

# POLICY MANUAL

**Policy Number: 43**

**Dog Management**

**Purpose:** To establish a Dog Management Policy for the Municipal Area that complies with The Dog Control Act 2000.

**Department:** Community & Development Services

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**Council Meeting Date:** 11 July 2017

**Minute Number:** 154/2017

**Next Review Date:** *April 2022*

## POLICY

### **1. Definitions**

### **2. Objective**

The objectives listed in this section have been developed to guide the Dog Management Policy and to ensure that Council consistently and effectively fulfils its responsibilities under the Dog Control Act 2000, particularly with regard to the protection of residents' rights.

The objectives of the Policy are:

1. To ensure that owners of dogs comply with their obligations under the Dog Control Act 2000.
2. To prevent the danger caused by dogs to the public and to other dogs and animals.
3. To minimise the distress and nuisance caused by dogs to the public.
4. To actively promote the responsible ownership of dogs.
5. To provide for the reasonable exercise and recreational needs of dogs.

### **3. Scope**

All dogs and owners of dogs within the Meander Valley Council local government area.

#### **4. Policy**

##### **COMPLAINTS AND NUISANCE PROVISIONS**

Council will consider every complaint received. Issues raised will be investigated in a manner which ensures that all facts are considered to avoid vexatious and false complaints being supported. Where necessary, Council will institute proceedings against a dog owner for an offence under Section 46 of the Dog Control Act 2000.

##### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

An annual report will be prepared and presented to Council for noting.

The report will include the following indicators.

- Number of dogs registered.
- Number of dogs impounded.
- Number of Infringement Notices issued.
- Number of formal complaints received and actions taken.
- Financial evaluation of the provision of animal control services.
- Number of kennel licenses issued.
- Summary of dogs declared to be dangerous.

##### **CODE OF RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP**

Council is committed to the objective of promoting responsible dog ownership and has adopted the following code which requires dog owners to:

- Ensure that the dog is kept under control at all times.
- Ensure that the dog is registered in accordance with the Dog Control Act 2000, with a financial incentive provided for owners to desex dogs that are not being kept for intentional breeding purposes
- Ensure that the dog receives necessary care and attention in accordance with good veterinary practice, and is supplied with adequate food, water and shelter.
- Ensure that the dog receives adequate exercise.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not cause a nuisance to any other person, whether by persistent or loud barking/ howling or by any other means.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not injure, endanger, intimidate, or otherwise cause distress to any person.

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not injure, endanger, or cause distress to any stock, poultry, domestic animal, or protected wildlife.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not damage or endanger any property belonging to any other person.
- Comply with all regulations under the Dog Control Act 2000, including the requirement for the person in charge of a dog to immediately remove and dispose of faeces left by the dog in a public place or in a place not owned by the person.

## **EDUCATION**

Council will make available a pamphlet which includes information on:

- the requirements of the Dog Control Act 2000;
- the code of responsible dog ownership;
- the role and function of Council and Council's responsibilities to the community regarding dog management;
- services available to assist community members to be responsible dog owners

Council Officers will, upon request, visit local schools to make presentations to students on dog ownership issues and responsibilities.

## **MUNICIPAL DOG POUND**

Council will operate a Municipal dog pound in accordance with the requirements of the Dog Control Act 2000.

Every effort will be made to secure an alternative home for dogs admitted and not claimed, however, dogs will be euthanised as a last resort when required.

The information pamphlet will include encouragement for dog owners to contact Council in the event of losing their dog. Such action aims to facilitate the reuniting of impounded dogs with owners.

## **FEES**

Council strives to set dog registration fees that are affordable by dog owners, yet provide a return for the costs associated with the delivery of dog control services.

Dog owners will be encouraged to register their dogs early in the financial year. Encouragement in this regard will be offered by the way of a discount if registration fees are paid prior to the 31 July each year.

In developing registration fees each year Council will utilise the following principles:

- Owners of sterilised dogs will be levied an amount as affordable as possible.
- Owners who choose not to sterilise dogs (either male or female) will be required to pay a higher level of fees.
- Pensioners will be provided with an opportunity to register their first dog at a discounted rate.
- Owners with an I.D. card from an approved Training Institute who keep either guide dogs, hearing dogs or companion dogs are not charged.
- Owners of dogs kept for breeding purposes and registered with the TCA will be levied a fee that recognises the purpose for which they are kept. The fee will, however, be discounted from that which would normally apply to an entire animal.
- Owners of Greyhounds registered with the Tasmanian Greyhound Racing Board will be provided with an opportunity to register the animal at a discounted rate.
- Owners of working dogs will be provided with an opportunity to register the animal at a discounted rate.

Owners seeking concessional registration (ie. pensioners or owners of sterilised or greyhound dogs) may need to produce written evidence of eligibility as prescribed in the Act. In the case of working dogs, a demonstration of working stock may be required. Breeders must produce a current Stud Prefix issued by the TCA.

Council will set its dog fees at its ordinary Council meeting held in May of each year. The fees will be advertised and standard renewal notices will be provided to all those who have registered a dog previously.

Council will undertake a full audit of dogs in the municipal area every 5 years.

## **DECLARED AREAS**

Under the Act, Council can declare dog exercise areas on land solely under the jurisdiction of the Council, where dogs can be exercised off the lead if under effective control at all times. The exercise areas are:

Prospect: Pitcher Parade (western side of Wetlands area)

Hadspen: River Reserve from Foote Street to Browne Street  
Westbury: part of Town Common  
Deloraine: part of Deloraine Community Complex site

## **5. Legislation**

Dog Control Act 2000

## **6. Responsibility**

Responsibility for the operation of the policy rests with the Director, Community & Development Services.