

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022 – 2031



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Fraser Coast Regional Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the region. Council is committed to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians, and to be an organisation that recognises and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's history and culture which are developed through diversity, opportunities and respectful relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Council wishes to thank all contributors and stakeholders involved in the development of this document.

DISCLAIMER

Information contained in this document is based on available information at the time of writing. All figures and diagrams are indicative only and should be referred to as such. Whilst the Fraser Coast Regional Council has exercised reasonable care in preparing this document, it does not warrant or represent that it is accurate or complete. Council or its officers accept no responsibility for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting in reliance upon any material contained in this document.

INTRODUCTION

As the community of the Fraser Coast region continues to grow and evolve, so too, does the diversity of lifestyles and the ways in which pets engage in our daily lives.

Pets play an important role and contribute to the wellbeing of many people within our region. Increasingly, for many people, pets are becoming more than just a pet as they offer companionship and become part of the family.

We recognise that people have different experiences, connections, and views about pets and that residents and visitors are impacted by them in different ways. Some people prefer the ability to venture and enjoy public places that are completely pet free, whereas others would prefer to take their animals with them everywhere they go.

For these reasons, Fraser Coast Regional Council considers effective domestic animal management to be vital in ensuring a harmonious co-existence between people, pets, and places, both now and in the future.

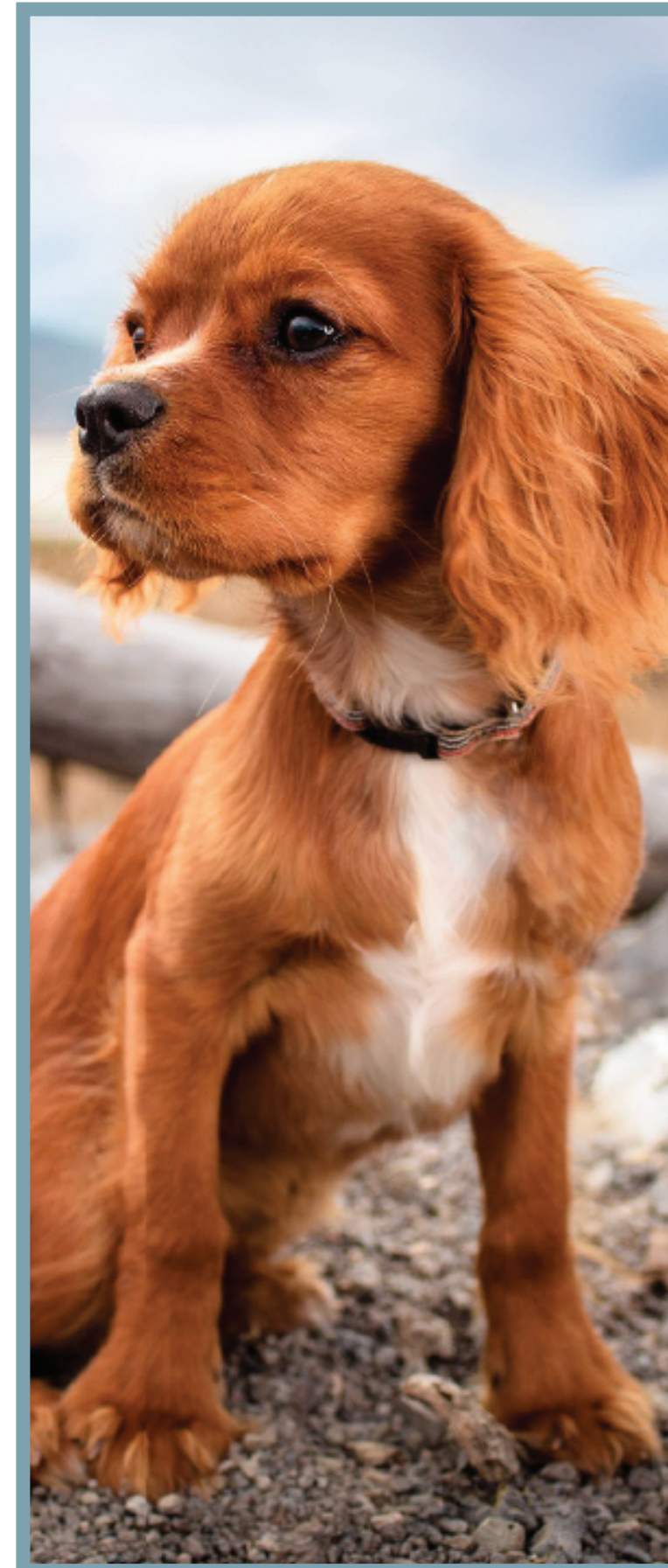
Fraser Coast Regional Council plays an important leadership role in supporting and promoting responsible pet ownership, community safety and healthy living across the community.

We recognise that as the entity at the forefront of this responsibility, that effective domestic animal management is critical.

Effective animal management, that contributes to harmonious co-existence between people, pets and places begins with responsible pet ownership.

Under the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*, *Local Law No.2 (Animal Management) 2011* and *Subordinate Local Law No.2 (Animal Management) 2011*, Council has an obligation to work with the community to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership through information, education, investigation and enforcement.

Consequentially as part of effective animal management and to be responsive to the needs and wants of our community, Council has developed the Domestic Animals Management Strategy (the strategy).



OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the strategy are:

Education:

- ❖ To ensure pet owners are educated and aware of the principles of responsible pet ownership.

Customer Service:

- ❖ To provide a high level of customer service and offer alternative service delivery options where appropriate.

Enforcement:

- ❖ To encourage compliance with State legislation and Local Laws and to apply an appropriate enforcement response to matters of non-compliance or continued non-compliance.

Responsible Pet Ownership:

- ❖ To encourage pet owners to embrace responsible pet ownership with respect to registration, micro-chipping and desexing and ensuring pets in the community are appropriately controlled and contained.

Community Facilities and Off-Leash Areas:

- ❖ To improve and increase community-based facilities for dog owners.

Animal Facilities (Pound)

- ❖ To provide a world class animal management facility appropriate for the welfare, housing and reclaim of impounded animals.

Training of Authorised Officers:

- ❖ To provide knowledgeable and trained staff to respond to matters of domestic animal management.

Animal management is more than just regulation and enforcement. **We believe that effective animal management contributes to the overall health and wellbeing of the community.**

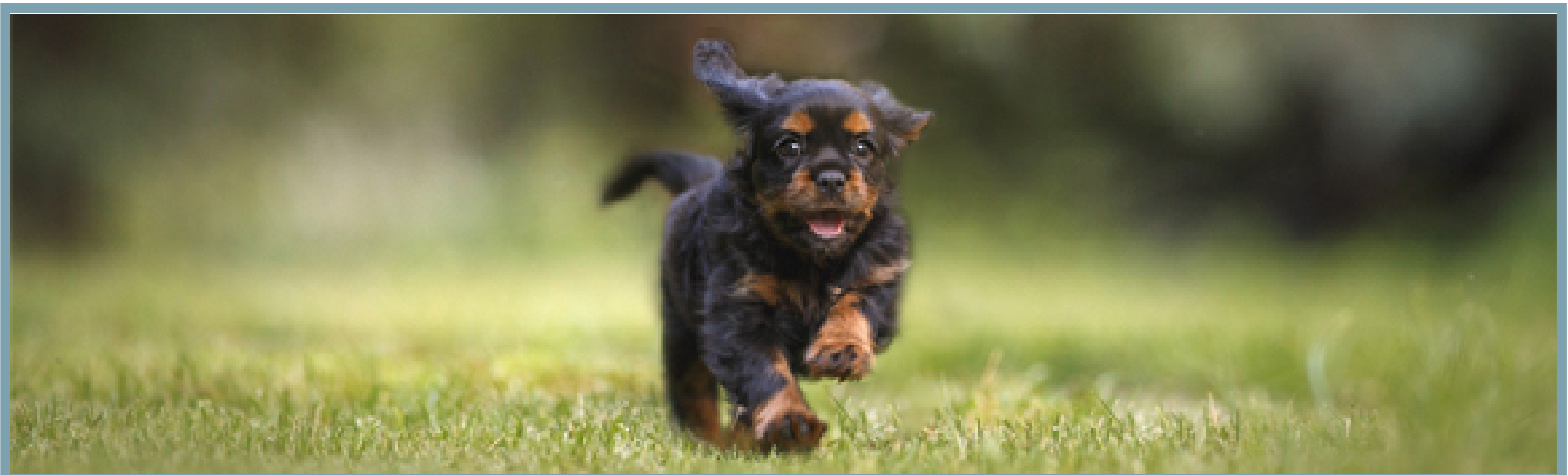
Animal management involves community responsibility through responsible pet ownership and expectations of are that pet owners will be accountable for looking after the needs of their animals in the best interests of neighbours, the local community, the environment and the pet itself.

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

- ❖ Assist Council to address key challenges and opportunities when determining operational planning and budgets.
- ❖ Provide the framework for how Council will work with the community to achieve harmonious co-existence between people, pets and places.
- ❖ Provide direction for Council's domestic animal management services and initiatives over the next 10 years.
- ❖ Help Council achieve the purposes of the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* and *Fraser Coast Regional Council (FCRC) Local Laws*.

OUR GOAL

- ❖ Educate the community and seek voluntary compliance of the principles of responsible pet ownership including registration; micro-chipping; desexing; control of pets in public places; and providing safe and secure enclosures.



HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

- ❖ Council invited the community, both pet owners and non-pet owners, to have their say on responsible pet ownership and the delivery of animal management services and initiatives over the next 10 years.

We connected with the community through:

- ❖ Key stakeholder groups and networks;
- ❖ Social media;
- ❖ Media releases, Council weekly news and advertising;
- ❖ Engagement hub and community engagement register;
- ❖ Pop-up kiosks at markets and shopping centers around the region; and
- ❖ Displays in the community and municipal libraries, and Customer Service Centers.

Feedback received through the engagement process has helped Council identify objectives and prioritise what is important with key themes of the engagement being:

- ❖ Education and responsible pet ownership;
- ❖ Enforcement;
- ❖ Training; service and facilities; and
- ❖ Safe and inclusive places.



We will continue to connect with the community through:

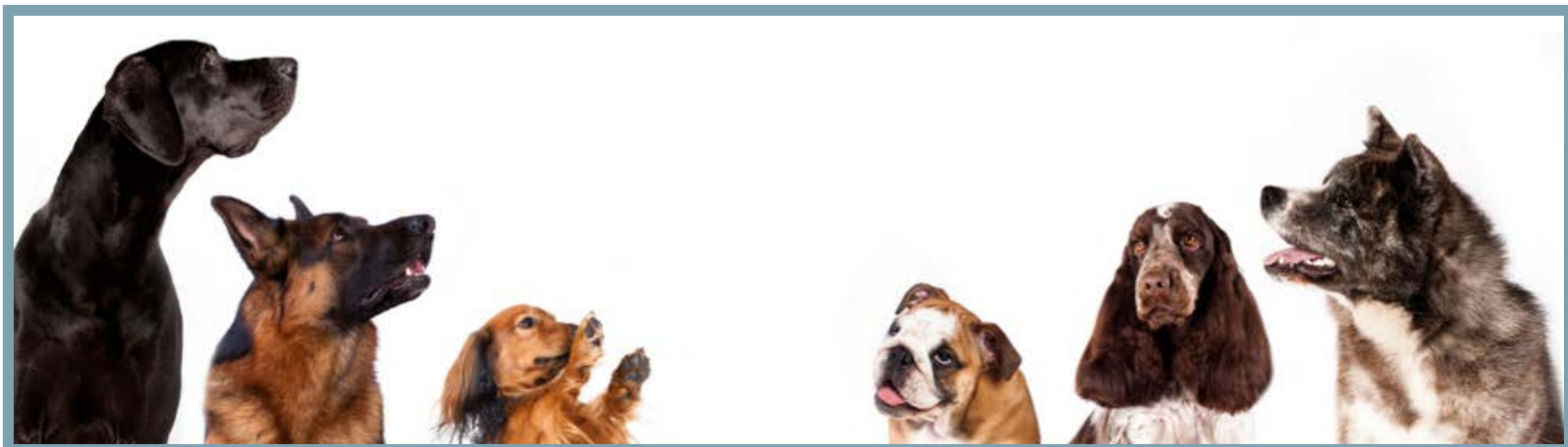
- ❖ **Increasing public awareness of the need to responsibly manage pets, thereby reducing the number of animal related nuisances;**
- ❖ **Improving community participation through education initiatives;**
- ❖ **Prioritising reactive services provided to the community such as responding to complaints; and**
- ❖ **Improving co-ordination of proactive services such as desexing programs.**

LINK TO COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN

- ❖ **Council's Corporate Plan is the principle strategic planning document that sets the future direction for Council activities and guides the delivery of quality services to our community.**

GOALS

- ❖ **To be a diverse, strong and well-governed region of vibrant places, with an innovative and diverse economy and connected as a whole by our community spirit and respect for our natural environment.**
- ❖ **To make a positive difference for the region and the lives of our community members by ensuring we provide a service that is forward looking and well managed.**



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2009

Although not containing specific provisions relating to animal management the *Local Government Act 2009* provides the framework detailing when and how a local government may develop a local law.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Council is responsible for the administration and enforcement of a range of State legislation and Local Laws through the Fraser Coast Local Government Area. The legal framework associated with Animal Management in this region includes:

- ❃ *Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008;*
- ❃ *Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Regulation 2019;*
- ❃ *Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011 and Subordinate Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011;* and
- ❃ *Local Law No. 2 (Animal Management) 2011 Subordinate Local Law No. 2 (Animal Management) 2011.*

These legislative provisions allow council to respond to or act upon complaints, enforce compliance and collect revenue through fee-based services such as registration, to be expended in a manner that contributes to the promotion and encouragement of responsible pet ownership.

STRATEGIC LINKS TO OTHERS

Local government must ensure the strategy does not breach the requirements of other legislation. Legislation local government needs to consider includes the:

- ❃ *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001;* and
- ❃ *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011.*

Education, Enforcement & Responsible Pet Ownership

EDUCATION

There are a range of strongly held views in the community on the relative merits of education versus enforcement with regard to domestic animal management. Council believes there is a role for both. Council is committed to providing community education opportunities that encourage responsible pet ownership and support the wider community to safely and confidently co-exist with pets.

Whilst voluntary compliance and/or behavioural changes are preferable, there will be a need from time to time for regulatory action to be instigated. Compliance activities can be time consuming and comes with a financial cost to Council and the community. While the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* is prescriptive in many of its requirements, there is scope for an education first approach to compliance activities.

What the community told us:

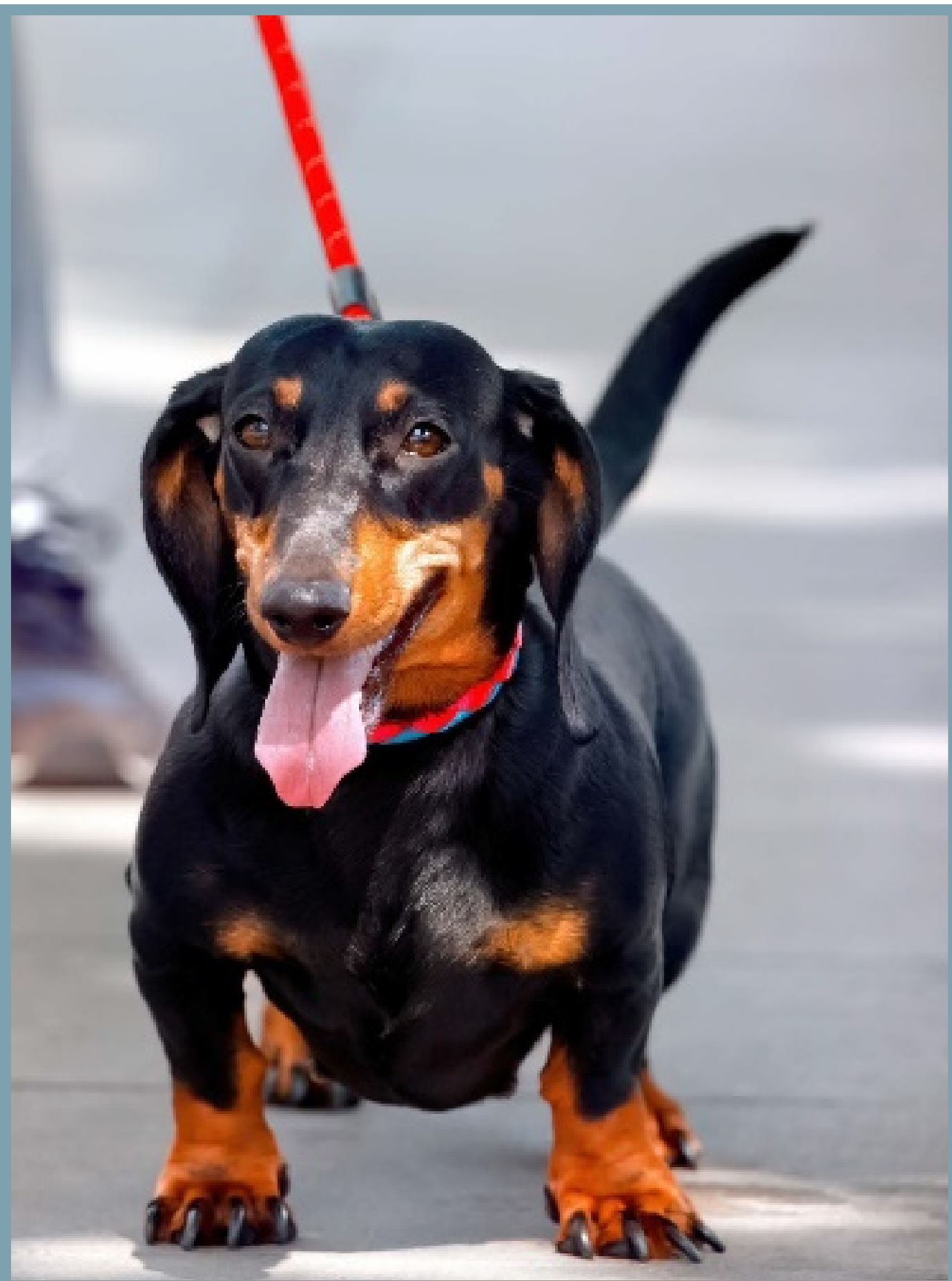
“...Would be great to have more pro-active animal education programs out there – maybe start with young kids in schools...”

“...education of animal owners is essential, but if it is not backed by effective action/enforcement, it will be a wasted resource...”

What we currently do

- ❖ **Media releases** – registration, vaccination, micro-chipping; desexing; Approved Inspection Programme;
- ❖ **Facebook posts** – impounded animals; adoption animals; reminders of unpaid registrations; and
- ❖ **Website factsheets.**





Proposed actions

- ❖ **Develop a responsible pet ownership program to ensure the community is aware of the requirements for keeping animals in the local government area;**
- ❖ **Schedule community events throughout the year to better engage with, and educate the community on animal management; and**
- ❖ **Ensure the currency and accuracy of promotion materials, forms and factsheets, and that these are available on the FCRC website.**

Future considerations or opportunities

- ❖ **Establish an operational team who proactively operate within the community and promote responsible pet ownership and education as their primary function, whilst providing early intervention opportunities;**
- ❖ **Produce improved promotional advertising across platforms such as TV, online and radio; and**
- ❖ **Seek opportunities to educate and promote the responsibilities of dog ownership and the benefits attributed to a healthy lifestyle for individuals and dogs through creating/participating in local Dog Walking Associations and Obedience Clubs.**



RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

When there is a lack of responsible pet ownership, there are serious impacts to people, pets, and places. Council recognises the importance of taking a strong stance in relation to responsible pet ownership.

Council plays an important leadership role in supporting and promoting responsible pet ownership through an informed community.

Our objective is to build a responsible pet ownership culture – empowering and equipping pet owners to be responsible for the benefit of their pet, themselves and the community.

What the community told us:

“Being a responsible pet owner means being a responsible citizen and being considerate to others and other pets.”

“Good to see council pro-actively addressing responsible ownership.”



A Code of Responsible Pet Ownership has been developed to help pet owners or prospective owners understand the importance of responsible pet ownership.

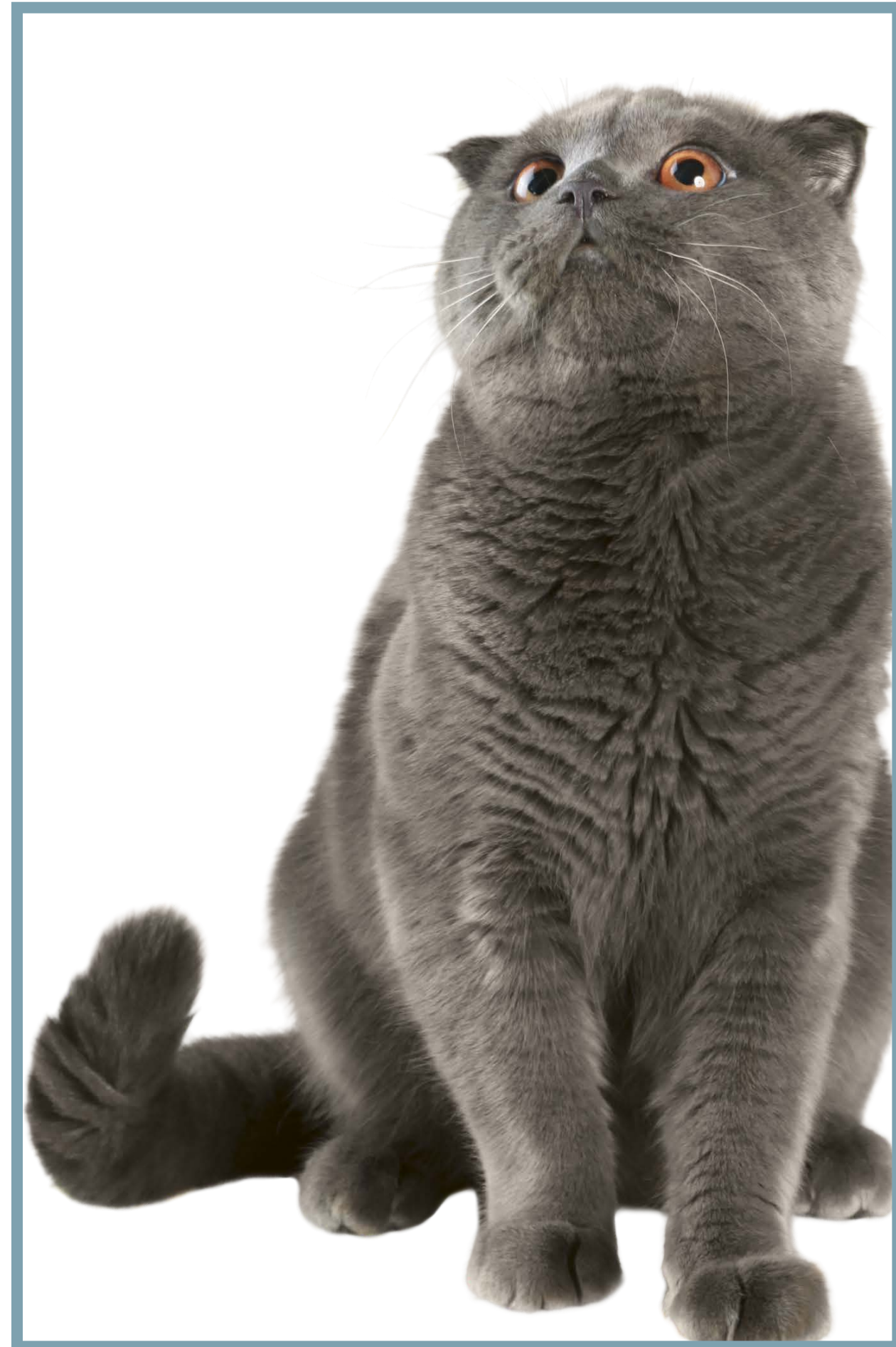
This code outlines best practices to achieve a caring and responsible environment for pets and their owners with the aim of minimising neighbourhood concerns, animal welfare issues (including oversupply and homelessness) and the destruction of wildlife and its habitat.

The code will guide councils’ education programs in focusing on the responsibilities of ownership.

Code of Responsible Pet Ownership

As a responsible pet owner, it is expected that;

- ❖ **Your property, lifestyle and budget are suited to the pet.**
- ❖ **Your property is secure to ensure your pet is confined and any impacts on public safety are minimised.**
- ❖ **You understand the needs and requirements of the type and breed of pet, including correct practices in relation to exercise, housing, diet and grooming.**
- ❖ **When you are in public places, ensure that dogs are under effective control by means of a lead (except in off-leash areas).**
- ❖ **If you are exercising your dog in bushland reserves – understand that the dog has an impact on habitat and wildlife and minimise any impact by ensuring the pet is always on a lead, stay on established tracks and trails, only exercise during daylight hours and keep away from wildlife.**
- ❖ **You register your dog annually with Council and comply with all legislative requirements.**
- ❖ **You ensure your pet does not cause nuisance to neighbouring properties and doesn't wander from your residence.**
- ❖ **Your pet is micro-chipped to enable quick identification and return of the pet if it becomes lost or escapes from your residence.**
- ❖ **Your pet is desexed in accordance with applicable legislation.**
- ❖ **You always clean up after your pet.**



PET REGISTRATION

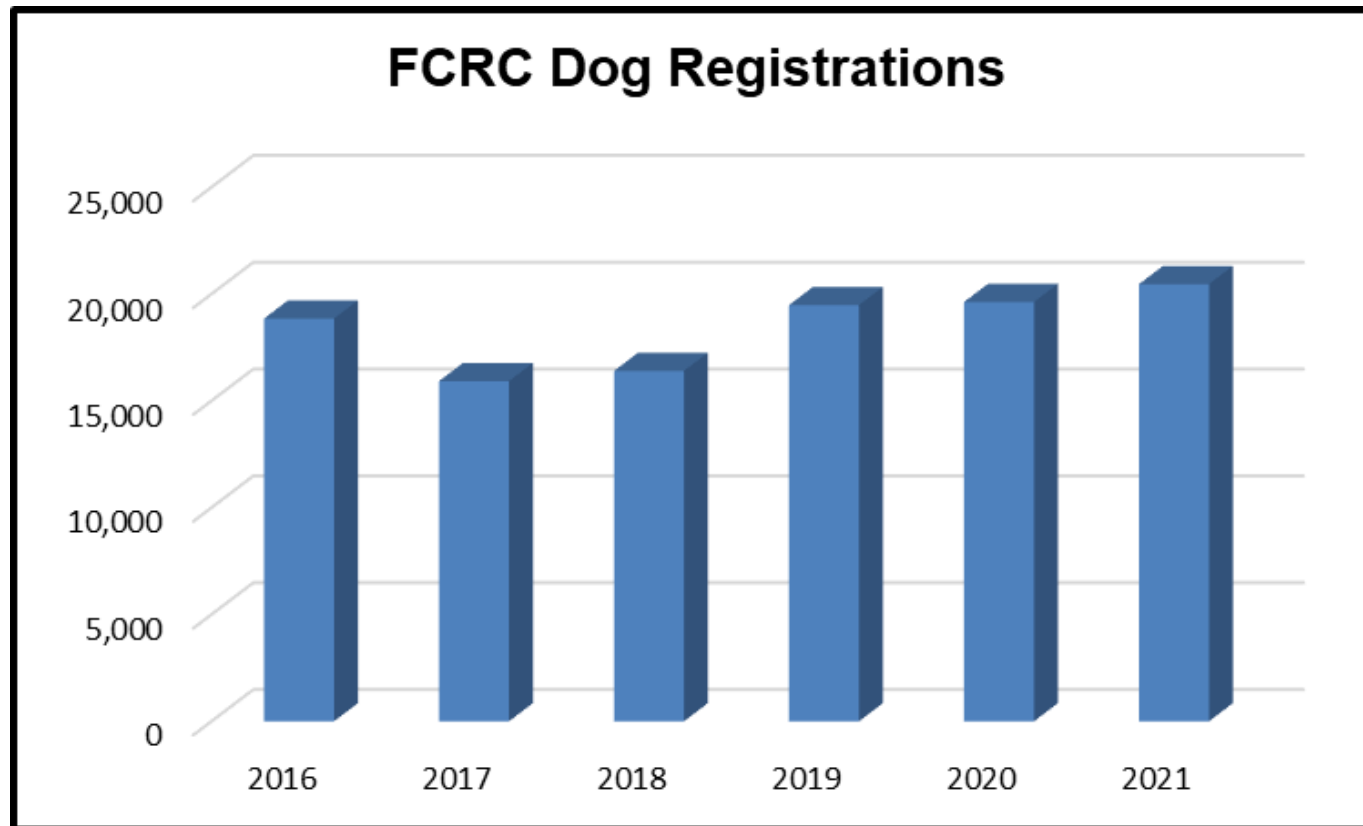
While annual dog registrations fluctuate, data collected via the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate that approximately 40% of Australian households own at least one dog, making them the most popular type of pets.

Our goal is to improve the number of registrations in the region. The Council registration database is an important tool used for returning lost dogs and identifying offending animals. It is important that owners' details are kept up to date.

Advantages of Registration

- ❖ **Pets are more likely to be returned to owners in a timely fashion;**
- ❖ **It reduces the need for unidentified animals to be re-homed or euthanised;**
- ❖ **It reduces the number of days/time spent in the animal management facility;**
- ❖ **It helps to ensure owners comply with their statutory requirements to have their pet registered;**
- ❖ **It allows a history to be maintained on Council's systems;**
- ❖ **It can be utilised to directly contact relevant owners to provide information and education material on pet ownership; and**
- ❖ **It acts as a 'proof of ownership' identification system for all registered pets.**

Fraser Coast Region dog registration numbers



* Numbers reflect total registration renewal notices issued at this point in time.

What we currently do

- ❃ Provide free **first-time registration for dogs (up to the end of the current renewal period)**;
- ❃ Offer lower registration renewal rates for dogs that are **desexed and micro-chipped**;
- ❃ Return wandering pets **without impounding** if they are **registered and micro-chipped (restricted hours Mon-Fri)**;
- ❃ Provide dog tags upon registration (and free replacement tags upon request);
- ❃ Provide dog off-leash areas across the region; and
- ❃ Provide dog bags through dispensers at locations across the region, including beach access and off-leash areas.



Proposed actions

- ❖ **Simplify the registration fee structure;**
- ❖ **Collect relevant fees at the point of return of impounded animals that are not desexed and/or micro-chipped (ensuring they are returned in accordance with relevant legislative requirements – State and Local);**
- ❖ **Review service level expectations and align staffing/resourcing to meet community needs;**
- ❖ **Encourage community, through education, to embrace responsible pet ownership;**
- ❖ **Encourage voluntary compliance with State and Local Laws; and**
- ❖ **Apply increased and proportionate enforcement response to matters of non-compliance or continued non-compliance.**

Future considerations or opportunities

- ❖ **Implement free and/or subsidised micro-chipping days at community locations for cats and dogs;**
- ❖ **Undertake proactive patrols across the region, including weekends and after-hours;**
- ❖ **Develop an education plan and implement across the community on matters of responsible pet ownership; and**
- ❖ **Investigate concession opportunities for desexing of animals.**



ENFORCEMENT

Council has an obligation to work with the community to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership through information, education and investigation. To mitigate the risk of harm to the community from aggressive dogs may require escalated actions such as formal enforcement or prosecution.

Council is authorised to investigate matters under both State legislation and Fraser Coast Regional Council Local Laws.

The *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* governs animal identification requirements as well as provisions in relation to dog attacks and regulated dogs.

***Local Law No.1 (Administration) 2011* and *Local Law No.2 (Animal Management) 2011* along with their subordinates, govern the keeping of animals and the prescribed requirements for doing so.**

What the community told us:

“More patrols/enforcement needed along the beach.”

“More enforcement of cats being kept in their own yards.”



What we currently do

- ❖ Respond to customers within business hours to domestic animal related matters including: dog attacks; aggressive dogs; wandering pets (cats and dogs); dogs off-leash; and livestock on Council controlled roads;
- ❖ Respond to after-hours calls that are or are a possible threat to public safety - dog attacks, and livestock on Council controlled roads;
- ❖ Facebook posts and Media releases; and
- ❖ Website factsheets.

Proposed actions

- ❖ Implement an enforcement manual and associated staff training to provide measured and appropriate responses to irresponsible pet owners within the community;
- ❖ Undertake a review of the local laws to:
 - provide staff the appropriate legislative tools to enable better responses to pet-related issues
 - ensure staff are appropriately authorised to undertake regulatory enforcement
 - ensure animal management processes align with community expectations and needs
 - ensure the Local Laws recognise and promote good practice in animal management
- ❖ Review service level expectations and align staffing/resourcing to meet community needs;
- ❖ Review and develop internal enforcement and review/appeal policy, which will support officers in making objective decisions surrounding matters of animal management, and
- ❖ Undertake proactive patrols across the region, including on weekends.

DOG ATTACKS (INVESTIGATION)

The impact of an attack or encountering an aggressive dog is not only an immediate risk, but quite often results in long lasting physical and emotional trauma for those involved.

Council takes reports of dog attacks and aggressive behaviour seriously and prioritises serious attacks for immediate response.

Proposed actions

- ❖ Investigate options to create a team dedicated to the investigation of dog attacks and aggressive domestic animals;
- ❖ Provide specialist training to ensure officers are knowledgeable and competent in investigation, decision-making and enforcement;
- ❖ Develop a decision-making framework to work in partnership with the enforcement manual providing clear processes for investigations of and enforcement action taken as a result of a dog attack; and
- ❖ Deliver high level of customer service and response to all parties involved through clear communications and updates until a matter is finalised.

# complaints	2019	2020	2021
Dog Attacks	220	212	230
Aggressive Dogs	211	237	270

Whilst official dog attacks and complaints about aggressive dogs remain consistent over the past 3 years, anecdotal evidence suggests that this figure is not indicative of the number of actual occurring within the community. Low levels of reporting can occur for a number of reasons including but not limited to:

- ❖ Victims failure to report due to fear of reprisals or other reasons;
- ❖ Parties to an incident settling matters without Council intervention;
- ❖ Failure of third party organisations reporting to Council

BARKING DOGS

Dogs barking is a natural behaviour. At times however, sometimes unknown to the animal owner, pets can adversely impact other community members. Council acknowledges and understands the impact a noise nuisance can have upon members of the community. Council aims to provide a more customer focused approach to barking dog complaints and is deploying new technology to assist with collecting evidence so that any matters which progress to enforcement meet appropriate standards of evidence.

# complaints	2019	2020	2021
Barking Dogs	695	551	595
Other noise nuisances	41	55	74

What the community told us:

“I cannot get action over an intimidating barking dog”

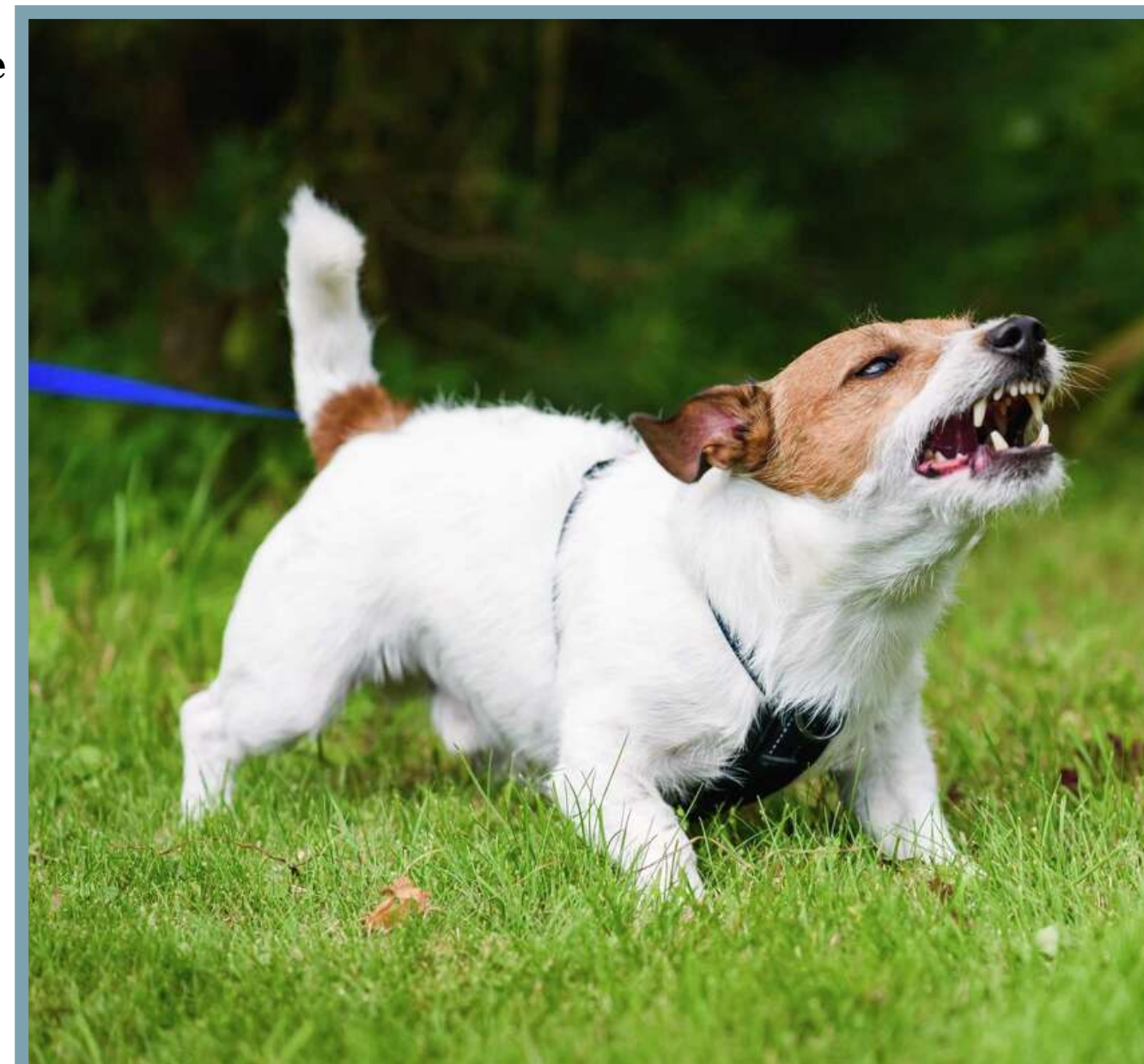
“Current process to complain about dogs barking are inappropriate & ineffective.”

What we currently do

- ❖ Investigate instances of alleged nuisance via diary collated data.

Proposed actions

- ❖ Implement a barking dog information pack which outlines (for both the customer and owner), the process for investigation and determination of animal noise nuisances;
- ❖ Incorporate both traditional officer intervention and investigation with utilisation of scientific noise monitoring devices; and
- ❖ Improve legislative provisions surrounding noise nuisance (local laws) and provide officers with a clearly defined framework for investigation and enforcement.



TRAINING, SERVICES, AND ANIMAL FACILITIES

TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Council recognises that competent and motivated staff are its greatest asset. Recruitment and ongoing training are key to delivering high quality, consistent and transparent service in accordance with established legislation, policies and procedures.

Council will focus on ensuring Officers are appropriately trained and experienced to educate, investigate and enforce legislative provisions within their authorisations and delegations.

What the community told us:

“Our local ranger has visited a few times.....each time it has been an education for both of us and a pleasant experience.”

“Differing information is provided depending on which staff member you speak to.”

“This should be the absolute priority. The old idea of the ‘dog catcher’ is dead and gone. We need to promote the education standard and qualifications the officers possess.”



What we currently do

- ❖ Offer basic induction training and on-the-job training to our officers including in relation to Council systems, local laws and legislation; and
- ❖ Offer opportunity for staff to undertake education courses in relation to domestic animal regulation.

Proposed actions

- ❖ Implement a detailed induction and training plan for new staff;
- ❖ Implement an enforcement manual and associated staff training to provide measured and appropriate responses to irresponsible pet owners within the community;
- ❖ Undertake a review of the local laws to provide staff the appropriate legislative tools to better respond and manage domestic animal related issues;
- ❖ Commit to increasing authorised officer qualifications; and
- ❖ Require specific levels of skill and experience at employment.

Future considerations or opportunities

- ❖ Review service level provision in order for Council to deliver enhanced responses to the community demand; and
- ❖ Enhance the current induction & training plan with a focus on:
 - providing staff the appropriate legislative tools to enable better response and management of animal-related issues;
 - ensuring staff are appropriately authorised to undertake regulatory enforcement;
 - ensuring animal management processes align with community expectations and needs; and
 - ensuring that Local Laws recognise and promote good practice in animal management.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES / OFF-LEASH AREAS

Dog off-leash areas provide the opportunity for owners to exercise and socialise their dogs. Pets that are well socialised and exercised are likely to be healthier, happier and less aggressive.

Dog off-leash areas are valued by the community and, while primarily for the benefit of our beloved pets, off-leash parks offer just as many benefits to humans as they do dogs. They are areas to exercise, to socialise, to bond with others and their pets and to meet with like minded community members and groups.



What the community told us:

“More fenced parks with two areas, not just one area.”

“I think the local laws need to be changed so that there are no off-leash areas except for dedicated fenced enclosures.”

“I think Council is better than most in providing off-leash facilities, both in terms of quality and location.”



What we currently do

- ❖ Provide and maintain secure off-leash dog parks across the region;
- ❖ Provide signage at beach access points indicating on an off-leash areas; and
- ❖ Provide dog dispenser bags at strategic locations throughout the community.

Proposed actions

- ❖ Review and identify areas of high use to better accommodate our growing community;
- ❖ Identify ways to improve existing purpose-built facilities;
- ❖ Install additional & high-visibility signage at off-leash locations; and
- ❖ Review service level provisions with the view to increase ranger patrols across the region, particularly in off-leash beach and parks areas.

Future considerations or opportunities

- ❖ Updating local laws in line with community needs and wants around off-leash areas.

CUSTOMER & BUSINESS SERVICES

Council recognises the importance of having effective channels of communication and accessibility of council services.

We are committed to removing barriers that customers may face in accessing staff, information, services and technologies by introducing new and innovative solutions and smart technology.

Council is committed to a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring our animal management services and initiatives support the needs of the community through ease of use, innovation and creativity.

What the community told us:



“Out of hours rangers are essential and not provided.”

“Can’t get to speak with anybody concerning animal problems.”

“There needs to be 24/7 availability to rangers in regards to lost/found/wandering animals.” “There are not enough Animal Management officers to adequately deal with the issues.”

“Customer service is always friendly.”

What we currently do

- ❖ Provide services Monday-Friday for all matters, with attendance to matters being triaged and subject to officer availability;**
- ❖ Provide after-hours on-call services for emergency situations only (threats to public safety including dog attacks and livestock on Council controlled roads); and**
- ❖ Provide domestic animal facilities open to the public from 10:00am-2:00pm Monday to Saturday.**

Proposed actions

- ❖ Provide a high level of customer service and offer alternative service delivery options where appropriate;**
- ❖ Develop a clear decision-making framework to demonstrate transparency of decision-making;**
- ❖ Provide customer relations training including conflict resolution;**
- ❖ Review opportunities for extended service provision to the public, particularly in relation to wandering pets, proactive education and pound operating hours; and**
- ❖ Increase business service efficiencies for processing customer requests and complaints.**



POUNDS AND ADOPTION CENTRE

Fraser Coast Regional Council is one of the few local governments in Queensland which operates both a Pound and Adoption Centre. In fact, we operate two facilities – one in Maryborough (Pound only) and one in Hervey Bay (Pound & Adoption Centre).

Our team operate a ‘fear free’ centre, with all staff having undergone training to ensure they look after the animals physical and emotional wellbeing while housed in our facilities.

We understand that a lost pet is a difficult and emotional situation for both a pet and the owner. We care about the community’s pets and their health and wellbeing. Our first priority is to ensure that pets and the community are safe.

What the community told us:

“Hours of operation are inadequate.”

“The staff are doing their best, but the facilities are outdated, and cats are not adequately housed.”

“We have moved a lot and I was happy to meet great staff, clean facilities and reasonable adoption fees in this region.”

“There is an increasing need for more facilities.”

“Opening hours ...some variation between days, e.g. open early to mid-morning some days and late afternoon to evening other days to allow for those who work.”



What we currently do

- ❖ Reunite lost pets with their owners;
- ❖ Re-home pets where they can't be reunited;
- ❖ Ensure the health and well-being of all animals that come through the centre;
- ❖ Work in conjunction with local refuges and foster groups to re-home as many pets as possible;
- ❖ Educate the community; and
- ❖ Apply appropriate enforcement actions when required.

Proposed actions

- ❖ Continue building relationships with rescue and foster groups in and out of the region to increase re-homing rates;
- ❖ Construct a new cat quarantine facility to minimise communicable disease and spread;
- ❖ Ensure continuing promotion of good practice in ensuring care, treatment and welfare of impounded animals;
- ❖ Develop and implement training plans for all current and new staff including in welfare and care of animals and compliance/enforcement; and
- ❖ Review operating days and times to meet community demand.

Future considerations or opportunities

- ❖ Investigate options to construct a centralised purpose-built facility in recognition that the region continues to grow and our current facilities may not meet growth and demand predictions; and
- ❖ Review service level provisions with the view to ensuring any dog or cat leaving the facility is micro-chipped and desexed (impounded adopted animals).

Did you know?

Our facility in Hervey Bay currently has capacity to house the following:

# capacity	Pound	Adoption Centre
Dogs & Puppies	24	24
Cats & Kittens	32	10

We have limited capacity to house small livestock or poultry

In 2020/2021 we impounded, returned to owners, adopted or rescued, the following animals:

# animals impounded	2020	2021
Dogs & Puppies	682	626
Cats & Kittens	605	567
Other	93	91

# animals returned to owner	2020	2021
Dogs & Puppies	411	366
Cats & Kittens	122	111

# animals adopted or rescued	2020	2021
Dogs & Puppies	153	108
Cats & Kittens	240	196

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SPACES

The relationship people have with pets is changing. For many people, they are not just a pet to enjoy at home but have become part of the family. Animals participate in everyday activities within the community, for example, walks on the beach, enjoying a visit to the local café, play dates in the park, festivals and events.

We are committed to improving the livability of our region by providing safe and accessible places that everyone can enjoy. This includes a diverse range of places where pets are welcome whilst ensuring that we maintain and preserve our natural environment and wildlife for future generations and ensure community safety.

What the community told us:

“When on the beach I do not know where on/off-leash starts and stops.”

"Visible patrols are needed to ensure the locals do the right thing in our parks and beaches"

Council's role is to support the community, ensuring safety and enforcing regulation where necessary. We are committed to supporting open public places that:

- ❖ Are safe and accessible with clear signage to ensure harmonious usage;
- ❖ Are inclusive of community needs;
- ❖ Protect the natural environment and wildlife; and
- ❖ Are responsive to changes in the local community needs.

Council will work with pet owners to ensure the safety and amenity of the broader community is maintained. Collaborative, proactive and enduring partnerships with community and other government agencies to support responsible animal management are core outcomes sought by this strategy.

The outcomes and success of both proposed and projected actions will achieve and deliver on the goal of safe and inclusive spaces which accommodate and consider the needs of the entire Fraser Coast Community.

NEXT STEPS

The delivery of objectives and commitments set out in the plan will be supported through implementation of key priorities in coming years. The approach taken will ensure that the outcomes align with community sentiment and that over the life of the plan objectives can be monitored, evaluated, changed and improved where required.

YEARLY REVIEW

The proposed actions & future considerations or opportunities will be reviewed annually to:

- ❖ Ensure they align with the current objectives of Council's corporate and operational plans.**
- ❖ Ensure they are achievable and align to ongoing community expectations.**

