

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

HUME CITY COUNCIL



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



Acknowledgement of Country

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, which includes the existing family members of the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia’s identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

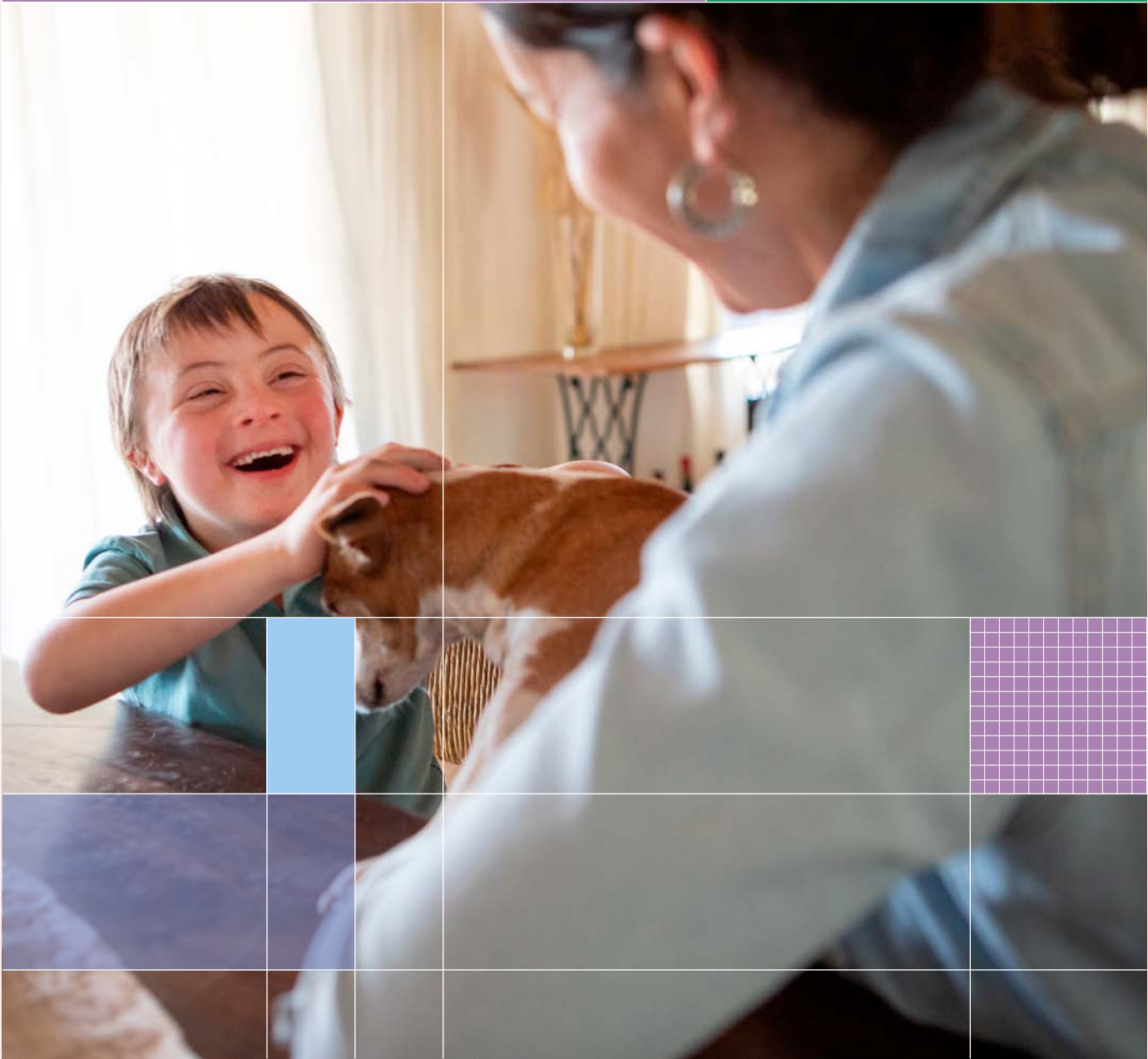
Contents

1. Introduction and Context	2
2. Training of Authorised Officers	16
3. Programs to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership and compliance with legislation	22
4. Programs to address overpopulation rates and any high euthanasia rates	32
5. Animal Registration and Identification	38
6. Animal Nuisance complaints	46
7. Dog Attacks	52
8. Dangerous, menacing and restricted breeds	58
9. Domestic animal businesses	64
10. Other matters	68
11. Annual review of plan and annual reporting	72
Appendix	74

DRAFT

1

Introduction and context



1.1 – Purpose of Domestic Animal Management Plan

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) requires councils in Victoria to develop a domestic animal management plan (DAMP), every four years.

The DAMP must outline council services, programs and policies established to address the administration of the Act, and councils' management of dog and cat issues in their community. Council must review its DAMP annually and publish an evaluation of the implementation of the past year's actions in its Annual Report. This DAMP will cover the period from late 2026-2030 as opposed to the standard four-year period.

DAMPs should cover the following issues:

- Ensure that people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation
- Minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals
- Address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats
- Encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats
- Minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance
- Effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations
- 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
- 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
- Provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

DRAFT

1.2 – Process for developing the Plan

Hume City’s DAMP was developed through extensive community and stakeholder engagement to ensure that it identified and addressed specific animal management issues across the City.

In addition to engagement with community members and stakeholders, the plan has been developed following review and consideration of historical service data, best-practice frameworks and approaches. The development of the DAMP was driven by a multi-disciplinary project working group across the following stages.



Stage 1 Community Consultation

A detailed community engagement program was delivered to encourage the community of Hume to have their say on domestic animal management issues. The main consultation method was an online survey where a total of 393 surveys were completed. The engagement gathered feedback from a wide cross section of the diverse areas across Hume and was distributed through:

- Letter and postcard mailout to **3,000 residents**, 50% of whom had a registered animal
- Intercept surveys conducted at pop-up events in shopping centres in **Sunbury, Broadmeadows, Mickleham and Craigieburn**
- Publication on the **Participate Hume** website with promotion through social media campaigns.
- **Six key stakeholder interviews** were undertaken via Teams and an addi

Survey Responses

393 surveys completed

Online/ Intercept Survey Responses

A total of 393 surveys were completed online or through pop-up events in shopping centres in Sunbury, Broadmeadows, Mickleham and Craigieburn.

Cat and Dog ownership

75.6% have a cat or dog

24.6% do not have a cat or a dog

Awareness of the DAMP and Local Laws

- **48%** were aware that Hume City Council has a plan that promotes responsible pet ownership
- **65.1%** were aware that Hume City Council has local laws that seek to protect the community and environment in relation to animals.
- **95.9%** were aware that dog owners are required to pick up their dog droppings.
- **91.3%** were aware all cats and dogs over 3 months old must be registered with Council.
- **94.9%** were aware dogs must be under control of their owners at all times, even in designated dog off-leash areas and dog parks.
- **86.8%** were aware that, all cats and dogs must be microchipped to be registered with Council.
- **82.4%** were aware cats and dogs registrations must be renewed each year by April 10th.
- **79.8%** were aware cats and dogs cost more to register if they are not desexed.

Awareness of the DAMP and local laws was slightly higher among dog and cat owners than those who did not own pets.

DRAFT

Stage 1 (cont)

Community Consultation

Concerns with responsible animal management

The three top rated concerns about animal management were:

- Cats wandering at night.
- Impact of cats on fauna and flora.
- Owners not controlling their dogs in public.

Promoting responsible animal management

The highest priorities identified by community members that Council should focus on in relation to domestic animal services and initiatives are:

- 24/7 emergency service to report dog attacks and stray animals.
- More enforcement action for residents who do not care for their pets.
- More enforcement action for residents who do not control their pets.

The top responses regarding other ways Council could provide more enforcement actions included:

- Higher fines for pet owners who do the wrong thing.
- More enforcement officers in public, doing spot checks and patrolling dog and other parks.
- Better safety in public areas such as more CCTV and surveillance in dog parks.
- More prompt action when residents report animal management issues to Council.

Cat Curfews

Respondents were asked if they support the introduction of a cat curfew.

- 77.2% support a cat curfew
- 14.9% do not support a cat curfew
- 7.9% don't know

Cat owners are less likely to agree that Council should introduce a curfew for cats (65.8%) than those who own a dog (75.6%) and those who don't own a cat or dog (88.0%).

The level of support for a cat curfew has increased since 2023 - from 73.7% to 77.2%.

Dusk to dawn curfew or a 24-hour curfew

Respondents who supported the introduction of a cat curfew were asked if they want Council to consider a dusk to dawn curfew or a 24-hour curfew.

62.4% preferred a 24/7 curfew

37.6% preferred a dusk to dawn curfew

Stage 2

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were undertaken with animal rescue centres, vet clinics and adoption centres. Combined key findings from these interviews included:

- Education, awareness raising, more resources and information about responsible animal management and pet ownership, including in languages other than English commonly spoken in the community is needed.
- Pet ownership including increased costs associated with desexing, registration, microchipping and vet care are all influenced by cost-of-living pressures.
- Cat overpopulation, increased stray animal populations and the low reclaim rate of lost and stray animals are increasing concerns
- Programs, schemes and incentives that support pet owners such as puppy school, training and desexing vouchers or free desexing programs would be supported.
- Partnering with animal rescue centres, vet clinics and adoption centres could help drive positive outcomes.

Stage 3

Council Workshop

Council officers across various departments participated in a workshop to analyse the community feedback and to determine and prioritise appropriate objectives and actions for the DAMP.



Stage 4

Public exhibition

The draft DAMP was developed and presented at the 13 October 2025 Council meeting where it was endorsed for Public Exhibition.

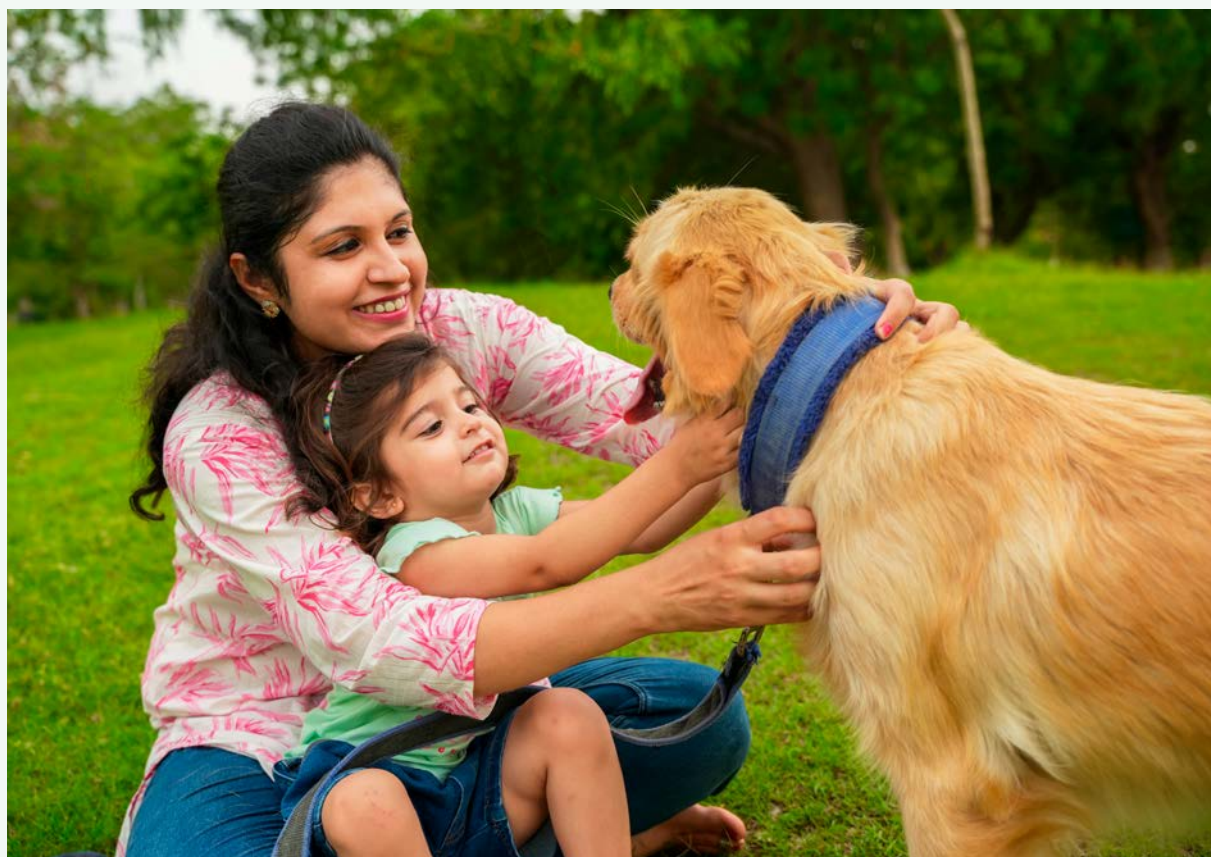
Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) of DAMP

The *Gender Equality Act 2021* requires Councils to undertake a gender impact assessment (GIA) on all Council policies, programs, and services that are deemed to have a significant impact on the community.

The GIA for the DAMP identified that women may be impacted differently to men. The

assessment considered the gendered division of household labour, sense of safety when walking alone at night, financial hardship in sole parent households, and vulnerability for women in a family violence situation. Additional impacts were identified for women who primarily speak a language other than English and women with a disability. The gender of the DAMP survey respondents were also mostly women.

There is a need to ensure information and administration related to the DAMP is easily accessible, and opportunities explored to provide support for women with pets seeking to leave a family violence situation.



1.3 – Demographic and Council profile

Hume City Council is located 15 kilometres north of the centre of Melbourne and is one of the fastest growing and most culturally-diverse communities in Australia.

The municipality is made up of vibrant and diverse communities including new and established areas, major industrial and commercial precincts and vast expanses of rural areas and parkland.

Hume is a city of great contrasts, including its geography, economy, backgrounds and cultural diversity. Spanning an area of approximately 504 square kilometers, the City is made up of the following suburbs:

- Attwood
- Broadmeadows
- Bulla
- Coolaroo
- Craigieburn
- Dallas
- Gladstone Park
- Greenvale
- Jacana
- Kalkallo
- Meadow Heights
- Mickleham
- Roxburgh Park
- Sunbury
- Tullamarine
- Westmeadows

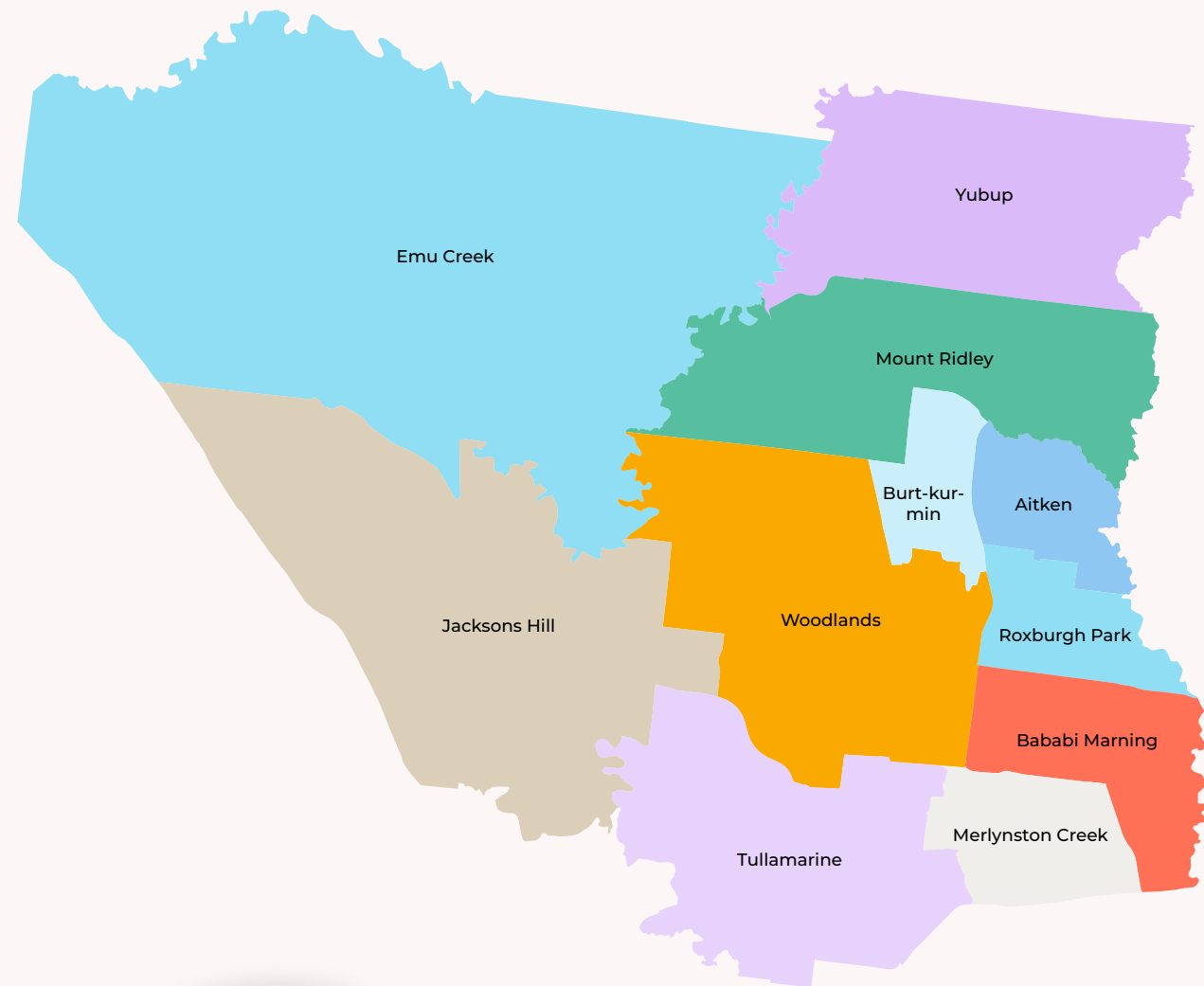
Hume is bordered by the local government areas of Merri-bek, Whittlesea, Brimbank, Macedon Ranges, Melton and Mitchell. Council works with neighbouring municipalities to respond to shared animal management concerns, coordinate animal management investigations, and to share best-practice processes and approaches.

In 2024, Hume City was home to 271,709 residents (Estimated Residential Population, June 2024). The population is growing rapidly and is forecast to increase to 411,674 people by 2041.

In 2024 there was a higher proportion of persons in all age groups below 20 years and a lower proportion of persons aged 60 or older when compared to Greater Melbourne.

Hume residents come from more than 160 different countries and speak over 140 languages, with 48.8% of people speaking a language other than English at home. The most common languages spoken other than English are Arabic, Turkish and Punjabi.

Hume City Council Wards



1.4 – Council Plans

Hume City Council has proudly adopted a refreshed Hume Community Vision 2045 – a thriving community with a strong sense of belonging.

Council's Strategic Planning Framework (Figure 2) describes how Hume City Council will work towards achieving the vision of the community.

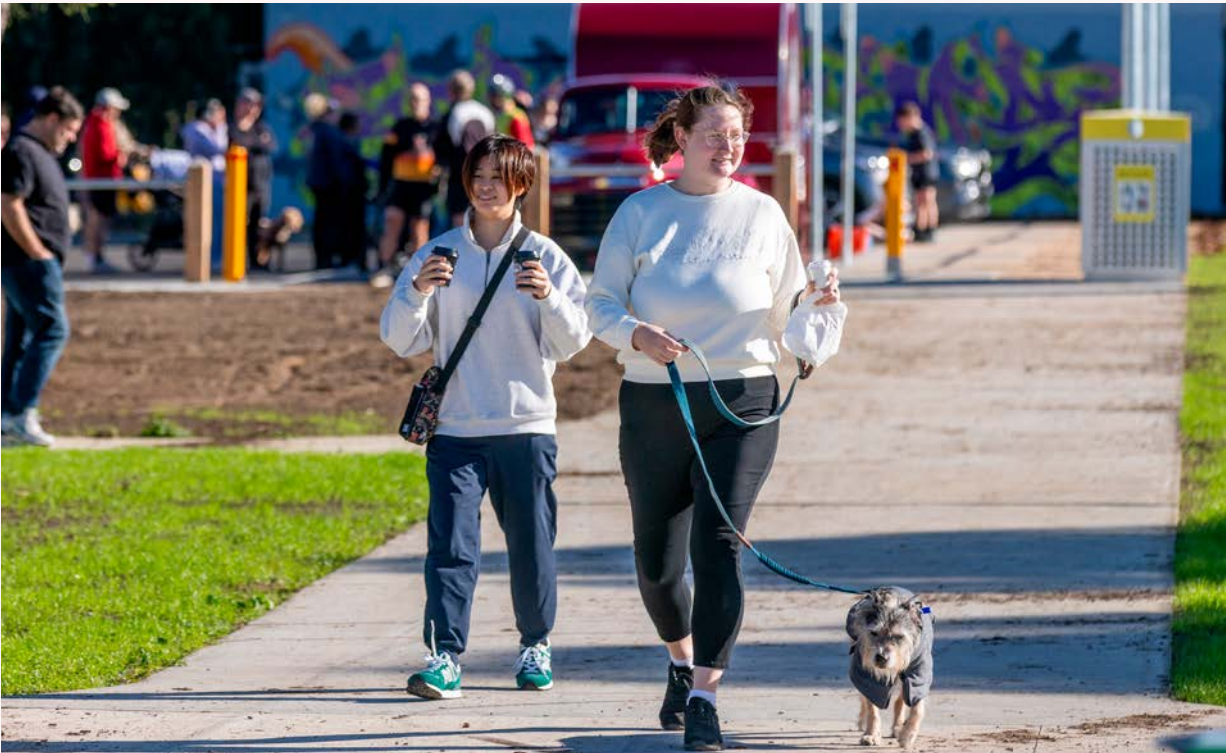
This planning framework consists of a number of integrated long, medium and short-term plans that consider the priorities and resources needed to achieve the strategic objectives of Council. These key Plans provide direction across the many Council services, including domestic animal management.

Figure 2: Council's Integrated Strategic Planning Framework



Source: Council Plan, 2025-2029, page 8

DRAFT



Hume Community Vision 2045

Hume City Council has adopted a refreshed Hume Community Vision 2045 – **a thriving community with a strong sense of belonging**. The Community Vision 2045 is the foundation of Council’s Corporate Planning Framework and is a plan for the whole community. Based on extensive community and stakeholder engagement, Hume Community Vision 2045 outlines the long-term vision for Hume City, and clearly states the community’s expectations and aspirations for the future.

Under the strategic objectives, **Equality, equity and inclusion and connection and Environmentally centred** there is an expectation that ‘everyone feels valued, safe and has a sense of belonging’ and ‘decisions are grounded by all aspects of our environmental impact, through the protection, conservation and expansion of our native flora, fauna, parklands and waterways’, including through responsible and considered domestic animal management.

Hume City Council Plan 2025-2029

The Council Plan takes an integrated approach to planning and includes actions incorporated as part of Council’s Municipal Health & Wellbeing and Disability Action Plan. This enables Council to align strategies, actions and initiatives across Council’s Strategic Objectives in an efficient and effective way in order to achieve multiple objectives at the same time.

Under Objective 1.3, Safe and well maintained places, there is an action **‘Increase in number of animal registrations’**.

1.5 – Context and current situation

Council’s role in animal management

The Hume City Council City Laws Team delivers a range of services, policies and functions to meet legislative responsibilities regarding animal management, and to promote and support responsible pet ownership, animal welfare, and positive health, safety and environmental outcomes for the community.

The purpose of Hume’s animal management service is to:

- Implement Council’s responsibilities under the Act and the General Local Laws.
- Promote the welfare of cats and dogs.
- Inform and educate the community about the benefits associated with pets, responsible pet ownership and the needs of companion animals.
- Respond to issues raised by the community about nuisance animals, e.g. barking dogs.
- Provide programs and services to support the community to be responsible pet owners, such as free desexing programs, education campaigns and park patrols.
- Provide animal welfare services through Lost Dogs Home.

A high-level summary of the current population and service numbers for domestic animals in Hume City is outlined in Table 1.

DRAFT

Domestic Animal Statistics

Table 1: Snapshot summary of current population and service numbers for domestic animals

● Program/ service ● Service level

16,200 dogs
6,535 cats

Identification and Registration

Annually

Identification and Registration campaigns

Acknowledge in
2 business days

Domestic animal complaints

Immediate
response

Dog attack and dog at large complaints

Responsive to
complaints

Routine street, park, reserve and creek patrols

Monday-Thursday
10am-5.30pm,
Friday 10am-4.45pm,
Saturday 9am-3.30pm,
Sunday 9am-12.30pm

Lost Dogs Home (opening hours)

Reduced fee voucher to
cover part of the cost of
dog or cat desexing
available to Health Care
and Pensioner Concession
Card holders

Micro-chipping and/or desexing
programs

Lost Dogs Home/On
Call City Laws
Officers

After Hours emergency service

19

Domestic Animal
Businesses Registered

1.6 – Domestic Animal Statistics snapshot
Currently there are 22,835 registered pets in
Hume City, 16,200 dogs and 6,635 cats.

There has been a 6.2% decrease in pet registration since 2020/21, despite continued population growth and suspected sustained levels of pet ownership across the municipality. This trend suggests a potential increase in unregistered animals, which is explored further in Section 5 of this plan.

There are a total of 37 declared dogs with nine (9) declared dangerous, 24 declared menacing, four (4) restricted breed dogs and 15 guard dogs in the municipality.

Hume has 19 registered Domestic Animal Management Businesses.

In 2024/2025 there were 3,096 animals brought into Lost Dogs Home by the public, surrendered by owners or brought in by City Laws Officers, where 620 have been reclaimed by owners, 1413 were rehomed and 933 were euthanised.

The City Laws Officers responded to 263 barking dog complaints, 2,001 domestic animal pick up requests, 550 dogs at large, 577 cat cage requests, and 425 dog attack reports including rushes.



DRAFT

2

Training of Authorised Officers



Delivering animal services that meet the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, to the level that the community expects, it is crucial to ensure that all Authorised Officers are appropriately trained and have the opportunity to participate in a robust training program.

What the community survey said...

There was strong support from the community for City Laws Officers to play a role of providing education to the community as well as enforcement when required. There was a desire for increased visibility of rangers in the community.

“More enforcement officers in public, doing spot checks and patrolling dog and other parks”



2.1 – Staffing and Authorisation

Council's City Laws Team is a multidisciplinary enforcement unit responsible for delivering compliance and regulatory services across a broad range of legislative areas. The team is led by the City Laws Coordinator and City Laws Team Leader, and is supported by a Team Leader – Administration & Business Improvement, a Senior Administration Officer, and two Administration Officers.

All City Laws Officers are formally appointed as Authorised Officers under relevant legislation and are empowered to enforce a wide range of Acts and Regulations, including:

- *Hume City Council General Local Law 2023*
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994*

- *Impoundment of Livestock Act 1994*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Road Safety Act – Road Rules*
- *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- *Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Summary Offences Act 1966*

While officers are trained to operate across multiple service areas, designated officers are assigned to prioritise animal management duties, ensuring consistent, timely, and effective responses to animal-related matters across the municipality.

DRAFT

2.2 – Training and Capability Development

Hume City Council is committed to ensuring that all authorised officers are appropriately trained and competent to administer and enforce the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and other relevant legislation.

Officer capability is developed through a structured and ongoing training program that includes:

- **Accredited qualifications** – All authorised animal management officers must hold or be actively working towards a Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation or an equivalent recognised qualification.
- **Comprehensive induction** – New officers complete a formal induction program covering Council policies, legislative frameworks, and standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- **On-the-job learning** – Officers gain practical experience through supervised fieldwork and mentoring by senior staff.
- **Industry engagement** – Officers participate in external training, seminars, and conferences to stay up to date with legislative changes, enforcement practices, and animal welfare standards.

2.3 – Ongoing Professional Development

To ensure officers remain current and capable in their roles, Hume City Council delivers regular, targeted training across key areas of animal management practice, including:

To ensure officers remain current and capable in their roles, Hume City Council delivers regular, targeted training across key areas of animal management practice, including:

- Conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques – enabling officers to manage challenging interactions with professionalism and empathy.
- Customer service and community engagement – fostering respectful, responsive, and inclusive communication with residents and stakeholders.
- Animal breed identification, behaviour awareness, and safe handling – ensuring officers can accurately assess animal behaviour and apply safe handling practices.
- Restricted breed dog identification – supporting compliance with legislative requirements and risk management protocols.
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) – including First Aid certification, manual handling, and field safety procedures to protect officers and the public.

This training framework is reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with legislative changes, industry standards, and emerging community needs.

2.4 – Our Action Plan

Table 4 and 5 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 2: Objectives 1.1 and 1.2.

Table 4: Activities under Section 2 Objective 1.1

Objective 1.1 - Ensure animal management officers have the skills necessary to support the community and effectively perform their regulatory role

Activity	When	Evaluation
Maintain and routinely review individual training and development plans for each authorised officer, capturing completed training, current certifications, and scheduled or recommended professional development activities.	Annually	Completion of annual goals and performance appraisals
Ensure all authorised officers participate in relevant industry training, mandatory refresher courses, and practical skill-building sessions to maintain legislative compliance, enhance technical capability, and support continuous professional development.	Ongoing	Training attendance records Annual training completion rate

Table 5: Activities under Section 2 Objective

Objective 1.2 - Create a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing

Activity	When	Evaluation
Celebrate team successes via internal and external promotions	Ongoing	Number of promotional posts or campaigns
Deliver training for in-home care service providers focused on animal management and reporting animal welfare	Annually	No of sessions delivered
Establish twice-yearly meetings with animal management teams from neighbouring councils to strengthen collaboration, share insights on emerging trends and issues, and align on effective regulatory strategies.	Annually	No of meetings attended

DRAFT

3

Programs to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership and compliance with legislation



During the engagement process, there was a mixed sentiment expressed by community members and stakeholders around responsible pet ownership with 59% of respondents feeling owners in their local area controlled their dog properly, but only 39% controlling their cat properly.

The communities' top priorities for services relating to domestic animal programs were:

- a 24/7 emergency call service to report dog attacks and stray animals
- more enforcement of local laws for residents who don't care for their pets; and
- the provision of a discount cat desexing program.

Other opportunities identified were providing education and training to residents, providing and promoting free and/or discounted services, introducing a cat curfew and increasing the provision of bins and bags for pet droppings.

"Conduct programs / leaflets / brochures about caring for pets, which includes de-sexing, how to keep them secure within the owner's boundary, dog training, need for socialising, etc."

"Have council patrolling more in parks etc to fine people who do not pick up dog poo or let their dogs off lead.."

"Provide more information on the laws and responsible pet ownership, apply the laws where necessary, more social media campaigns"

"They need to distribute the information in all languages so people understand."



3.1 – Context and current situation

**Council provides a 24/7 hotline and response to dog attacks.
A City Laws Officer will respond immediately**

Phone 9205 2200 as soon as the attack occurs

**If there is serious risk to a person’s life ring 000 then ring
Council at the time of the attack.**

Council provides information to educate the community about responsible pet ownership and has a number of existing initiatives and programs in place to encourage responsible pet ownership and to address compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

- Some of these programs include:
- Providing information and advice on responsible pet ownership, including the benefits of desexing, registration and microchipping.
 - Following up on unpaid animal registration renewals to ensure pets are registered as per legislation.
 - Providing a discounted desexing program to Hume residents who hold concession cards.
 - Maintaining, promoting and patrolling the on and off-leash dog parks and fenced in dog parks across Hume City.
 - Providing cat traps to residents for free and facilitating the collection of trapped cats.

Cats and Dogs At Large

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* does not allow dogs to be ‘at large’ outside the premises of the owner or not securely confined to the owner’s premises. For cats, however, the Council must make an ‘Order’ to require cat’s to be securely confined to the owner’s premises and to not be ‘at large’, this is often referred to as a ‘cat curfew’.

During the engagement process, community members expressed strong support for the introduction of a ‘cat curfew’ in Hume City (77.2% support), with a higher percentage preferring a 24-hour curfew to a dusk to dawn curfew. The most common drivers for community members supporting a curfew was protection of wildlife, safety for cats and preventing wandering cats doing damage to private property.

Opposition to a cat curfew was higher among cat owners (28.6%). Those who did not support a ‘cat curfew’ (14.9%), reported

it is natural for cats to wander, or cruel to keep cats inside. Others felt that cats were not an issue in their communities or felt the task of retraining or confining cats to private property was difficult or impossible.

The purpose of a ‘cat curfew’ is to ensure cats remain on their owner’s property and not ‘wander at large’ in the community. If implemented, owners could be fined for their cat ‘wandering at large’ just as dog owners are fined. Currently cat owners are only required to pay impound fees if their cat is caught on public or private land and impounded. Wandering cats create nuisance, cause damage to private and public property, harm wildlife, disturb responsibly contained dogs, contribute to increased unwanted kitten populations, and can spread disease to other animals and to humans. Other States in Australia have legislated that cats are not to ‘wander at large’ for many years which has been enforced by local government.

“The cats in the area were tormenting our dogs and causing distress. It is not fair how cats can be out and no one is responsible for them but as a dog owner I can’t do that. Cat owners should be held to the same account.”

“Keeps wildlife safe, keeps the cats safe, keeps the neighbours sane”



Dog Off Leash areas

All public areas of Hume are gazetted as dog on-lead areas. The exception are areas listed as ‘dog off-leash areas’. Providing dog off-leash areas is one of Council’s initiatives in promoting responsible pet ownership, by providing space for dogs to be socialised and exercised.

The use of off-leash areas still requires the owner to have their dog under effective control. Effective control means that **your**

dog will immediately ‘STOP’, ‘COME’, and ‘SIT’ on command. When using an off-leash dog park or area you must not allow your dog to harass, scare or annoy other people, dogs or animals. Remember your dog might be friendly and like other dogs but another person’s dog may not like your dog – always ask permission before allowing your dog to interact or for you to interact with another person’s dog.

The following areas within Hume City are designated off-leash areas:

Designated Dog Off-Leash Areas	On Active Reserve	Time restrictions
Emu Bottom Wetlands (excluding Horseshoe Bend). 300 Racecourse Road, Sunbury	No	No
The Nook. Vaughan Street Sunbury	No	No
Eric Boardman Reserve. 224-256 Mitchells Lane, Sunbury	Yes	No
Heysen Drive Reserve. Between Heysen Drive and Reservoir Road, Sunbury	No	No
Langama Park. 89-107 Mitchells Lane, Sunbury	Yes	No
Spavin Drive Lake. Aldridge Drive, Sunbury	No	No
Stewarts Lane Nature Reserve. Between Coates Ct, Streeton Ct and south of Stewarts Lane	No	No
Sunbury Park (including Sunbury Dog Park). 60 Harker St, Sunbury	No	No
Sunbury Recreation Reserve (Clark Oval). Riddell Road, Sunbury	Yes	No
Bulla Recreation Reserve. 17-45 Green Street, Bulla	Yes	No
Bradford Avenue Reserve. 26-40 Bradford Ave, Greenvale	Yes	Yes
Drummond Street Reserve. 11-25 Drummond Street, Greenvale	Yes	Yes
Greenvale Recreation Reserve. Section Road, Greenvale	Yes	No
Carrick Drive Reserve. 300 Carrick Drive, Gladstone Park	No	No
John Coutts Reserve. 45-48 Katrina Drive, Gladstone Park	No	No
Jack Ginifer Reserve. 206-224 Carrick Drive, Gladstone Park	Yes	No
Leo Dineen Reserve. 52-60 Spring Street, Tullamarine	Yes	No
Trade Park. 241 Melrose Drive, Tullamarine	No	No
Melrose Drive Reserve. 300 Melrose Drive, Tullamarine	Yes	No
Westmeadows Reserve. 136 Ardlie Street, Westmeadows	Yes	Yes
WillowBrook Reserve. 317 Mickleham Road, Westmeadows	Yes	No
Anderson Reserve. 2-14 Glen Allan Street, Broadmeadows	Yes	No

Broadmeadows Valley Park (including Dog Park). Barry Road (near sporting area & east of NS path), Broadmeadows	No	No
Broadmeadows Valley Park – Ripplebrook Reserve. Ripplebrook Drive, Broadmeadows	No	No
Seabrook Reserve. 20 Goulburn Street, Broadmeadows	Yes	No
Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery. 220 Camp Road, Broadmeadows	No	No
Gibb Reserve. 185 Blair Street, Dallas	Yes	No
Laura Douglas Reserve. 57-75 King Street, Dallas	Yes	No
Jacana Reserve. 59-79 Johnstone Street, Jacana	Yes	Yes
Jacana Valley. 157-159 Johnstone Street, Jacana	No	No
Shanklands Linear Parkland (BVP North). Between Somerton & Barry Road, Meadow Heights	No	No
Lakeside Drive Reserve. 27-51 Lakeside Drive, Roxburgh Park	Yes	No
Bolinda Road Reserve. Via Horne Street, Campbellfield	No	No
Seth Raistrick Reserve. 1678-1700 Sydney Road, Campbellfield	Yes	No
Progress Reserve. 27-59 Almurta Avenue, Coolaroo	Yes	Yes
Aitken Creek Reserve. Between Hothlyn Drive and railway line, Craigieburn	No	No
Craigieburn Dog Park. 127-147 Craigieburn Road (rear Craigieburn Lesure Centre), Craigieburn	No	No
DS Aitken Reserve. 136-170 Craigieburn Road, Craigieburn	Yes	No
Hothlyn Drive Reserve. 110-118 Hothlyn Drive, Craigieburn	Yes	Yes
Hume Tennis & Community Centre. Cnr Marathon and Newbury Boulevards, Craigieburn	No	Yes
Mt Ridley Hilltop Reserve. Mt Ridley Road, Craigieburn	No	No
Newbury Park. Cnr Newbury and Grand Boulevards (west of hockey fields), Craigieburn	No	No
Victor Ian Foster Reserve. 16-32 Pines Way, Craigieburn	Yes	No

Additional areas will see gazettal including Elmhurst Park Fenced Off Leash Area, Gladstone Park, Mickleham Dog Park, Kalkallo Dog Park.

Sites with time restrictions must have dogs on lead between 8am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Council regularly reviews and updates dog off-leash and prohibited areas as the community continues to grow and expand. Council’s website includes an up to date list of designated off-leash areas.

Animal registrations

Currently Council has 16,200 registered dogs and 6,635 registered cats in Hume. Registration and microchipping of both cats and dogs is required under the Domestic Animal Act. Refer to Section 5 Registration and Identification below for more information.

Animal related infringements

Table 6 shows the number of infringements issued in Hume. Overall, there has been a decrease since 2022/2023 to 2024/2025 (1,146 to 779).

Comparing 2022/2023 to 2024/2025 the figures were relatively stable with an increase in infringements issued for: dogs at large at daytime (503 to 310); failure to register dog/cat (440 to 318); and failure to renew registration for dogs and cats (68 to 60).

COVID-19 had a significant impact on residents and their pets. There was an unprecedented demand to adopt and foster pets during lockdown. Many community members acquired and adopted puppies, and due to an inability to attend puppy classes and obedience training, dogs have not undergone training and missed opportunities to socialise with people. This has resulted in

an increase in reports relating to dog behaviour in public.

Animal surrenders have increased across Australia over the past 3 years. Animal Welfare organisations report that the rising cost of living, rental crises, rising veterinary costs and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic have contributed to this trend. In Victoria, the impact of protracted lockdowns on animal socialisation and training opportunities has led to a spike in surrenders attributed to animal behavioural issues.

Stakeholders consulted during the development of the DAMP also reported an increase in behaviour related surrenders amongst people of lower socioeconomic and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, perhaps due to the unavailability of affordable and culturally appropriate education and training resources.

Table 6: Cat and dog infringements issued in Hume

Offence type	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Dog at large daytime	503	500	310
Dog at large night-time	105	50	48
Dog not under effective control	11	2	4
Failure to register cat/dog	440	337	318
Failure to renew registration cat/dog	68	64	60
Dog attack - non serious injury	19	35	39
TOTAL	1146	988	779

Compliance activities

- Enforcement using Notices to Comply, infringement Notices, Animal Management Agreements and, where required, court prosecution.
- Complaint investigation by Council.
- Follow-up non-renewed pet registrations.
- Random inspections of properties of declared dogs.
- Provision of cat traps to complainants in cases where education and advice has failed to prevent cat trespass.
- Impoundment of dogs or cats found wandering.
- Social media campaign around the registration renewal period.

3.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Section 26 *Domestic Animals Act 1994*: Hume City requires dogs to be kept under effective control while in a public place including in designated off-leash areas.

Local Laws

- **General Purposes Law No.1 2023:**
Section 39 – Keeping of Animals, requires a permit for keeping certain numbers of cats and dogs on different types of property

Section 40 – Housing of Animals, requires a minimum standard for keeping animals on private property

Section 41 – Dog Waste on Roads and in Municipal Places, requires management of dog waste in the community.

Policies and Procedures

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



3.3 – Our Action Plan

Tables 7 and 8 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 3 Objectives 2.1 and 2.2.

Table 7: Activities under Section 3 Objective 2.1

Objective 2.1: Promote community awareness and support for indoor cat lifestyles and pursue the introduction of local regulations requiring cats to be contained on or within the private property of their owner.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Distribute educational resources to cat owners highlighting the benefits of indoor living, cat enclosures and containment options.	Year 1 (2026)	Number of resources distributed
Develop and present a proposal for a municipal cat curfew requiring containment on private property.	Year 1 (2026)	Council report submitted/Council decision outcome

Table 8: Activities under Section 3 Objective 2.2

Objective 2.2: Promote responsible cat and dog ownership

Activity	When	Evaluation
Engage diverse stakeholders (e.g. schools, faith groups, multicultural networks) to co-design and deliver a culturally inclusive pet ownership education campaign.	Year 2 (2027)	Campaign reach and engagement metrics
New initiative: Host a Hume City Pet Expo focused on promoting responsible ownership, advancing animal welfare, strengthening bonds between people and their pets, and connecting pet owners with local products, services, and support networks.	Year 3 (2028)	Expo attendance, number of participants and partners
Provide information on choosing appropriate pets for different living environments (e.g. high-density housing, breed suitability).	Year 2 (2027)	Website visits and resource downloads/ Social media reach and engagement

DRAFT

4

Programs to address overpopulation rates and any high euthanasia rates



The overpopulation of dogs and cats is an issue that presents challenges in the community such as: impacts on wildlife, community and domestic animal health as well as the welfare of dogs and cats if they are stray, semi-owned, or malnourished due to limited capacity of owners to care for them. Particularly, the overpopulation of cats leads to challenges with rates of euthanasia within the stray cat population due to low rehoming rates.

The community expressed concern regarding cats wandering at night, as well as a desire to explore mandatory desexing and increased education around the benefits of desexing animals to address overpopulation issues.

"I am fed up with the number of roaming cats in the area. I reported a house with over 20 cats (3 mums) one dad, the kittens were getting killed on the road"

"The amount of cats that wander around at all times is concerning. They are not desexed and reproduce rapidly."



4.1 – Context and current situation

The impounding and euthanasia rates are detailed in Table 9.

There has been a significant increase in the number of cats impounded between 2022/23 and 2024/25 (+497), and an increase in the number of cats euthanised (+437) and cats rehomed (+419).

Table 9: Numbers of cats and dogs impounded and subsequent outcomes

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Cats			
Impounded	1604	1328	2101
Returned to Owner	84	60	100
Euthanised	294	343	731
Rehomed (adopted)	764	266	1183
Dogs			
Impounded	920	978	995
Returned to Owner	529	467	520
Euthanised	84	81	202
Rehomed (adopted)	137	51	230

The number of dogs impounded has increased each year from 920 in 2022/23 to 995 in 2024/25. Rates of dog euthanasia are much lower due to the higher rates of reclaiming dogs (average of 53% over past three years) as compared to cats (5%).

Hume is committed to ensuring that as many animals as possible are reunited with their owners. Pets are valued members of the family and it can be distressing for owners and animals when they are missing or being held within the pound.

If an animal can not be reclaimed and is assessed as suitable for adoption ideally, they will be rehomed through the contracted pound service, which continues to make significant improvements in rehoming animals by partnering with dog rescue organisations. Hume City Council provides the following services and programs to establish long-term and secure pet ownership in the community:

- Reduced rate and free desexing for cats through partnership with Second Chance Animal Rescue (SCAR) and the State government.
- Website and social media campaigns to promote responsible pet ownerships, including desexing benefits, registration and microchipping.
- Cat trapping service available to all residents.
- 24/7 hour phone service so registered dogs can be returned immediately.
- Established a section 84Y agreement with a local shelter to rehome surrendered dogs.

In September 2024 Hume City Council was granted \$25,000 by the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to run a targeted cat desexing program until March 2026. Council partnered with SCAR to provide free desexing, microchipping, vaccination and registration for one (1) cat owned or semi-owned by residents who are identified as being low-socio economic. This program aims to prevent unwanted litters and enables residents to enjoy cat ownership. Council covers the cost of registration and any additional cats above the one approved under the grant funding. Where cat owners have no adequate transport, City Laws Officers transport their cat to and from SCAR. This program is still continuing.

DRAFT

4.2 - Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Local Laws

- General Purposes Local Law No.1 2023

Section 39 – Keeping of Animals, requires a permit for keeping certain numbers of cats and dogs on different types of property

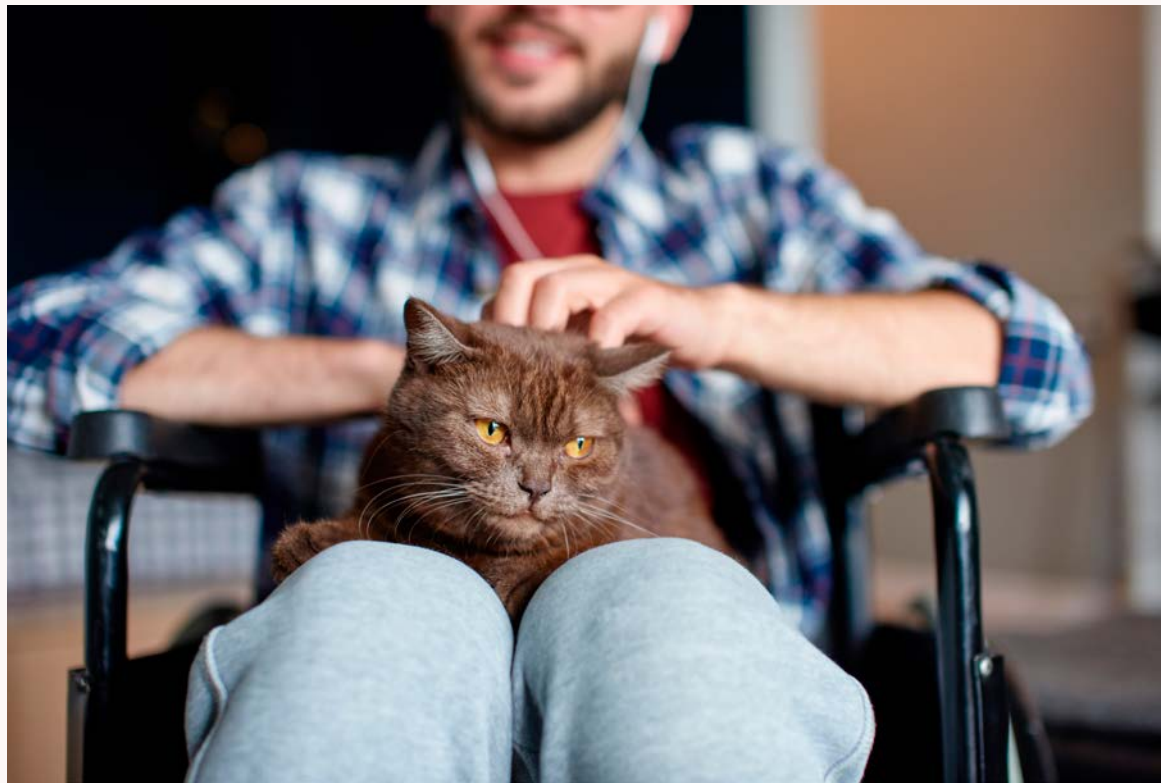
Section 40 – Housing of Animals, requires a minimum standard for keeping animals on private property

Policies and Procedures

- Council has Standard Operating Procedures for excess animal complaints, cat trapping, cat complaints and dog surrenders.

Compliance Activities

- Investigating and recording reports of excess animals and hoarding
- Investigating backyard breeders to determine if they need to register as a Domestic Animal Business
- Annual inspections for all declared dogs
- Prosecuting regarding excess animals
- Enforcing registration, microchipping and tag-wearing requirements
- Issuing infringement notices for cats and dogs found at large.



4.3 - Our Action Plan

Tables 10 and 11 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 4 Objectives 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 10: Activities under Section 4: Objective 3.1

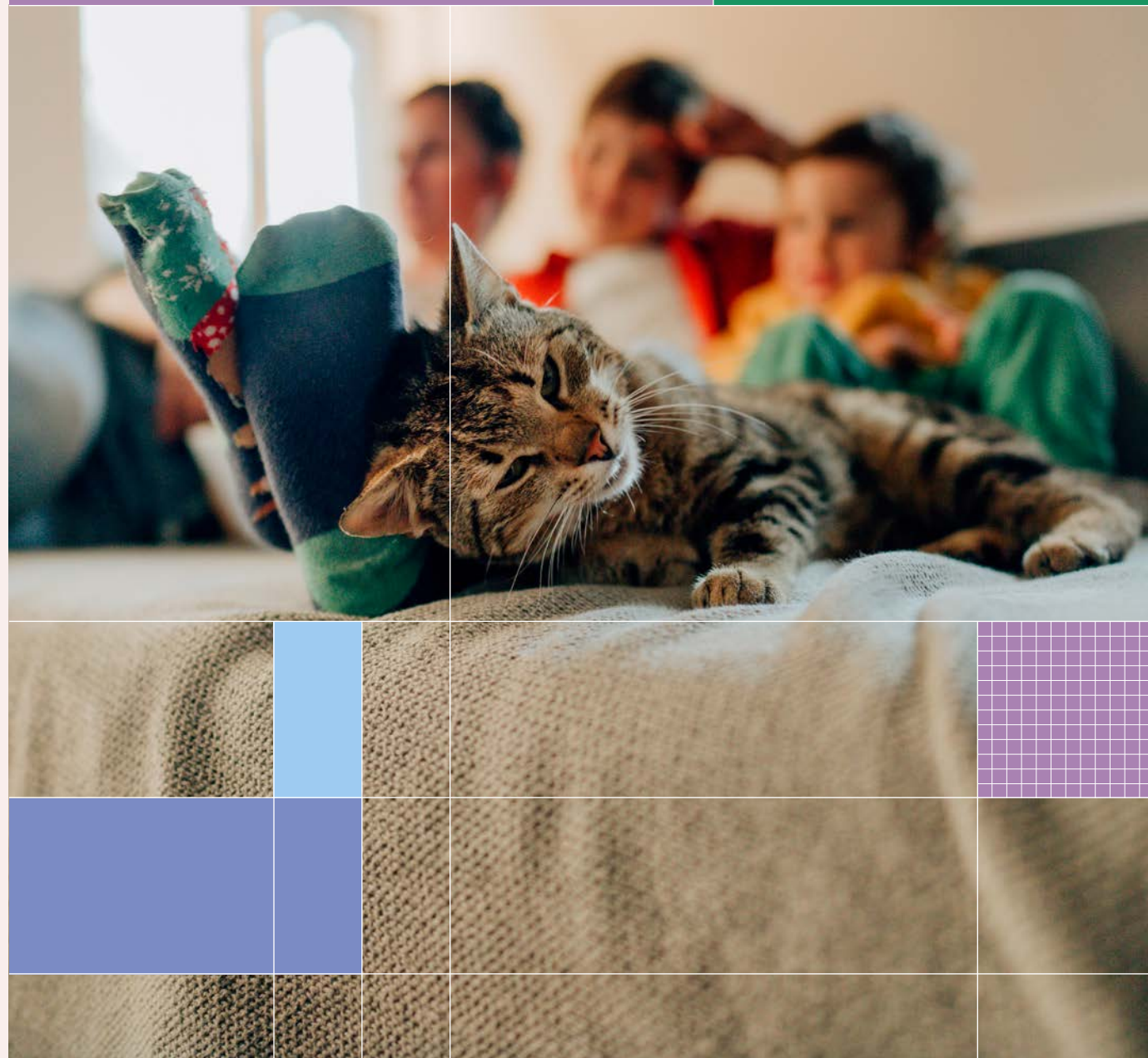
Objective 3.1: To decrease the number of stray, abandoned and unwanted cats		
Activity	When	Evaluation
New Initiative: Collaborate with rescue groups, welfare organisations, and veterinary providers to offer subsidised desexing programs and vouchers for low-income pet owners.	Annually	Number of cats desexed / Number of vouchers distributed
Deliver community education on stray cat management, including discouraging feeding, reporting sightings, and accessing humane trapping support.	Ongoing	Number of education material produced and distributed / Community engagement metrics
Host local adoption events to support the rehoming of unwanted cats and kittens.	Annually	Number of adoption events held / Number of kittens/ cats rehomed

Table 11: Activities under Section 4: Objective 3.2

Objective 3.2: To minimise overpopulation rates		
Activity	When	Evaluation
New Initiative: Conduct research to identify barriers to desexing and develop a best-practice framework for council, including consideration of mandatory desexing policies.	Year 1 (2026)	Research report completed / Recommendations developed
Investigate the feasibility of a Last Litter Program offering free desexing for female pets upon surrender of litters.	Year 3 (2028)	Feasibility study completed
Promote the benefits of desexing, including improved pet health and wellbeing, reduced feral and stray populations and prevention of unwanted litters.	Year 2 (2027)	Campaign reach and engagement / Increase in desexing rates

5

Animal Registration and Identification



Pet registration and microchipping are legislative requirements. It provides Council with an understanding of the level of pet ownership and allows for the development of relevant services and programs. It also assists in the safe and quick return of any lost dogs and cats to their owners.

A number of suggestions were made by community members to improve registration uptake in Hume City. These included promoting the benefits of registration, offering discounted registration fees to vulnerable cohorts, and providing information regarding registration in community languages.

“Rules and laws should be made clearly when registering pets.”

“Deliver information with registration”

“My cat is inside all the time. I don’t see why I’m charged the same registration fees as someone who lets their cat wander”



DRAFT

5.1 – Context and current situation

There are currently 16,200 registered dogs and 6,635 registered cats in Hume.

It can be difficult to capture exact data on cat and dog ownership, as not all cats and dogs are registered. Hume has shown a decrease in dogs registered since 2018/19 (19,049 down to 16,200 in 2024/25) despite a significant increase in the number of new households in the municipality during this period.

Table 12 demonstrates the number of cats and dogs registered in Hume. Unlike other local councils, over the last two years of records, the figures for both dog and cat registrations have stayed relatively consistent with a small decrease in dogs (-760) and cats (-278).

Table 12: Number of cats and dogs registered in Hume

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Dogs	17,865	16,960	16,200
Cats	7,024	6,913	6,635
Total	24,889	23,873	22,835

As part of the DAMP development process, Council has assessed an approximate number of unregistered cats and dogs in Hume. Based on an analysis of national ‘Pets in Australia’ 2023 survey, it is estimated that at least 41% of households in Hume City have a cat or dog.

Further extrapolation of this data reveals that at least 32% of households in Hume City have a dog, compared to 13.5% which

are currently registered with Council. At least 14.8% of households have a cat, compared to 5.2% which are currently registered.

Based on this analysis, it is estimated that 20% to 25% of households have an unregistered animal in Hume, or approximately 22,000 unregistered dogs and 11,900 unregistered cats.

Unregistered animals limit Council’s ability to effectively plan and deliver targeted animal management services. Without accurate registration data, it becomes more difficult to monitor population trends, respond to emerging issues, and allocate resources where they are most needed. Unregistered pets are also less likely to be desexed or microchipped, which can contribute to higher rates of stray animals, lower reunification outcomes, and increased pressure on shelters and rehoming services.

From a community perspective, unregistered animals may pose risks to public safety and amenity. Dogs that are not registered are less likely to be engaged

through Council’s education and compliance programs, which can lead to increased incidents of nuisance behaviour, roaming, or aggression. Similarly, unregistered cats, particularly those that are not contained, can have significant impacts on local biodiversity and contribute to the displacement of native wildlife.

Overall, the high number of unregistered animals in Hume presents a barrier to achieving the goals of responsible pet ownership, animal welfare, and community safety. Addressing this issue is a key priority for Council in the implementation of this Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Table 13: Estimated unregistered animals

	Dogs	Cats
Estimated unregistered animals	22,000	11,900 (excluding feral and unowned cats)
Estimated animal registration fees foregone	\$815,300	\$298,000
Total Fees	\$1,113,300	

Education and community awareness

- Council officers undertake a proactive role within the community to address animal registration.
- Attending events such as festivals and awareness days.
- Development of educational videos – addressing certain aspects of the laws – including animal management and registration requirements.
- Running and attending non-structured ‘morning/afternoon tea with a City Law Officers at council community centres’ and meeting our community in an unstructured format

5.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Local Laws

– **General Purposes Local Law No.1 2023**

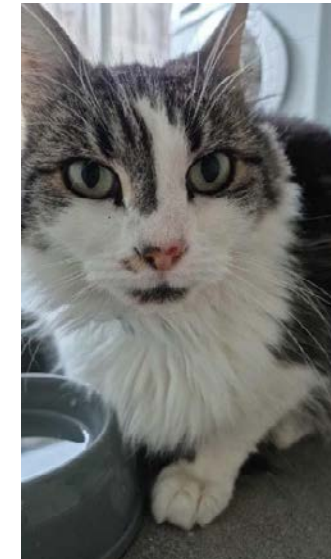
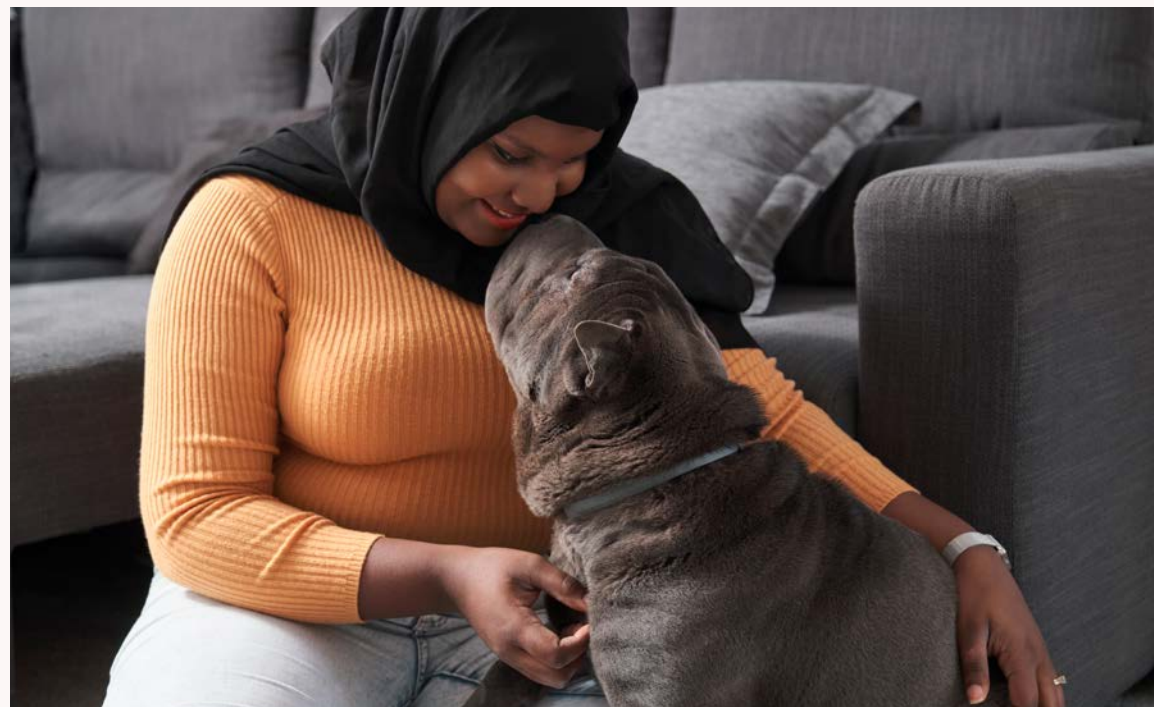
Section 39 – Keeping of Animals, requires a permit for keeping certain numbers of cats and dogs on different types of property

Policies and Procedures

- Council has Standard Operating Procedures for investigating unregistered animals.

Compliance Activities

- Providing annual animal registration renewal notices followed up with reminder notices, SMS message, phone call.
- Investigating all unregistered animal complaints.
- Issuing infringement notices for failing to re-register/register.
- Equipping all Authorised officers with microchip scanners and laptops/tablets to check registrations when on patrol.
- Ensuring that all seized or impounded animals are registered and microchipped prior to release.
- Following up registration for cats and dogs purchased from a Domestic Animal Business or animals that have been microchipped.



Reuniting Pets

Max

After five years of heartache and uncertainty, a beloved cat was recently reunited with its owner. Max, the domestic short hair cat had vanished without a trace in 2020, leaving its family (Teaghan, Zac and Alyssa) wondering if they'd ever see their furry friend again. Miraculously, Max was found safe and brought to The Lost Dogs' Home.

Through responsible pet management, including microchipping and registration, Lost Dogs Home staff were able to scan Max's microchip and quickly make contact with Teaghan. The reunion was emotional, especially for the kids who were delighted to have their pet home again.

Every week pets are returned to their owner because they are microchipped and registered. Many dogs are returned home after hours because they are displaying their registration tag which allows City Laws Officers to make direct contact with the owner and allow them to collect their dog without it being impounded. This highlights the importance of microchipping and registration.

5.3 – Our Action Plan

Table 14 and 15 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 5 Objective 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 14: Activities under Section 5 Objective 4.1

Objective 4.1: Increase the number of dog and cat registrations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide accessible, multilingual information on the benefits of pet registration and microchipping via digital, print, and outdoor channels, using real-life case studies to engage the community.	Annually	Number of materials produced and distributed / Campaign reach and engagement across platforms / Increase in registration rates post-campaign
Offer free initial pet registration to support and encourage first-time registrations.	Annually	Number of free registrations issued
Conduct annual modelling to estimate unregistered pet populations and deliver targeted engagement programs in low-registration areas.	Annually	Modelling report completed / Number of targeted campaigns delivered / Change in registration rates in targeted areas

Table 15: Activities under Section 5 Objective 4.2

Objective 4.2: User friendly service to make it easier for residents to register their pets online

Activity	When	Evaluation
Establish an animal registration portal to enable residents to complete and update registrations online, with improved accessibility, usability, and operational efficiency.	Year 2 (2027)	Portal implemented and operational / Increase in online registrations

DRAFT

6

Animal Nuisance complaints



Community feedback demonstrated a number of key nuisance themes particularly relating to cat impacts on fauna and flora, cats wandering at night, owners picking up dog droppings, cats wandering or defecating on private property and owners not having their dog under control. Council has a role in protecting the community from unnecessary nuisance from cats and dogs through their services and community education.

6.1 - Context and current situation

There has been a demonstrable increase in complaints regarding dogs at large from 261 in 2023/23 to 550 in 2024/25 and requests for cat cages from 144 in 2022/23 to 577 in 2024/25.

Table 16 shows that there has been an increase in all categories of nuisance requests of between 14% and 68% with the largest increase being for cat cage requests (185 to 577) and domestic animal pickups excluding surrenders (1219 to 2001) when comparing 2024/25 and 2022/23

figures. Barking dog requests have fluctuated over the last three years, decreasing from 225 in 2022/23 to 203 in 2023/24 then increasing to 263 in 2024/25.

There has been a 64% increase in surrendered animals since 2022/23 and a 33% increase since 2023/24.

DRAFT

Table 16: Cat and dog complaints to Council from 2023/23 to 2024/25

Type	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Barking dogs	225	203	263
Domestic animal pick up (excl. surrenders)	1219	1575	2001
Dog at large	378	563	732
Cat cage request	185	191	577
Dog attack and rushes	312	407	425
Animal violations (unregistered, defecating, off-leash, excess, livestock)	1073	1335	1262
Domestic animal surrender	190	356	532
TOTAL	3582	4630	5792

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

- Providing signage related to dog control placed in parks.
 - Providing information and advice on methods for resolving nuisance in the community.
- Encouraging complainants to speak to the owner of the animal causing the nuisance directly.
 - Conducting park patrols when resourcing permits and educating the community on local laws.
 - Providing dog waste bags and holders at festivals and events.

“Their pets are causing distress whether it be by being off lead and approaching us and our dog or their cats coming onto our property causing damage.”

“It’s annoying to see droppings on sports grounds where people want to play sport. I am annoyed at people who drop bags of droppings on the ground after picking up droppings”



6.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Local Laws

- **General Purposes Local Law No.1 2023**

Section 39 – Keeping of Animals, requires a permit for keeping certain numbers of cats and dogs on different types of property

Section 40 – Housing of Animals, requires a minimum standard for keeping animals on private property

Section 41 – Dog Waste on Roads and in Municipal Places, requires management of dog waste in the community.

Policies and Procedures

- Council has Standard Operating Procedures for investigating barking dog complaints, wandering dog complaints and cat complaints.

Compliance Activities

- Investigating nuisance complaints and issuing infringements and when necessary prosecuting.
- Undertaking a trial of monitoring excessive barking dog nuisance by utilising electronic monitoring of problem dog barking.
- Partnering with other agencies such as the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) through their Animal Welfare Victoria unit, and Victoria Police on broader nuisance issues.

6.3 – Our Action Plan

Tables 17 and 18 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 6 Objectives 5.1 and 5.2.

Table 17: Activities under Section 6 Objective 5.1

Objective 5.1: Reduce the number of nuisance complaints that arise in the Municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Increase proactive patrols in public parks, reserves, and open spaces to educate residents and improve compliance with animal management laws.	Annually	Number of patrols conducted monthly / Number of resident interactions
Advocate to the Victorian Government to strengthen legislative frameworks for animal management and support the development of sector-wide communities of practice to share knowledge, align approaches, and improve outcomes across local governments.	Ongoing	Number of advocacy submissions or meetings / Participation in communities of practice

Table 18: Activities under Section 6 Objective 5.2

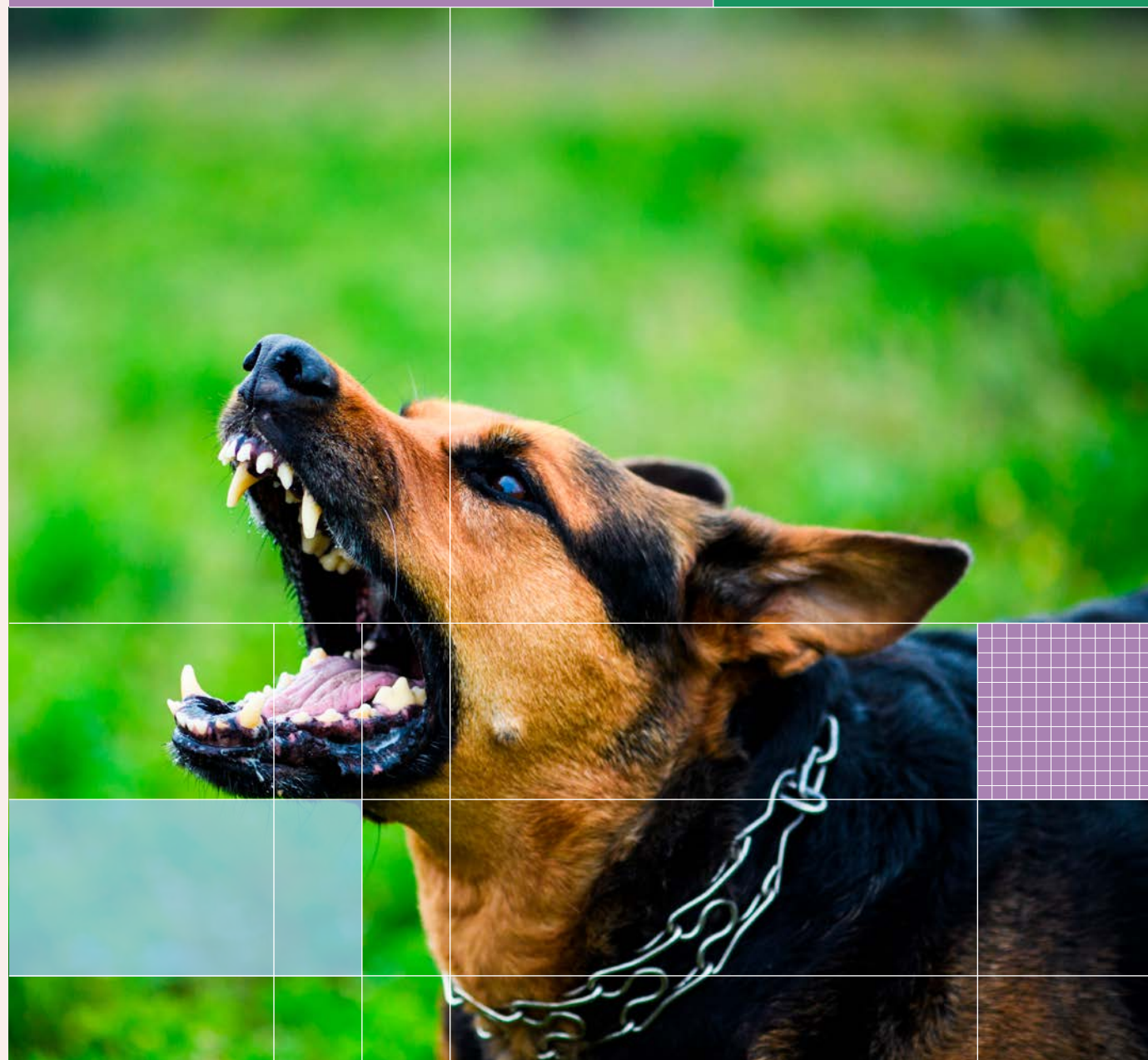
Objective 5.2: Make it easier to report animal management issues to Council.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide community education on how to report animal-related nuisance complaints and build awareness of Councils investigation process.	Annually	Number of education sessions or materials delivered / Community reach and engagement
Implement technologies and systems that support the effective capture and recording of evidence to assist with barking-related investigations and enforcement.	Year 1 (2026)	Feasibility study completed / Technology solution implemented

DRAFT

7

Dog Attacks



Dog attacks against people and other animals, unfortunately, do occur in the local area. Community feedback indicated on leash areas, streets and public dog parks are a particular area of concern for dog attacks and aggressive behaviour. Community feedback suggests management of dog attacks should be addressed through targeting owner behaviours and understanding of responsibilities.

69% of survey respondents were concerned about aggressive dogs in public with the primary concerns reported: wandering dogs or dogs off-leash, dog containment on private property, education and training for dog owners, clear processes and timely response to incidents and enforcement.

There has been a 48% increase in complaints regarding dog attacks (including rushes) over the past 3 years increasing to 425 received in 2024/25.

Community members named a 24/7 emergency service to report dog attacks and stray animals as the highest priority for potential animal management programs Hume City Council should provide.

“I have been attacked by unsupervised dogs and hospitalised.”

“Too many attacks & bites of both dogs & people by off lead dogs. Owners do not take responsibility from what I have seen in the community groups on social media.”

“I no longer walk my small size dog due to fear of dog attacks in our local community (especially the amount of off lead attacks and lost and wandering dogs who attack)”



DRAFT

7.1 — Context and current situation

**Council provides a 24/7 hotline and response to dog attacks.
A City Laws Officer will respond immediately**

Phone 9205 2200 as soon as the attack occurs

**If there is serious risk to a person's life ring 000 then ring
Council at the time of the attack.**

Over the past year (2024/25) Council has responded to or been alerted to 425 dog attack complaints, compared to 223 in 2022-23. There are currently 38 dogs that are declared as dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs in Hume. Complaints were recorded via the telephone, email reporting and reporting via the dangerous dog hotline.

In 2024/25 Council had 15 prosecutions, for *non-serious injuries dog attacks and dog rushes*.

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

- Encouraging residents to report dog attacks and near misses.
- Responding promptly to complaints about dog attacks and taking appropriate action.
- Investigating dog attack reports and taking an appropriate course of action.

Dog Attack Investigation

Preventing and investigating dog attacks is a critical function of the City Laws Team

While Council frequently receives reports of dog attacks in the municipality, it is aware that many incidents go unreported. Unreported dog attacks pose a safety threat to the community and often lead to more serious attacks on people and animals. Reporting all types of dog attacks, including rushes, assists the City Laws Team to maintain a safe community environment. To report a dog attack, phone Council on 9205 2200 anytime day or night and an officer will assess the situation and respond appropriately. More information is available on Council's website.

When conducting a dog attack investigation, City Laws Officers follow a systematic approach.

This typically begins with interviewing the victim, witnesses and the owner of the dog believed to be involved in the incident. During the investigation process, officers diligently review available CCTV footage, gather veterinary and medical reports detailing the injuries sustained by the victim, delve into past incidents or reports relating to the dog, and collect other evidence through surveillance and other activities.

City Laws Officers have a range of enforcement actions at their disposal which are linked to how serious the attack has been. These actions may include seizure of the dog responsible for the attack, the imposition of a dangerous or menacing declaration on the dog, and pursuing charges, orders, and compensation on behalf of the victim through the court system. For minor attacks or rush incidents, the dog owner may be educated and provided instructions on how to keep their dog on their premises and how to socialise the dog to prevent further or escalated incidents. Not all dogs are seized, and destruction orders are only used for extremely serious situations.

To ensure effective handling of dog attack cases, all City Laws Officers responsible for investigating and enforcing such incidents possess extensive knowledge and experience in enforcing provisions under the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*. They undergo advanced training in various areas, including interview techniques, investigation processes, evidence collection, and legal proceedings. This comprehensive training equips them with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of dog attack cases and ensure a thorough and fair investigative process.

7.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Policies and Procedures

- Council has Standard Operating Procedures for investigating dog attacks, dog rushes and threatening dog complaints, as well as for the seizure and prosecution of dogs involved in attacks.
- Council operates a 24/7 emergency after hours service to respond to animal related issues

Compliance Activities

- Issuing official warnings, notice to comply, and infringements.
- Declaring dogs as menacing or dangerous.
- Court prosecution.
- Seeking an order for the destruction of a dog.



7.3 – Our Action Plan

Tables 19 and 20 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 7 Objectives 6.1 and 6.2.

Table 19: Activities under Section 7 Objective 6.1

Objective 6.1: Decrease the number of confirmed dog attacks in the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and deliver an education campaign to assist community to identify and safely respond to aggressive dog behaviours.	Year 2 (2027)	Number of education resources developed and distributed / Community engagement metrics
Enhance monitoring and response efforts in areas with high rates of dog-related incidents through increased officer presence and other appropriate surveillance measures.	Ongoing	Number of advocacy submissions or meetings / Participation in communities of practice

Table 20: Activities under Section 1 Objective 6.2

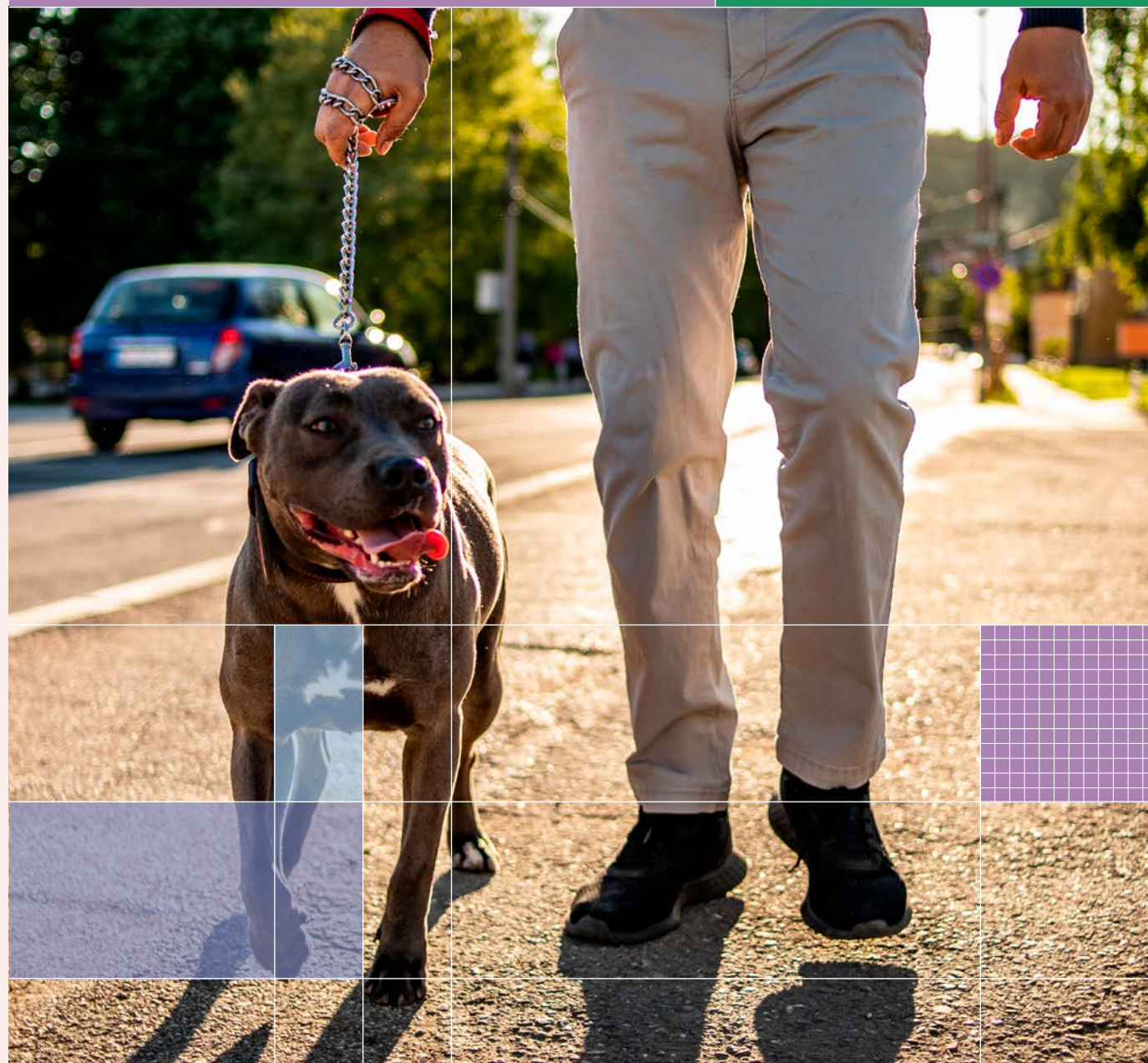
Objective 6.2: Increase community awareness of how to report dog attacks

Activity	When	Evaluation
Raise community awareness of dog attack reporting, processes and outcomes, including the promotion of the Council's 24/7 dangerous dog hotline.	Ongoing	Community education campaign developed. Number of reports pre and post awareness campaign

DRAFT

8

Dangerous, menacing and restricted breeds



The community’s understanding of what constitutes a dangerous or restricted dog may not broadly align with the classifications as per the Act, however there was clear concern about dangerous dogs in the community (particularly off-leash dog parks) and poor management by owners. There was a desire for stronger regulations or restrictions to certain breeds, such as containment on private property, wearing a muzzle and identification collar when outside their property. The community identified a need for more education about dangerous dog breeds and how to care for them.

8.1 – Context and current situation

Table 21 outlines the number of declared dogs in Hume, with 50 in total, the majority being dogs declared menacing and guard dogs (24 and 12 respectively). In 2024/2025, 19 complaints were received regarding dangerous dogs and six resulting prosecutions.

The number of dogs declared in Hume has remained constant over the past five years and was 50 in 2024/2025. Some owners choose to surrender their dogs after a serious attack and these dogs are humanely euthanised. Owners of menacing dogs can apply to have the restriction lifted after two years provided,

they and their dog has been compliant and passed training requirements.

Dogs are declared menacing or dangerous due to an incident occurring. Restricted Breeds are declared if they meet the category of dog breed as defined by legislation. Guard dogs are declared dangerous because they are used to guard non-residential premises but remain declared for life.

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

DRAFT

Table 21: Declared dogs in Hume City Council

Information	Total for 2024/25
Dogs declared dangerous	10
Dogs declared menacing	24
Restricted breed dogs	4
Guard dogs	12
Total	50
Complaints of dangerous dogs	19
Prosecutions - dangerous dogs	6

Hume City Council’s current education/ promotion activities surrounding declared dogs include:

- Providing education on Council website and Animal Welfare Victoria brochures on dangerous and restricted dog breeds.
- Ensuring owners of declared dogs are aware of their obligations under the Domestic Animals Act.
- Annual inspections for all declared dogs.

Aggressive dogs “should be muzzled in public and always on lead”

“I’d be interested in seeing collars on anxious dogs to denote them as so, because an anxious dog is more likely to have a go at someone too. I think collars with information denoting “anxious” or “dangerous” and keeping dogs on leashes”

“Having had my own puppy killed by a dog, I am extremely concerned about the lack of responsibility shown by many dog owners”

“I feel that too much leeway is given to people who continually let their dogs out or do not secure them correctly. There should be higher fines and a “three strikes” rule”



8.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Policies and Procedures

- Hume City Council's animal registration form requires all owners to declare if their dog is a restricted breed, has been declared menacing or is a dangerous dog as required under the Act.
- Council has standard operating procedures for the identification, declaration and management of menacing, dangerous and restricted dog breeds.
- Council has standard operating procedures for investigating dog attacks and declaring dogs dangerous, menacing, or restricted breeds along with identifying guard dogs.

Compliance Activities

- Proactively inspecting dangerous and restricted breed dog sites to ensure compliance of the DAA regulation.
- Ensuring restricted breed and dangerous dog complaints are investigated by a City Laws Officer.
- Maintaining data on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry.
- Annually inspecting properties housing declared dangerous, restricted breed and menacing dogs.
- Conducting patrols by City Laws Officers of industrial areas, parks and wider municipality to monitor dog behaviour and identify unregistered guard dogs.



8.3 – Our Action Plan

Tables 22 and 23 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 8 Objectives 7.1 and 7.2.

Table 22: Activities under Section 8 Objective 7.1

Objective 7.1: Identify and register all declared dogs in the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
New initiative: Develop and deliver a Guard Dog Awareness program to educate the community on the legal responsibilities and requirements of keeping guard dogs.	Year 3 (2028)	Awareness campaign developed

Table 23: Activities under Section 8 Objective 7.2

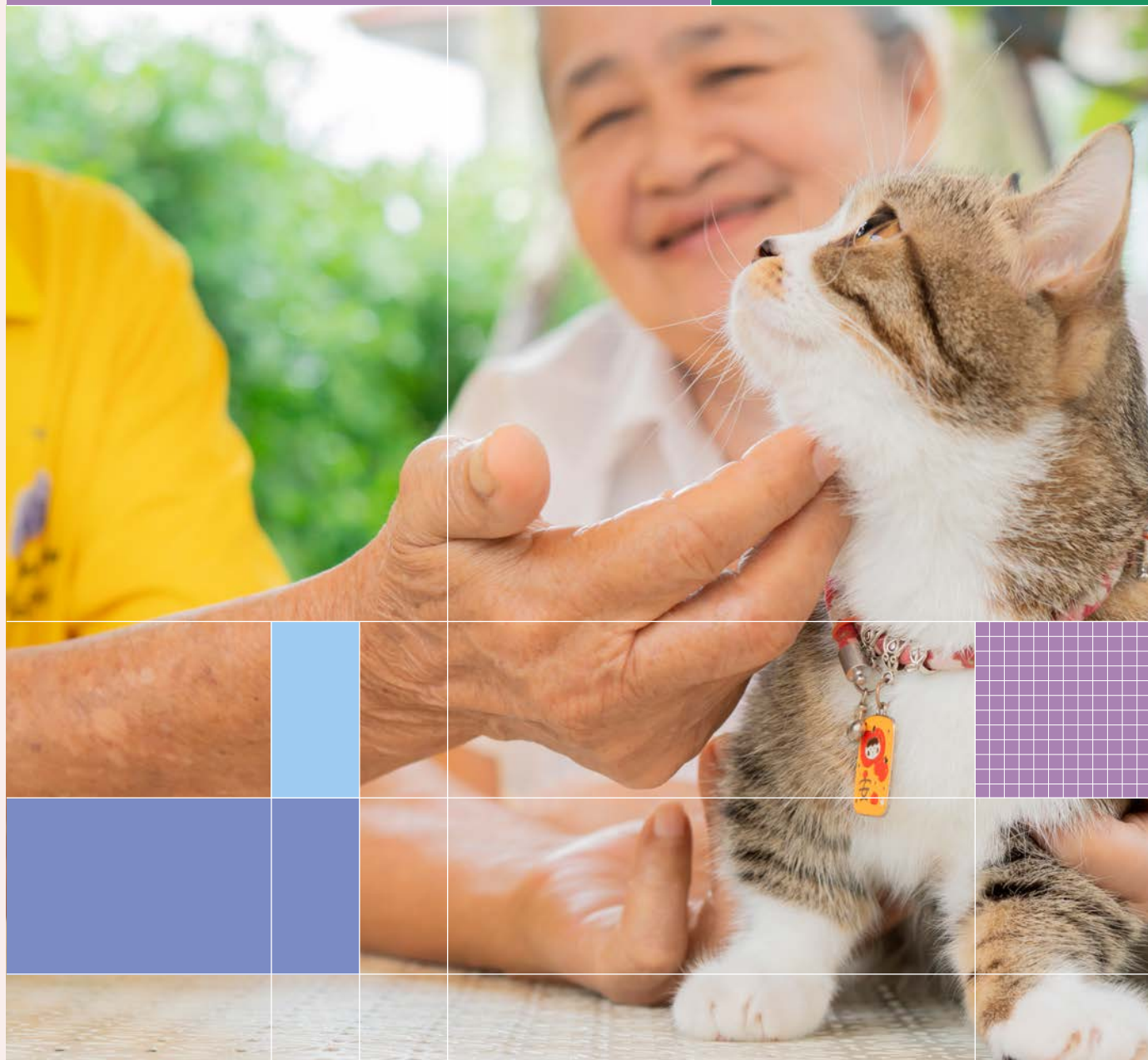
Objective 7.2: Ensure all declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Partner with local general practitioners, medical centres and Police to improve reporting of dog attack incidents to Council.	Ongoing	Number of partners engaged / Awareness materials distributed

DRAFT

9

Domestic animal businesses



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

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

9.1 – Context and current situation

There are 19 registered Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) within Hume. In 2024/25, Hume received 5 complaints regarding Domestic Animal Businesses. There were 2 Domestic Animal Businesses that were identified as non-registered and 5 notices to comply issued.

Table 24: Domestic Animal Businesses in Hume

Item	2024/2025
Registered DABs	19
Identified DABs non registered	2
Complaints regarding DABs	5
Prosecutions related to DABs	0
Notice to Comply issued to DABs	5

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

- Proactively inspecting all registered Domestic Animal Businesses annually to ensure compliance with the relevant Code of Practice.
- Registering all eligible Domestic Animal Businesses.
- Providing all Domestic Animal Businesses with the relevant Code of Practice.
- Providing education about Domestic Animal Businesses on Council's website.

9.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council has standard operating procedures for investigating domestic animal business complaints and identifying unregistered animal businesses.

Compliance Activities

- Auditing Domestic Animal Businesses annually and upon complaint.
- Monitoring websites advertising the sale of puppies.
- Inspecting premises with over three fertile females registered to determine if they need to register as a Domestic Animal Business.
- Prosecuting on non-compliance.



9.3 – Our Action Plan

Tables 25 and 26 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 9 Objectives 8.1 and 8.2.

Table 25: Activities under Section 9 Objective 8.1

Objective 8.1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality by 2026

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all domestic animal businesses (inclusive of breeding establishments) in the municipality to determine their registration status and education needs	Ongoing	Number of new businesses identified

Table 26: Activities under Section 9 Objective 8.2

Objective 8.2: Ensure all Domestic Animal Business comply with relevant legislation

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct annual inspections and audits of domestic animal management businesses. Where required, act promptly to address matters of non-compliance.	Annually	Number of audits conducted (target:100%) / Number of non-compliance reports investigated
Update officer inspection templates to ensure alignment to the appropriate Code of Practice	Ongoing	Templates reviewed and updated annually

DRAFT

10

Other matters



10.1 – Context and current situation

The Lost Dogs Home

The Lost Dog's Home currently provides care and quality vet services to lost and stray pets on behalf of Hume City Council.

Impounded cats and dogs are housed at The Lost Dog's Home and kept for the statutory period at a minimum, during which time The Lost Dog's Home is required to make every effort to reunite the animal with its owner.

A Locally operated Animal Management Facility for Hume

A Feasibility Study has been completed which identifies the benefits for Hume owning their own internally operated animal management facility. The key benefits identified were:

- Ownership and control of operations with a vision to be cost neutral.
- Increasing animal welfare boarding for members of the community experiencing domestic violence or homelessness.
- Extending outreach programs offered to the community.
- Improved operational efficiencies by reducing the resources required to transport animals outside of Hume
- Enhanced level of local based animal welfare services and improved customer service and accessibility – a locally based Animal Management Facility will significantly reduce the need for residents to travel a substantial distance outside of Hume to retrieve their animal or seek animal shelter services.
- Greater capacity and opportunities to provide education and training to encourage responsible pet ownership.
- Greater capacity to provide facilities to support provision of services such as animal adoptions and low-cost veterinary services.
- Greater oversight of animal welfare outcomes from impounded animals, particularly dangerous and seized dogs.
- Convenient location for residents to access services.
- Being visible in the community and raising awareness of animal management and responsibility services.
- Providing quality in house services and reinvesting any savings into programs and services, resulting in greater service provision.
- Opportunity to further develop partnerships with other municipalities, animal rescue and foster groups.
- Expansion of program and service provision, resulting in higher rates of microchipping, desexing and registrations.

Emergency Management

Council has a Municipal Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan which addresses the organisational responsibility of Hume City Council in the planning, prevention, response, relief and recovery from emergencies. In addition, Council is developing a Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan which includes the care and welfare of domestic cats and dogs should an emergency arise that effects their wellbeing.

The Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee has identified grass and bushfire, flooding and extreme weather events as having a high to extreme risk that could impact upon the welfare of companion animals and livestock within the municipality.

Animal Welfare Boarding Protocol

Hume City Council is committed to supporting those experiencing family violence. The decision not to leave a family violence situation may be related to concerns about the ongoing care and welfare of domestic animals.

Currently, Council provides links to an Animal Welfare Boarding Service as required however, Hume City Council is committed to developing a protocol to formalise the use of Animal Welfare Boarding in training and daily practice for Authorised Officers.

10.2 – Our current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

The Lost Dog’s Home has their own policies and procedures with respect to the management of animals impounded on behalf of Hume City Council.

10.3 – Our Action Plan

Tables 27, 28 and 29 show the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 10 Objective 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Table 27: Activities under Section 10 Objective 9.1

Objective 9.1: Ensure the long-term sustainability, capability, and responsivity of animal shelter services through strategic planning and service design.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore and define future service needs and delivery arrangements for animal shelter and related services, identifying sustainable, effective, and community-responsive models.	Year 1 (2026)	Business Case report completed

Table 28: Activities under Section 10 Objective 9.2

Objective 9.2: Emergency management planning for domestic animals as part of the Municipal Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure animal management staff are involved in the review and implementation of Council’s Municipal Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan.	Ongoing	Animal management staff participation in emergency planning activities

Table 29: Activities under Section 10 Objective 9.3

Objective 9.3: Increase community awareness of animal welfare boarding program

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore and establish animal boarding options for victims/survivors of family violence	Year 1 (2026)	Options developed and promoted / Awareness campaign reach and engagement

11

Annual review of plan and annual reporting



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

11.1 - Our Action Plan

Table 30 shows the activities, timeframe and method of evaluation to meet each activity under Section 11 Objective 10.1.

Table 30: Activities under Section 11 Objective 10.1

Objective 1: Comply with Section 68A(3)

Activity	When	Evaluation
Submit a copy of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) and any amendments to the Secretary of the Department.	December 2025	Copy provided to Secretary
Conduct an annual review of the DAMP and make amendments where appropriate.	Annually	Review completed and documented / Amendments made (if applicable) / Council endorsement of changes
Publish an annual evaluation of the DAMP's implementation in Council's Annual Report.	Annually	Evaluation report published
Commence development of Council's new 2030-2033 Domestic Animal Management Plan	Year 4 (2029)	Project plan developed and implemented

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Consolidated DAMP Action Plan 2026-2029

Activity		When	Evaluation
Ensure animal management officers have the skills necessary to support the community and effectively perform their regulatory role	Maintain and routinely review individual training and development plans for each authorised officer, capturing completed training, current certifications, and scheduled or recommended professional development activities.	Annually	Completion of annual goals and performance appraisals
	Ensure all authorised officers participate in relevant industry training, mandatory refresher courses, and practical skill-building sessions to maintain legislative compliance, enhance technical capability, and support continuous professional development.	Ongoing	Training attendance records Annual training completion rate
Create a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing	Celebrate team successes via internal and external promotions	Ongoing	Number of promotional posts or campaigns
	Deliver training for in-home care service providers focused on animal management and reporting animal welfare	Annually	No of sessions delivered
	Establish twice-yearly meetings with animal management teams from neighbouring councils to strengthen collaboration, share insights on emerging trends and issues, and align on effective regulatory strategies.	Annually	No of meetings attended

Activity		When	Evaluation
Promote community awareness and support for indoor cat lifestyles and pursue the introduction of local regulations requiring cats to be contained on or within the private property of their owner.	Distribute educational resources to cat owners highlighting the benefits of indoor living, cat enclosures and containment options.	Year 1 (2026)	Number of resources distributed
	Develop and present a proposal for a municipal cat curfew requiring containment on private property.	Year 1 (2026)	Council report submitted/Council decision outcome
Promote responsible cat and dog ownership	Engage diverse stakeholders (e.g. schools, faith groups, multicultural networks) to co-design and deliver a culturally inclusive pet ownership education campaign.	Year 2 (2027)	Campaign reach and engagement metrics
	New initiative: Host a Hume City Pet Expo focused on promoting responsible ownership, advancing animal welfare, strengthening bonds between people and their pets, and connecting pet owners with local products, services, and support networks.	Year 3 (2028)	Expo attendance, number of participants and partners
	Provide information on choosing appropriate pets for different living environments (e.g. high-density housing, breed suitability).	Year 2 (2027)	Website visits and resource downloads/ Social media reach and engagement
To decrease the number of stray, abandoned and unwanted cats	New Initiative: Collaborate with rescue groups, welfare organisations, and veterinary providers to offer subsidised desexing programs and vouchers for low-income pet owners.	Annually	Number of cats desexed / Number of vouchers distributed
	Deliver community education on stray cat management, including discouraging feeding, reporting sightings, and accessing humane trapping support.	Ongoing	Number of education material produced and distributed / Community engagement metrics
	Host local adoption events to support the rehoming of unwanted cats and kittens.	Annually	Number of adoption events held / Number of kittens/cats rehomed

Activity		When	Evaluation
To minimise overpopulation rates	New Initiative: Conduct research to identify barriers to desexing and develop a best-practice framework for council, including consideration of mandatory desexing policies.	Year 1 (2026)	Research report completed / Recommendations developed
	Investigate the feasibility of a Last Litter Program offering free desexing for female pets upon surrender of litters.	Year 3 (2028)	Feasibility study completed
	Promote the benefits of desexing, including improved pet health and wellbeing, reduced feral and stray populations and prevention of unwanted litters.	Year 2 (2027)	Campaign reach and engagement / Increase in desexing rates
Increase the number of dog and cat registrations	Provide accessible, multilingual information on the benefits of pet registration and microchipping via digital, print, and outdoor channels, using real-life case studies to engage the community.	Annually	Number of materials produced and distributed / Campaign reach and engagement across platforms / Increase in registration rates post-campaign
	Offer free initial pet registration to support and encourage first-time registrations.	Annually	Number of free registrations issued
	Conduct annual modelling to estimate unregistered pet populations and deliver targeted engagement programs in low-registration areas.	Annually	Modelling report completed / Number of targeted campaigns delivered / Change in registration rates in targeted areas
User friendly service to make it easier for residents to register their pets online	Establish an animal registration portal to enable residents to complete and update registrations online, with improved accessibility, usability, and operational efficiency.	Year 2 (2027)	Portal implemented and operational / Increase in online registrations

Activity		When	Evaluation
Reduce the number of nuisance complaints that arise in the Municipality	Increase proactive patrols in public parks, reserves, and open spaces to educate residents and improve compliance with animal management laws.	Annually	Number of patrols conducted monthly / Number of resident interactions
	Advocate to the Victorian Government to strengthen legislative frameworks for animal management and support the development of sector-wide communities of practice to share knowledge, align approaches, and improve outcomes across local governments.	Ongoing	Number of advocacy submissions or meetings / Participation in communities of practice
Make it easier to report animal management issues to Council	Provide community education on how to report animal-related nuisance complaints and build awareness of Councils investigation process.	Annually	Number of education sessions or materials delivered / Community reach and engagement
	Implement technologies and systems that support the effective capture and recording of evidence to assist with barking-related investigations and enforcement.	Year 1 (2026)	Feasibility study completed / Technology solution implemented
Decrease the number of confirmed dog attacks in the community	Develop and deliver an education campaign to assist community to identify and safely respond to aggressive dog behaviours.	Year 2 (2027)	Number of education resources developed and distributed / Community engagement metrics
	Enhance monitoring and response efforts in areas with high rates of dog-related incidents through increased officer presence and other appropriate surveillance measures.	Annually	Number of patrols delivered in hot-spot areas on a monthly basis
Increase community awareness of how to report dog attacks	Raise community awareness of dog attack reporting, processes and outcomes, including the promotion of the Council's 24/7 dangerous dog hotline.	Ongoing	Community education campaign developed. Number of reports pre and post awareness campaign

Activity		When	Evaluation
Identify and register all declared dogs in the community	New initiative: Develop and deliver a Guard Dog Awareness program to educate the community on the legal responsibilities and requirements of keeping guard dogs.	Year 3 (2028)	Awareness campaign developed
Ensure all declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations	Partner with local general practitioners, medical centres and Police to improve reporting of dog attack incidents to Council.	Ongoing	Number of partners engaged / Awareness materials distributed
Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality by 2026	Identify all domestic animal businesses (inclusive of breeding establishments) in the municipality to determine their registration status and education needs	Ongoing	Number of new businesses identified
Ensure all Domestic Animal Business comply with relevant legislation	Conduct annual inspections and audits of domestic animal management businesses. Where required, act promptly to address matters of non-compliance.	Annually	Number of audits conducted (target:100%) / Number of non-compliance reports investigated
	Update officer inspection templates to ensure alignment to the appropriate Code of Practice	Ongoing	Templates reviewed and updated annually
Ensure the long-term sustainability, capability, and responsivity of animal shelter services through strategic planning and service design.	Explore and define future service needs and delivery arrangements for animal shelter and related services, identifying sustainable, effective, and community-responsive models.	Year 1 (2026)	Business Case report completed
Emergency management planning for domestic animals as part of the Municipal Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan	Ensure animal management staff are involved in the review and implementation of Council's Municipal Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan.	Ongoing	Animal management staff participation in emergency planning activities
Increase community awareness of animal welfare boarding program	Explore and establish animal boarding options for victims/ survivors of family violence	Year 1 (2026)	Options developed and promoted / Awareness campaign reach and engagement

Activity		When	Evaluation
Comply with Section 68A(3)	Submit a copy of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) and any amendments to the Secretary of the Department.	December 2025	Copy provided to Secretary
	Conduct an annual review of the DAMP and make amendments where appropriate.	Annually	Review completed and documented / Amendments made (if applicable) / Council endorsement of changes
	Publish an annual evaluation of the DAMP's implementation in Council's Annual Report.	Annually	Evaluation report published
	Commence development of Council's new 2030-2033 Domestic Animal Management Plan	Year 4 (2029)	Project plan developed and implemented

hume.vic.gov.au/Home

