

Domestic Animal Management Plan **2012-2016**

37 pages



Adopted 25 July 2012

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Executive Summary

“Professional, Prepared, Proud”

Recent amendments to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* has legislated that all Victorian Councils revise their existing Domestic Animal Management Plans by November 2012.

During the development of this plan, Bass Coast Shire Council embraced the opportunity to engage with stakeholder groups, the broader community, and Council’s Animal Management Team. Feedback and suggestions obtained have been integrated into the Plan’s strategic directions.

Strategies developed have been thoughtfully considered to ensure that:

- They help to educate the community;
- Provide for an improved enforcement;
- Are consistent in their approach;
- They reward responsible pet ownership

The document has been balanced so that pet owners and the needs of the broader community are considered, Council’s overarching plan and vision is incorporated where appropriate, and Legislative requirements of the Act are met.

Introduction and Context

Purpose

The Domestic Animal Management Plan sets the strategic direction in terms of animal management within Bass Coast Shire for the next four years, allowing for review on an annual basis. It will reflect what Council does in relation to animal management and will work out ways to improve current practices and set future directions and action plans.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan is a State Government requirement under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*. The Development of the Domestic Animal Management Plan was guided by the Department of Primary Industries – Bureau of Animal Welfare, across all Victorian municipalities. The Plan aims to increase the relative profile and importance of the domestic animal management function in the local government sector.

Process Applied in Developing this Plan

Bass Coast Shire Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan has been developed in consultation with the following key groups:

- Council's Animal Management Team
- An internal stakeholder reference group – comprised mostly of Council's Animal Management and Local Laws team
- An externally focussed stakeholder reference group –
(including representation from Phillip Island Nature Park, South Gippsland Animal Aid, Wonthaggi Dog Obedience Club and local veterinarians)
- Additional targeted consultation
(including representation from Parks Victoria, Committees of Management for San Remo Foreshore, Grantville and District, Corinella Foreshore, Cape Woolamai Coast Action, and the Non-Resident Ratepayers Group of Inverloch)
- Broad community consultation with both pet and non-pet owners

The existing Domestic Animal Management Plan was reviewed against both community needs and the requirements of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Bass Coast Shire Council – Demographic Profile

Bass Coast Shire is a 90 minute drive from Melbourne's CBD and encompasses 865 square kilometres of land. Its unique coastline is complemented by a beautiful hinterland. The major centres of the Shire are Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville. Bass Coast is one of the few Victorian municipalities whose three major industries are tourism, construction and agriculture.

The origin of the Shire

The traditional owners of the Shire are the Bunurong people. The area takes its name from George Bass who sighted the area during an expedition to prove the existence of Bass Strait in 1796. Bass Coast has a rich history that is central to the establishment of the State of Victoria. In 1826 Corinella was established as a permanent settlement, the second in the State. Victoria's third permanent settlement was established on the Bass River shortly after the founding of Melbourne in 1835. In the early 1800s timber was the primary industry of the area. Timber was shipped to Melbourne and beyond from several ports along the coastline. Once the land was cleared, it was used for agriculture including dairying, beef farming and raising crops. The first coal discovered in Victoria was found at Cape Paterson. Coal mines were later established in Wonthaggi and Kilcunda, but ceased operation in the mid to late 1900s. Bass Coast was adopted as the official name of the Shire when the local governments were amalgamated in 1994.

Visitors and Events

The Shire boasts many beautiful beaches and unique nature reserves and attracts 3.4 million visitors including 35% of Melbourne's international visitors, each year. During peak holiday periods, Bass Coast's population exceeds 70,000. Phillip Island attracts many visitors with its world famous nightly Penguin Parade. The annual Motorcycle Grand Prix and V8 Supercars are also highlights of our annual events calendar. These major events are complemented by a growing number of unique local activities.

Agriculture and the Environment

The Bass Coast Shire is predominantly a coastal municipality with a unique coastline complemented by a highly productive agriculture hinterland. It has some of the most diverse, well known and well visited coastline in Victoria with major natural assets including Western Port (a Ramsar listed wetland site), Anderson Inlet, Bass River, Powlett River, Tarwin River, two Marine Parks, the Phillip Island Nature Park and other heath and bushland reserves. Bass Coast is also part of the internationally recognised Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve.

Many studies and reports have found that Bass Coast residents, businesses and visitors identify the natural local environment as a major lifestyle component and of paramount importance for living, working or visiting Bass Coast.

Population and the Sea Change Phenomenon

A rapid increase in population has seen many changes to the area in the past decade. There has been a strong increase in property prices and development, as a result of the high demand for residential properties. Bass Coast's proximity to Melbourne has made it a destination of choice for many people wanting to escape the city for a holiday or on a permanent basis.

In 2010, the Estimated Resident Population for the Bass Coast Shire was 30,974¹. The sea change phenomenon continues to have a considerable impact on population growth. Bass Coast Shire's population has increased by more than 7% since the last Domestic Animal Management Plan was developed in 2008.

Bass Coast has a higher than average proportion of older residents with 23% of the population aged over 65 years. That figure is expected to increase to 45% by 2021.

People who own, or are purchasing their homes make up 80% of the Bass Coast population - compared with a Regional Victorian average of 78 %. The total number of dwellings is 21,479.

A recent study into the Economic Impact of Tourism on the area revealed that 47% of people who own holiday homes in Bass Coast intend to live permanently in their holiday homes in the future. 85% of these said they planned to retire to Bass Coast.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates

Animal Management Programs and Services - Summary

Program	Service Level to Community
Domestic Animal Complaints	Dependent on the complaint priority, action timeframe can range from immediate to 3 days in line with Council's customer service charter
Dangerous Dog Complaints	Response immediately
After Hours – Emergencies on 1300 226 278 ➤ Wandering Dogs ➤ Dog Attacks	Animal collected if restrained at private property Animal collected if restrained in public place Attendance if emergency still exists
Wandering Cat Complaints	Cat Cage System
Patrols	Responsive only - patrols are conducted when advice is received regarding wandering animals
Identification and Registration	Annual registration renewal notices – 10 April Active enforcement Annual Pet Expo event Website / media releases and articles / brochures and flyers
Micro-chipping - discounted	Council currently participates in a Pet Expo annually, and runs microchipping at this in conjunction with Central Animal Records. A discounted rate of \$20 applies
Council's Domestic Animal Shelter Facility	Council's Domestic Animal Shelter is by appointment from 9.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). It is located in Cameron Street, Wonthaggi
Domestic Animal Business Inspections	Council conducts annual audits and issues annual compliance notices
Dangerous / Restricted Dog Inspections	Annual inspections
Communication and Education	Annual Pet Expo event Provision of press releases on varying animal issues, including locally identified "hot topics" as the need arises Website and brochures Council also distributes information from Bureau of Animal Welfare and the Victoria Law Foundation
Dogs on / off leash	Orders / legislation in place restricting dogs off leash to designated free-roam areas
Prohibited areas	Orders / legislation in place prohibiting cats and dogs from certain areas

Identification of Key Issues for Bass Coast Shire Council – Community and Stakeholder Consultation

A widely inclusive consultation process was undertaken in order to obtain feedback and suggestions in regard to responsible animal management across the municipality. Feedback and suggestions obtained have been integrated into the Plan's strategic directions.

Community Survey – Responsible Pet Ownership

Council consulted the community about issues regarding responsible pet ownership – and how these issues affect individuals and neighbourhoods. Council also asked residents to provide suggestions for measures that may be implemented to address any issues. The survey was designed to capture opinions in relation to current strategies and assist in developing future strategies.

Council developed a questionnaire, which was then distributed to the community during June 2011. 4800 written questionnaires were mailed out a random selection of dog owners, cat owners and non pet owners from Council's databases. 900 of the questionnaires were specifically mailed to non-resident ratepayers. The survey was also available to the community online via a link on Council's web site.

602 responses were received and processed, which is a 12.5% response rate, and is indicative of the high level of community interest in this issue.

- 59.3% of respondents were pet owners
- 24.9% of respondents were non-resident ratepayers

The survey identified the following issues as the key matters of concern to the community, with regard to CATS:

- Threat to flora and fauna
- Cats should be contained to owner's property
- Wandering cats
- Feral/ stray cats
- Cats defecating on other people's property

The survey identified the following issues as the key matters of concern to the community, with regard to DOGS:

- Dog waste
- Irresponsible owners
- Wandering/ roaming dogs
- Barking
- Controls for dogs on beaches

With specific regard to off leash areas for dogs in the municipality:

- 23.5% of respondents reported that they were aware that Bass Coast has specified off-leash areas for walking dogs
- 15.9% of respondents reported that they believed that the specified off-leash areas provided were sufficient

The survey identified the following issues as the key matters of concern to the community, with regard to REGULATIONS:

- Greater need for enforcement of regulations and patrols
- Need to educate the community – more information needed
- Owner accountability

Animal Management Team Workshops

Bass Coast Shire Council's Animal Management Team also workshopped ideas and strategies, based upon the feedback received from the responsible pet ownership community survey.

The Animal Management Team was specific with their feedback and able to offer suggestions based upon their industry experience:

- Investigate possibilities for additional off leash areas in the municipality
- Develop a broad communication strategy to improve education regarding responsible pet ownership
- Consider options for rehousing unclaimed animals due to limited pound capacity
- Take a van to more isolated communities and conduct reduced cost microchipping and education
- Investigate possibilities for compulsory desexing of animals

Reference Group – Industry and Community Stakeholders

This group was created in order for Council to be able to consult specifically with a spectrum of industry stakeholders, and included members from the Phillip Island Nature Park, South Gippsland Animal Aid, Wonthaggi Dog Obedience Club, local veterinarians, local residents and key members of Bass Coast Shire Council. The group initially worked together to discuss issues relating to domestic animal management in Bass Coast Shire, and then again to workshop key issues identified as part of the survey.

Suggestion themes from these discussions were:

- Investigate possibilities for additional off leash areas in the municipality
- Investigate the option of installing dog faeces bins / bags at areas where dogs can be exercised
- Regulatory bodies to work together to ensure a consistent approach to domestic animal management
 - Work with DSE / Parks Victoria and Committees of Management to discuss approach to off leash areas
 - Standardise signage across the municipality, between the various management bodies (ie. DSE / Committees of Management / Council)
 - Introduce 'Where Can I Walk My Dog' brochures to other areas of municipality (already exists for Phillip Island)
- Improved education regarding responsible pet ownership
 - Introduce education in schools
 - Add links to Council's website that makes reference to useful programs
 - Utilise community groups as a means for community education
 - Officers to hand out information when patrolling
 - Develop 'Barking Dog' information kits for both complainants and owners
- Conduct additional subsidised microchipping
- Investigate possibilities for compulsory desexing of animals
 - Offer incentives for desexing (eg. first year of registration free)
 - Benchmark other Councils regarding the process undertaken for implementing desexing policies
- Reward responsible owners
- Investigate possibilities for introduction of a cat curfew /confinement policy

Additional Targeted Consultation

The purpose of consulting with specific community groups and organisations was to gain further information regarding concerns, ideas and strategies for the future regarding domestic animal management.

Various foreshore committees of management were consulted, including the following:

- ParksVictoria
- San Remo Foreshore Committee of Management
- Grantville and District Foreshore Committee of Management
- Corinella Foreshore Committee of Management
- Cape Woolamai Coast Action
- Non-Resident Ratepayers Group of Inverloch

ParksVictoria comments

- Unsure if there are any possible areas viable for off-leash, main concern is hooded plover nesting sites (rare and threatened species)
- Cats form a high proportion of predators – ParksVictoria has no resources for targeted cat control work (only 2 rangers)
- Need to work together – different bodies of management
- Rules differ and are unclear to the public
- Need consistent signage
- Additional education tools
- Could Council expand 'Where Can I Walk My Dog' brochure for Phillip Island to include other parts of Bass Coast?

Committees of Management (general)

- Installation of water fountains in parks with 'overflow' water bowls for dogs (San Remo specific)
- Installation of dog waste bins and bags in populous areas
- A need to regulate dogs on beaches in summer – more issues occur in holiday season
- A need for opportunities to 'run' dogs safely
- Increased community education required

Statement of Purpose

The Community and Council Vision

Council's Vision

"We will be valued by the community for our leadership and as a provider of quality services to ensure Bass Coast is a safe, healthy and enjoyable place to live, work and visit."

Council's Mission

"To maximise the quality of life of our community, now and into the future"

The vision for our community's future has been incorporated into six overarching Council Plan Objectives:

1. Advocacy
2. Cohesive Communities
3. Business Prosperity
4. Sustainable Environment
5. Good Governance

The Domestic Animal Management Plan

The Domestic Animal Management Plan is part of the Guiding Bass Coast Towards 2030 philosophy, and has particular links to the second Council Plan Objective:

Council Plan Objective	Animal Management Objectives
2. Cohesive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community satisfaction with community safety• Community satisfaction with enforcement of local laws

Council's Animal Management Team - Community Safety Rangers

Bass Coast Shire Council's Animal Management Team – Community Safety Rangers is situated within the Community Safety Department.

The purpose of this team is to contribute to the Council Plan Strategic Directions by:

- Implementing Council's responsibilities under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- Ensuring appropriate regulation of dog and cat ownership
- Reduction of the impact of domestic animals on community amenity

Ultimately though, the purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan is to achieve a balance in meeting the needs of the community – including both pet owners and non pet owners.

Strategic Directions for Animal Management



I.0 Training of Authorised Officers

Actions in this section address Section 68(A)(2)(b) of the Domestic Animals Act by outlining programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in Bass Coast Shire Council.

Training of Authorised Officers – overall objective

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work

Current Situation

Population size and land area of Bass Coast Shire

Bass Coast Shire is a 90 minute drive from Melbourne's CBD and encompasses 865 square kilometres of land. Its unique coastline is complemented by a beautiful hinterland. The major centres of the Shire are Wonthaggi, Cowes, Inverloch, San Remo and Grantville. Bass Coast is one of the few Victorian municipalities whose three major industries are tourism, construction and agriculture.

In 2010, the Estimated Resident Population for the Bass Coast Shire was 30,974². The sea change phenomenon continues to have a considerable impact on population growth. Bass Coast Shire's population has increased by more than 7% since the last Domestic Animal Management Plan was developed in 2008.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates

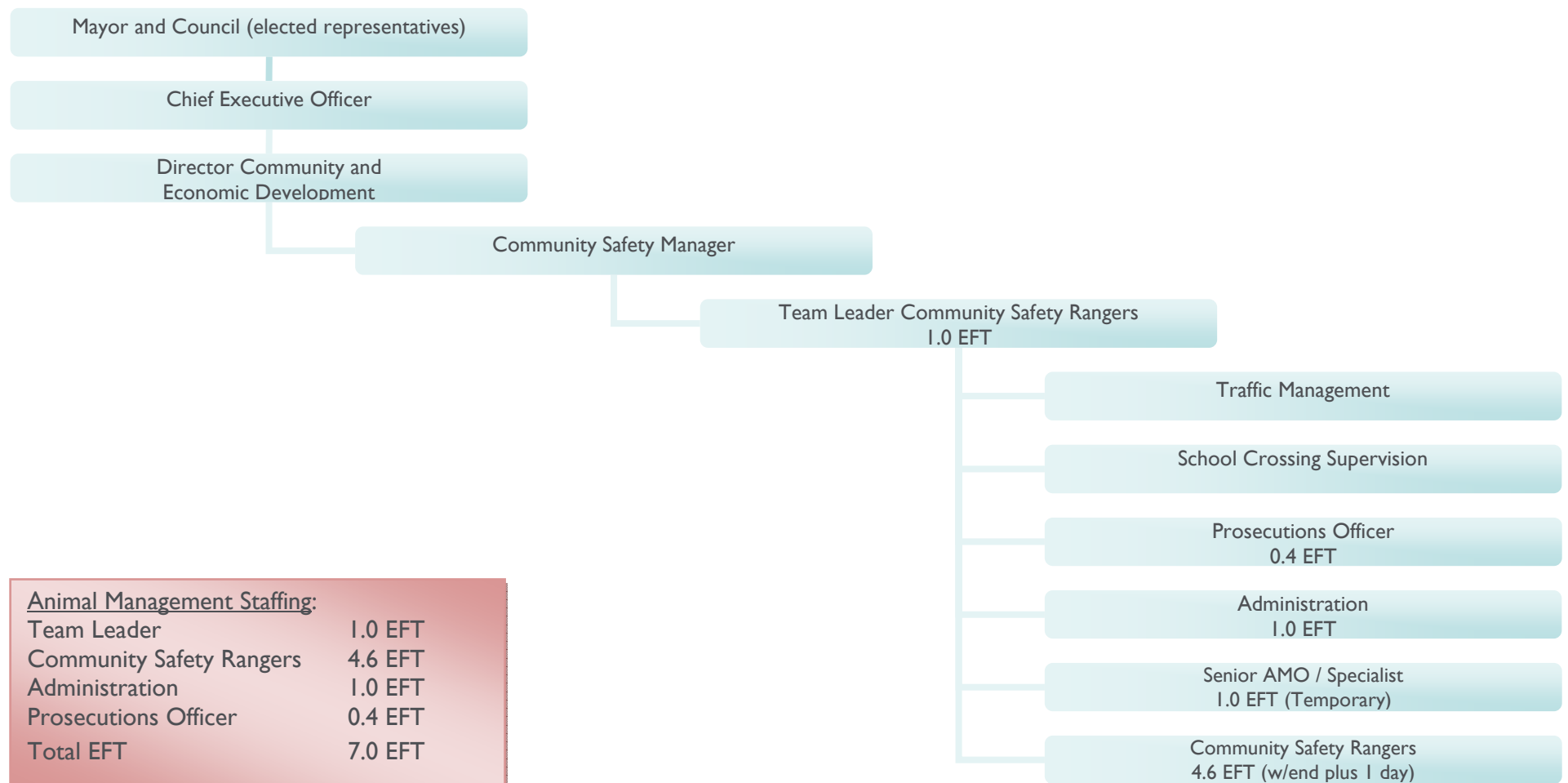
Domestic animal statistics and data

Bass Coast Shire Council Key Statistics	Bass Coast Shire Council (base data) 2010-11 financial year	Bass Coast Shire Council ³	Other Rural 2 Group Councils ⁴	State Average
Population	30,974	30,974		
Households	21,479	21,479		
Area	865km ₂	865 km ₂		
Number of EFT authorised Animal Management Officers	4.6	0.21 per 1000 households	0.41 per 1000 households	0.21 per 1000 households
Hours of training per officer annually	30	30	38 hours	62 hours
Number of Registered Dogs	5,317	248 per 1000 households	605 per 1000 households	428 per 1000 households
Estimated Dog (owned) Population	7,530	7530		
Number of Registered Cats	1,191	55 per 1000 households	183 per 1000 households	150 per 1000 households
Estimated Cat (owned) Population	1,585	1585		
Number of Registered Declared Dogs	0	0		

³ Bass Coast Shire Council Data recalculated to reflect Bureau Animal Welfare benchmarking format

⁴ Data provided by Bureau Animal Welfare 2005-06

Staffing and operational structure



Current and ongoing training activities

- All staff are required to undertake a minimum of 30 hours learning and development, per officer, annually - as part of individual personal development programs
- On the job training, plus ongoing coaching
- Staff to hold minimum Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation – or have appropriate other relevant qualifications
- Staff representation on industry bodies and committees

Staff Skills Training Program

Course	Notes	Officers	Current 2012	Planned 2013	Planned 2014	Planned 2015
OH & S Training (inc Manual Handling)	Bi-Annual refreshers	All	X		X	
Dealing with Difficult People/Conflict Management – Customer Service	Bi-Annual refreshers	All		X		X
Insert Microchipping		Senior	X			X
Animal Handling / Animal Behaviour		All	X	X	X	X
First Aid	Refresher course – all staff, as required	All	X	X	X	X
Animal Behaviour		AMO Rangers	X	X		
Industry seminars/workshops	Annually - rotation	All	X	X	X	X
Animal Mgt Enforcement workshops		Senior		X		X
Cert IV Local Government Stat Compliance & Animal Management	Requirement for all staff to complete – rotation	All	X	X	X	

Our Plans – Training of Authorised Officers

Objective 1.1: Develop and maintain a training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training.

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
1.1.1	Conduct staff skills audit to determine training gaps	Dec 2012	Annual review of spreadsheet, to ensure its accuracy and to determine whether proposed training goals have been met for each officer
1.1.2	Develop learning and development calendar to address identified training gaps	Dec 2012	As above

Objective 1.2: Offer at least 1 opportunity for officers to attend industry training / networking sessions each year.

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
1.2.1	Work with other agencies to facilitate the ability to cross train officers	June 2013	Annually - review how many officers undertook training
1.2.2	Attend BAW regional training seminars	Annually	Annually - review how many officers undertook training

Objective 1.3: Undertake microchip implantation courses

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
1.3.1	Undertake microchip implantation courses, as identified in staff skills matrix	Ongoing	Annually - review how many officers undertook training

2.0 Registration and Identification

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(v) and 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f) - by outlining services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.

Current Situation

Our data

As with many other Victorian Councils, Bass Coast Shire Council's estimated owned dog and cat populations notably exceeds that of the registered dog and cat population.

Number of Registered Dogs	5,317
Estimated Dog (owned) Population	7,530
Number of Registered Cats	1,191
Estimated Cat (owned) Population	1,585

Council consulted the community about issues regarding responsible pet ownership – and how these issues affect individuals and neighbourhoods. Community education was noted as a contributing factor in improving the level of responsible pet ownership within the community. Actions relating to community education have been tabled in Section 3.0 of this document under 'Nuisance' – and they are also transferable to enhancing the level of compliance with registration and identification requirements.

Actions tabled in this Section 2.0 Registration and Identification concentrate primarily on the need to reward residents for responsible pet ownership, making things easier and more cost-effective for the community.

This section also focuses on the need to improve Council's internal registration functionality, and review suitable IT systems.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Annual registration renewal and reminder notices
- We enforce the legislative requirements of the Act, and have no additional orders or policies regarding registration and identification
- Legislative requirement for registration of dogs and cats at age of three months
- Legislative requirement for microchipping of all newly registered dogs and cats

Our current education / promotion activities

- Use of local media / website to promote registration requirements
- Discounted microchipping at the annual Pet Expo
- Annual microchipping at The Pet Expo (San Remo)
- Regular media releases / articles in local newspapers regarding responsible pet ownership issues
- Provide a range of educational materials / brochures for the community
- Use of Council website as a promotional tool including links to other agencies and useful websites
- Annual registration renewal notices

Our Compliance Activities

- Issue cautions and infringement notices
- Investigate complaints
- Patrols conducted upon request
- Cat cage system

Summary

Council will endeavour to maximise the number of registered and identifiable domestic animals – in order to aid compliance activities and to help reunite lost pets with their owners.

It is anticipated that the municipality will continue to experience notable population growth, and subsequently an increase in dog and cat population. Council will require an improved ability to effectively manage the registration database and extract useful statistics that inform decisions in the future.

Our Plans – Registration and Identification

Objective 2.1: Review the registration fee structure to encourage and reward responsible pet ownership in the community

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
2.1.1	Conduct review	Annually	Completion of review, with recommendations for future registration structure amendments

Objective 2.2: Trial microchipping and registration in townships

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
2.2.1	Trial 'mobile one stop shop' – inclusive of microchipping - in nominated townships to increase number of microchipped and registered animals	Dec 2013	Analysis and report of findings from trial

3: Improve functionality of registrations software

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
2.3.1	Undertake business analysis of needs and determine if current software is able to meet needs (eg AM2000)	June 2013	Completion of business analysis, with recommendations for the future
2.3.2	Develop business case to either enhance current software or replace with new system	June 2013	As above
2.3.3	Conduct ongoing investigations of improvement in technology	Annually	As above

Also refer to Section 3 – Nuisance, and the following objectives:

- 3.1 Development of an education strategy
- 3.2 Cooperate with other agencies to enhance education outcomes
- 3.3 Improve awareness of regulations and requirements for responsible pet ownership

3.0 Nuisance

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(vi) and 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f) – by outlining programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.

Current Situation

Our data

Council consulted the community via a questionnaire to 5000 residents about issues regarding responsible pet ownership – and how these issues affect individuals and neighbourhoods. Additional targeted consultation was also undertaken with key stakeholder and land management groups.

The following were identified as the key matters of concern, with regard to CATS:

- Threat to flora and fauna
- Cats should be contained to owner's property
- Wandering cats
- Feral/ stray cats
- Cats defecating on other people's property.

The following were identified as the key matters of concern, with regard to DOGS:

- Dog Waste
- Irresponsible owners
- Wandering/ roaming dogs
- Barking
- Controls for dogs on beaches.

All of the key issues identified by the community relate in some way to Nuisance, so strategies developed are heavily weighted towards minimising Nuisance, which then has a flow on effect across other areas including minimisation of harm to wildlife, improving registration and identification rates, etc.

Community education was considered to be a big factor in decreasing the level of Nuisance. Additionally, it was noted that due to the number of bodies managing different areas of public land in the municipality, the regulations and requirements were sometimes considered to be unclear.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Designated dog off leash areas
- Designated 'No dogs and cats allowed' areas
- Pet owners to remove faeces from public places and carry a means to collect faeces
- Local law regulating the number of dogs and cats kept at a property

Our Education/Promotion Activities

- Annual microchipping at The Pet Expo (San Remo)
- Regular media releases / articles in local newspapers regarding responsible pet ownership issues
- Provide a range of educational materials / brochures for the community
- Use of Council website as a promotional tool including links to other agencies and useful websites

Our Compliance Activities

- Issue cautions and infringement notices
- Investigate complaints
- Patrols conducted upon request
- Cat cage system

Summary

We hope to encourage people to manage their pets in a way that protects the health and welfare of the animal, maximises the companion benefits of their pet and minimises potential for nuisance or harm to others.

Our Plans – Nuisance

Objective 3.1: Development of an education strategy

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.1.1	Develop an education program which can easily be 'taken to the community'	Dec 2013	Program development
3.1.2	Develop an educational strategy that specifically targets visitors and non-resident ratepayers	Dec 2013	Strategy development

Objective 3.2: Cooperate with other agencies to enhance education outcomes

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.2.1	Work closely with the Bureau of Animal Welfare to assist them to effectively deliver the Pet Ownership for Schools Program	Dec 2013	Annual report of outcomes
3.2.2	Work with pet groups to better promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership and suitable breeds chosen for lifestyle	Dec 2013	Annual report of outcomes

Objective 3.3: Improve awareness of regulations and requirements for responsible pet ownership

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.3.1	Develop a strategic DAM media release / mail out calendar	June 2014	Calendar development and implementation
3.3.2	Develop information kits for responsible pet ownership	June 2014	Availability and distribution of kits
3.3.3	Utilise Council's on-hold message facility as a promotional tool	June 2014	Number of times on-hold message utilised annually
3.3.4	Enhance educational materials available for dog barking issues – targeted at both complainants and owners	June 2014	Review of materials complete
3.3.5	Conduct information programs at nominated townships	June 2014	4 programs conducted annually
3.3.6	Provide staff with promotional material for hand out where required whilst on patrol	June 2014	Availability of materials
3.3.7	Develop a series of rewards for responsible pet owners	June 2014	List of rewards and circumstances for award

Objective 3.4: Establish a Domestic Animal Management Committee of regulatory bodies

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.4.1	DAM Committee to meet bi-monthly with the purpose of encouraging holistic approach to domestic animal management across the municipality (eg. Council, Parks Victoria, Phillip Island Nature Parks, various foreshore committees of management, etc)	June 2013	Number of meetings, attendance and outcomes
3.4.2	DAM Committee to develop agreement regarding dog and cat access throughout the municipality: Areas of prohibition – dogs and / or cats Dog on-leash areas Dog off-leash areas / dog playgrounds Consistency of signage (Develop a municipality-wide map of abovementioned areas for use by community and visitors)	Dec 2013	Report of outcomes

Objective 3.5: Establish additional patrols

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.5.1	Conduct additional patrols of 'hotspots' as identified through Council's Customer Request System	Dec 2012	List of additional patrols undertaken annually
3.5.2	Establish regular patrols of beaches	Dec 2012	List of beach patrols undertaken annually

Objective 3.6: Consider conducting a trial of dog waste bins and bags

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.6.1	Undertake benchmarking of other Councils. Conduct feasibility, plan and implement if feasible	June 2014	Benchmarking report undertaken, report of findings from trial (if applicable)

Objective 3.7: Consider planning options for future off leash areas

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.7.1	Liaise with Council's planning department Investigate options for incorporation of off-leash areas into sub-division applications - Implement if feasible	June 2013	Report of outcome

4.0 Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(vi) and 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f) – by outlining 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.

Current Situation

Our data

Currently, Bass Coast Shire Council has no dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs registered within the municipality.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Provide details of dangerous dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry
- Council is following DAA procedures to comply with recent changes to the Act.

Our Education/Promotion Activities

- Supply and distribution of literature and pamphlets regarding keeping dangerous dogs

Our Compliance Activities

- Annual inspections of dangerous / restricted dogs for compliance
- Prosecute non-compliant owners
- Investigation of complaints
- Ensure all dogs declared by Council are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry

Summary

We endeavour to minimise the risks of dog attack to the community and animals from menacing, dangerous or restricted breed dogs.

Our Plans – Dangerous. Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Objective 4.1: Actively enforce new restricted breed dog laws

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
4.1.1	Apply consistent approach to enforcement by development of Standard Operating Procedures (also referenced in 5.1.1)	Dec 2012	Development of Standard Operating Procedures
4.1.2	Constantly review Standard Operating Procedures on a regular basis for best practice and currency	Annually	Annual review undertaken

Objective 4.2: Apply standards to identify restricted breed dogs

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
4.2.1	Apply new approved Standards for Restricted Breed Dogs in Victoria	Dec 2012	Evidence that Standards have been applied consistently

Objective 4.3: Regular inspection of premises

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
4.3.1	Annual premises inspection to ensure compliance with regulations	Dec 2012	List of premises and inspections annually

Objective 4.4: Provide information that is up to date and easily understood

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
4.4.1	Ensure that information available to both owners and the broader community is clear and concise	Dec 2012	Availability and distribution of information
4.4.2	Amend pet registration form to reflect new regulations regarding declared dogs	Dec 2012	Registration form amended accordingly

5.0 Dog Attacks

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(iii) and 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f) - by outlining programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.

Current Situation

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Designated dog off leash areas
- Designated 'No dogs and cats allowed' areas
- Local law regulating the number of dogs and cats kept at a property
- Policy relating to officer response times in the instance of dog attack or bites

Our current education / promotion activities

- Use of local media / website to promote registration requirements
- Discounted microchipping at the annual Pet Expo
- Annual microchipping at The Pet Expo (San Remo)
- Regular media releases / articles in local newspapers regarding responsible pet ownership issues
- Provide a range of educational materials / brochures for the community
- Use of Council website as a promotional tool including links to other agencies and useful websites

Our Compliance Activities

- Issue cautions and infringement notices
- Investigate complaints
- Patrols conducted upon request

Summary

We endeavour to minimise the risk of dog attacks on people and animals.

Our Plans – Dog Attacks

Objective 5.1: Develop more stringent procedures for follow up of dog attacks

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
5.1.1	Undertake the development of Standard Operating Procedures (also referenced in 4.1.1)	Dec 2012	Development of Standard Operating Procedures
5.1.2	Constantly review Standard Operating Procedures on a regular basis for best practice and currency	Annually	Annual review undertaken

Also refer to Section 3 – Nuisance, and the following objectives:

- 3.1 Development of an education strategy
- 3.2 Cooperate with other agencies to enhance education outcomes
- 3.3 Improve awareness of regulations and requirements for responsible pet ownership
- 3.4 Establish a Domestic Animal Management Committee of regulatory bodies
- 3.5 Establish additional patrols

6.0 Overpopulation and High Euthanasia

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(iv) and 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)- by outlining programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats.

Current Situation

Our data

Compared to other Victorian Councils, Bass Coast Shire has very good rates of rehousing and returning dogs and cats to their owners, and subsequently relatively low euthanasia rates. Although Council still continuously strives towards improvement in this area.

It is generally agreed that there is an issue with feral animals, particularly cats, and their impact upon wildlife in this largely rural municipality.

Bass Coast Shire Council Key Statistics	Bass Coast Shire Council (base data) 2010-11 financial year	Bass Coast Shire Council ⁵	Other Rural 2 Group Councils ⁶	State Average
Number of Impoundments (dogs)	318	14.8 per 1000 households	7.5 per 1000 households	8.5 per 1000 households
Number of Dogs Returned to Owner	235	74% of impoundments	47.2% of impoundments	55.7% of impoundments
Number of Dogs Rehoused	46	14% of impoundments	12.0% of impoundments	13.2% of impoundments
Number of Dogs Euthanased	37	12% of impoundments	40.8% of impoundments	31.1% of impoundments
Number of Impoundments (Cats)	125	5.8 per 1000 households	6.4 per 1000 households	5.7 per 1000 households
Number of Cats Returned to owner	31	25% of impoundments	6.6% of impoundments	8.7% of impoundments
Number of Cats Rehoused	48	38% of impoundments	12.3% of impoundments	17.2% of impoundments
Number of Cats Euthanased	46	37% of impoundments	81.1% of impoundments	74.1% of impoundments

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Legislative requirement for microchipping of all newly registered dogs and cats

⁵ Bass Coast Shire Council Data recalculated to reflect Bureau Animal Welfare benchmarking format

⁶ Data provided by Bureau Animal Welfare 2005-06

Our current education / promotion activities

- Use of local media / website to promote registration requirements
- Discounted microchipping at the annual Pet Expo
- Annual microchipping at The Pet Expo (San Remo)
- Regular media releases / articles in local newspapers regarding responsible pet ownership issues
- Provide a range of educational materials / brochures for the community
- Use of Council website as a promotional tool including links to other agencies and useful websites

Our Compliance Activities

- Issue cautions and infringement notices
- Investigate complaints
- Patrols conducted upon request
- Cat cage system

Summary

It is Council's aim to further reduce the euthanasia rates and overpopulation levels by working with the community to reduce the number of 'entire' animals in the municipality. Our fostering relationships with approved shelters will also assist to increase the rate of animal rehousing.

Our Plans – Overpopulation and Euthanasia

Objective 6.1: Investigate compulsory desexing of newly registered dogs and cats at age of 3 months

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.1.1	Benchmark other Councils with these regulations in place to gain learnings	Dec 2013	Benchmarking undertaken and report of findings
6.1.2	Prepare Council report to gain approval of new order	Dec 2013	Report to Council
6.1.3	Promote new regulations to the community	June 2014	Effectiveness of communication strategy

Objective 6.2: Investigate a desexing voucher program for concession card holders

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.2.1	Liaison with veterinary clinics	Dec 2013	List of veterinary clinics consulted and report of outcomes
6.2.2	Conduct feasibility study	Dec 2013	Feasibility study undertaken and report of outcomes
6.2.3	Implement if feasible	June 2014	Number of animals desexed as part of the scheme Cost to run scheme Any changes in the longer term re proportion of desexed animals on pet registration database, proportion of impounded pets that are desexed

Objective 6.3: Establish a 24 hour cat containment policy in the municipality

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.3.1	Benchmark other Councils with these regulations in place to gain learnings	Dec 2013	Benchmarking undertaken and report of findings
6.3.2	Prepare Council report to gain approval of new order	Dec 2013	Report to Council
6.3.3	Promote new regulations to the community	June 2014	Effectiveness of Communication Strategy

Objective 6.4: Display photographs of impounded animals on Council's website

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.4.1	Photograph impounded animals upon arrival at the pound for display on Council's website	Dec 2013	All impounded animals to be displayed on website

Objective 6.5: Utilise fostering services of approved organisations to rehouse impounded animals

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.5.1	Seek to develop a fostering agreement with an approved organisation	June 2014	Fostering agreement developed and implemented

7.0 Domestic Animal Businesses

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(ii) and 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f) – by outlining 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.

Current Situation

Our data

We currently have 6 registered Domestic Animal Businesses – 3 pet shops, 2 boarding kennels and 1 breeder. Also, we have 2 additional breeders' applications being processed for consideration.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- We enforce the legislative requirements of the DAA.

Our current education / promotion activities

- Supply and distribution of information regarding Domestic Animal Management Businesses and relevant codes of practice.

Our Compliance Activities

- Domestic Animal Business inspected for compliance annually.
- Investigation of complaints / enforcement action for non-compliance.

Summary

We endeavour to work in partnership with domestic animal businesses to achieve Council's domestic animal management goals.

Our Plans – Domestic Animal Businesses

Objective 7.1 Provide Domestic Animal Business workshops

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
7.1.1	Work with Council's Economic Development team to provide Council / Domestic Animal Business workshops for sharing information – for current and prospective proprietors	Dec 2014	Number of workshops undertaken annually

Objective 7.2 Provide Domestic Animal Businesses with information kits

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
7.2.1	Develop information kits for Domestic Animal Businesses	June 2014	Availability and distribution of information kits

Objective 7.3 Undertake research to proactively identify unregistered Domestic Animal Businesses

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
7.3.1	Undertake research – such as web searches, signage displayed, and word of mouth	Ongoing	Compare number of registered DAB before and after each activity

8.0 Other Matters

Actions in this section address Section 68A(2)(e) by providing 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.

Our Plans – Other Matters

Objective 8.1: Consider establishing an Education Officer position at Council to coordinate a strategic community education process for domestic animal management.

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
8.1.1	Develop business case in order to prepare for additional staff bid in business planning / budgetary process	June 2015	Development of business case

Objective 8.2: Review Local Laws and Orders to ensure Domestic Animal Management Plan objectives can be met.

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
8.2.1	Conduct review	Dec 2012	Report of findings

Objective 8.3: Improve welfare of impounded animals

#	Activity	When	Evaluation
8.3.1	Improve Pound facilities to ensure ongoing compliance with BAW regulations	Dec 2012	Pound facilities are compliant
8.3.2	Seek continuous improvement in animal management vehicles	June 2013	Undertake research and report of findings

9.0 Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

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.

Our Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Process

Bass Coast Shire Council will monitor performance of the animal management services that are detailed in this plan by reporting annually through the Council's established reporting systems.

Review Cycle / Date for this Plan

Bass Coast Shire Council has a comprehensive business planning and monitoring system in place. Any new initiatives or ongoing programs identified in this plan will be recorded in that system and reported against in accordance with the KPIs shown in the previous section.

This system will also feed outcomes into Council's annual report.

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Manager Community Safety in consultation with the Community Safety Ranger Team. A report will be presented to Council.

The Plan will be reviewed and a new Domestic Animal Management Plan will be completed on or before 30 June 2016.