2016-2017	Variance
Dog	75%	79.1%	+4.1%
Cat	91%	93.2%	+2.2%

Desexing rates have increased favourably over the last three years. This is evidence that our incentive programs and education are working. The Council incentive program offering discounts on registration to the owners of desexed dogs and cats may have contributed to this increase.

Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

Our plans

Objective 1

Raise awareness about semi-owned cat population

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Implement <i>Who's for Cats?</i> education campaign utilising the following resources (available from Bureau of Animal Welfare)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are you feeding a bigger problem? Fact Sheet;• media release for publication in local newspapers;• TV commercial — can be used on Council's website; and• promotions to encourage people to take full ownership of cats.	Annually	<p>At least one media story published;</p> <p>Update information on Council's website;</p> <p>Review number of semi-owned cats handed into shelter/pound.</p>

Objective 2

Identify and record ownership status of seized cats.

Activity	When	Evaluation
<p>Review current procedures and recording system for accurately identifying ownership details of cats picked up and/or impounded. (owned, semi-owned, wild, feral). Including their status regarding microchipping, desexed, registered.</p>	December 2018	Procedure and reporting system reviewed and changes implemented.

Objective 3

Enhance website for lost and found animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review Council's website relating to lost and found animals. Identify any performance and functionality improvements available such as ability to zoom in on photos of lost/found pets. Investigate use of social media as a tool in reuniting lost pets with their owners.	December 2018	Website review undertaken and enhancements or modifications implemented. Use of social media investigated and considered for implementation.

Objective 4

Reduce regulatory restrictions on the return of lost animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review current Section 84Y agreements with willing veterinary practices or other responsible organisations to allow them to hold lost animals whilst trying to locate and return them to their owners, and in emergency or welfare situations.	February 2018	Section 84Y agreement prepared and entered into with willing organisations.

DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) of the *Domestic Animals Act* requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation – also addresses 68A(2)(a), (c)(i), (d), (f).

CURRENT SITUATION

Type of Business	2013-2016	Current
Boarding establishment	8	8
Pet Shop	4	3
Dog Training	1	1

The above figures show that Council's total number of domestic animal businesses has remained stable. In some cases, non-compliance with the relevant Code of Practice meant that they had to make changes to their processes or face fines and further enforcement action by Council.

To date compliance with Codes of Practice has been excellence, however in 2012 Council made a successful prosecution relating to the conduct of a domestic animal business. The dog boarding establishment was operating from residential premises without being registered under the *Domestic Animals Act*. The operator was found guilty, convicted, fined \$3,000 and ordered to pay costs of over \$6,000.

Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

Summary

Overall Council has a low level of domestic animal businesses and few compliance issues. Regular compliance checking and education activities will continue. All registered Domestic Animal Businesses (DAB) achieve yearly registration following a process of audit and follow-up inspections.

Our plans

Objective 1

Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct proactive investigations to determine businesses that should be registered as DAB.	By December each year	Compare number of registered DAB before and after investigations.

Objective 2

Inspect and audit all registered Domestic Animal Businesses.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Audit all DAB for compliance with legislation.	Annually (at registration period April-June)	All DAB audited and compliance rates recorded.

OTHER MATTERS

Section 68A(2)(e) of the *Domestic Animals Act* requires Council to provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary.

CURRENT SITUATION

In 2010, Council initiated a comprehensive review of its dog off-leash areas. Council engaged specialist consultants in animal management to conduct the review. The off-leash areas had not been reviewed for 14 years and it was appropriate to conduct a comprehensive review of these provisions.

The methodology used in conducting this review included the following:

- desk based review of all open space within the City;
- inspection of all of Council's current off-leash areas;
- examination of relevant Council plans and policies; and
- consultation with relevant Council staff.

The first round of community consultation was undertaken between November 2010 and January 2011 which included the following:

- three public forums;
- 40 in-park surveys of users of the current off-leash parks;
- 50 questionnaires mailed to stakeholders who were identified as having a potential interest in this issue; and
- preparation of a draft Report.

A second round of community consultation on the draft Report was held between 29 March and 12 April 2011.

It was publicised by letters/emails to the identified stakeholders and those who had registered their interest or participated in the first round of community feedback, sporting clubs, subscribers to Council's e-newsletter and registered users of the Glen Eira — Have your Say website. Copies were also left at libraries, Council service centres and the recreation services counter. The process was publicised in local papers and on Council's website.

As a result of this process, three parks in the north west of the municipality gained timed off leash areas, greater protection was given to sporting ovals, playgrounds and barbeque areas by reducing the off leash distance from 50 metres to 20 metres, and shared pathways were changed to become on leash.

A copy of the 2011 order which currently exists can be found on Council's website and in Appendix 4 to this plan.

Whilst a number of pocket parks have appeared since then, they are undersize to allow for dogs to run off leash, however during our engagement with community and stake holders the need for a dog agility park was raised and discussed as an important stimulant for dogs. Although not included within this Plan, Theme Three of Glen Eira's adopted *Council and Community Plan 2017-2021*, states, we will, *Explore opportunities to create dog agility park within the municipality.*

Orders, local laws, Council policies and procedures

See Appendix 1

Educational and promotional activities

See Appendix 2

Compliance activities

See Appendix 3

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

As per Section 68A(3) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council will review its *Domestic Animal Management Plan* annually to assess whether any amendments are necessary in order to ensure the plan is relevant and can be completed within the required time frame.

Council will expand its evaluation reporting to include more detailed statistics to ensure clarity and transparency relating to Council's Animal Management Services.

Council will publish the evaluation of its *Domestic Animal Management Plan* as part of its *Annual Report*.

In the final year of the plan, Council will undertake a major review and prepare drafting the next *Domestic Animal Management Plan* for the 2022-2026 period.

APPENDIX I — ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Orders:

Council Order Section 26(2) — Control of dogs in public places

Local laws:

- Keeping dogs and cats.
- Keeping poultry.
- Keeping pigeons.
- Keeping horses, cattle, sheep, pigs and general livestock.
- Shooting and snaring birds and animals.
- Animal litter.
- Unsatisfactory Fowl Houses, Kennels, Pigeon Lofts and animal enclosures.
- Animals and amenity.
- Animals and adequate fencing.

Policies:

- Destruction of dogs after Court order or exercising Council power to destroy a dog (s.84P).
- Policy for the impounding of animals.

Procedures:

- Trapping of cats and loan of traps.
- Inspecting properties for keeping more than two dogs or more than two cats.
- Dealing with barking dog complaints.
- Animal pickups.
- Registration of dogs and the fee structure for registration (Schedule to the Act).
- Enforcement strategy associated with issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution.
- Serving notices of seizure relating to seizing of identified dogs.
- Seizure and impounding of dogs after a dog attack.
- Dealing with owners when recovering dogs that have been seized by Council.
- When a dog is declared dangerous (s.34).
- When a dog is declared menacing (s.41A).
- When a dog is declared to be of a restricted breed (s.98A).
- Provide details of dangerous dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry (VDDR) (s.44AE).
- Provide details on VDDR of dogs destroyed in relation to s.84TA, TB and TC (s.44AEA).
- Seizure and impounding of dangerous and restricted breed dogs.
- Assessment of restricted breed dogs.
- Process for the registration/refusal of registration/renewal of registration of dangerous and restricted breed dogs (s.17).

APPENDIX 2 — EDUCATIONAL, SUPPORT AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Council's aim is to promote responsible pet ownership primarily through educational activities and programs. These include:

- regular articles in Council's monthly newspaper — *Glen Eira News* including a centre spread feature on responsible pet ownership;
- regular media releases relating to topical issues such as dog attacks, registration renewals, desexing and microchipping programs;
- postcards with an explanation of Council's Order relating to the restraint of dogs in public places and the designation of off leash areas. These postcards are used extensively by officers during their park patrols;
- distribution of information about the benefits of dog obedience and puppy school training;
- production of a responsible pet ownership booklet and other booklets;
- Council's website has relevant information about responsible pet ownership;
- responsible pet ownership information on community noticeboards;
- a variety of free gifts such as leashes and doggy waste bag holders are available as giveaways; and
- information to assist people in the selection of the right pet for them.

Council also holds a yearly *pet expo* in conjunction with its *Party in the Parks* events. This has been very popular and gives pet owners the opportunity to participate in the free activities offered on the day.

School children in the municipality also receive instruction on how to behave around dogs through the Bureau of Animal Welfare Responsible Pet Ownership Program for Schools or the schools contacting Council directly. Details of the program can be found on the website located at www.pets.info.vic.gov.au

APPENDIX 3 — COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requires Council to administer and enforce the provisions of the Act.

The approach used by Council, in the first and preferred instance, is to inform, educate and encourage pet owners to accept responsibility for their pet, thereby complying with the provisions and intent of the Act in a voluntary way. The more successful Council is in this educational approach the less actual enforcement is required. This approach is consistent with the general philosophy of reasonable laws reasonably enforced. Council's Animal Management Officer's (AMO) see their primary role as one of providing a service to the community.

To ensure compliance with the Act, public places (particularly parks) are monitored regularly by AMO's. AMO's are also available to respond to serious breaches of the Act.

Emphasis is always given to maintaining community safety.

Council's compliance activities include:

- regular street and park patrols. Working hours are adjusted to increase AMO presence during daylight saving periods and in the early morning and late afternoon/early evening. These are times of increased activity or potential conflict in the parks with people walking and exercising their dogs and people exercising or jogging;
- for non-safety related offences, taking a graduated approach: verbal warnings and provision of responsible pet ownership brochures and literature, official written warnings and infringement notices for detected repeated breaches;
- prosecution in the Melbourne Magistrates Court for alleged dog attacks (zero tolerance for safety related offences);
- regular inspections of dangerous dog and restricted breed dog enclosures;
- respond to calls or complaints from members of the public regarding possible non-compliance with the provisions of the Act;
- an after-hours emergency service in case of dog attack or dogs at large;
- yearly inspections of domestic animal businesses;
- publication of successful prosecutions to act as a deterrent for others;
- distribution of relevant information regarding responsible pet ownership with warnings and infringement notices; and
- distribution of material by officers whilst patrolling parks in conjunction with verbal information to users of the parks.

APPENDIX 4 — ORDER PURSUANT TO S. 26(2) OF THE DOMESTIC ANIMALS ACT

Notice is given that the Glen Eira City Council at its Ordinary meeting held on 30 August 2011 resolved to make the following order under section 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994

Glen Eira City Council Order Pursuant to Section 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994

1. Definitions

In this order:

'Owner' has the same meaning as in the **Domestic Animals Act 1994**;

'Leash Free Area' means the following reserves or part of the following reserves designated by signs as being available for the unleashing of dogs at the time(s) signposted:

Allnutt Park (McKinnon)	Bailey Reserve (Bentleigh East)	Bentleigh/Hodgson Reserve (Bentleigh)
Boyd Park (Murrumbeena)	Caulfield Park (Caulfield North)	Centenary Park (Bentleigh East)
Joyce Park (Ormond)	Duncan MacKinnon Reserve (Murrumbeena)	East Caulfield Reserve (Caulfield East)
EE Gunn Reserve (Ormond)	Glen Huntly Park (Caulfield East)	Greenmeadows Gardens (St Kilda East)
Harleston Park (Elsternwick)	Hopetoun Gardens (Elsternwick)	Halley Park (Bentleigh)
King George VI Memorial Reserve (Bentleigh East)	Lord Reserve (Carnegie)	McKinnon Reserve (McKinnon)
Marlborough Street Reserve (Bentleigh East)	Moorleigh Community Village Reserve (Bentleigh East)	Murrumbeena Park (Murrumbeena)
Packer Park (Carnegie)	Princes Park (Caulfield South)	Victory Park (Bentleigh)

2. Dogs must be under effective control

The Owner of any dog must keep the dog in effective control by means of a chain, cord or leash, not exceeding 1.5 metres in length, attached to the dog and either:

- a) held by the Owner who must be capable of restraining the dog; or
- b) fixed securely to a post or other fixture

while the dog is in any public area of the municipal district of the Council, except where Clause 3 of this Order applies.

3. Owners obligations

A dog may be exercised off a chain, cord or leash in a Leash Free Area designated by the Council, if the Owner:

- a) carries a chain, cord or leash not exceeding 1.5 metres in length, sufficient to bring the dog under effective control, and

- b) remains in effective voice or hand control of the dog so as to be able to promptly bring the dog under effective control by placing the dog on a chain, cord or leash not exceeding 1.5 metres in length if that becomes necessary whether to comply with the provisions of this order or for any other reason.
- c) If a dog is off a chain, cord or leash in a Leash Free Area designated by the Council, the dog must be brought under the effective control of the Owner by means of chain, cord or leash not exceeding 1.5 metres in length if the dog roams, or is likely to roam, to within 20 metres of:
- (i) the principal location of an organised sporting event;
 - (ii) a children's play equipment area (unless the children's play equipment area is fenced off such that access to that area by the dog is prevented);
 - (iii) the entrance of a school during school hours and 15 minutes prior to and after school hours;
 - (iv) the principal location of an organised public meeting;
 - (v) a permanent barbecue or picnic area (unless the permanent barbecue or picnic area is fenced off such that access to that area by the dog is prevented);
- or if the dog does or is likely to worry, threaten, rush or attack any person or other animal.

4. Areas to which Clause 3 does not apply

Clause 3 does not apply to the following areas:

- a) The shared pathway which surrounds Caulfield Park, Caulfield North;
- b) The car park and shared pathway at the northern end of EE Gunn Reserve Ormond;
- c) Oval 1 and the shared pathway between Oval 1 and Oval 4 at Princes Park, Caulfield South.

5. Time limits in Certain Leash Free Areas

A dog may only be exercised in accordance with Clause 3 between the hours of 6:00am and 9:00am at the following reserves, or at parts of the following reserves as signposted:

- a) Harleston Park (Elsterwick);
- b) Hopetoun Gardens (Elsterwick);
- c) Greenmeadows Gardens (St Kilda East).

Andrew Newton

Chief Executive Officer