



**WOOF**

**MEOW**

**GREATER SHEPPARTON  
CITY COUNCIL  
DOMESTIC  
ANIMAL  
MANAGEMENT  
PLAN  
2022–2026**

**GREATER  
SHEPPARTON** 









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## MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Our pets play an important role in many of our lives. They offer companionship, reduce stress, assist us to be more active and are often important members of our families. However, they can also cause concern when left to wander the streets or when they are allowed to become a nuisance. Wandering dogs risk being involved in a dog attack or causing a car accident. Wandering cats kill our native wildlife and cause significant damage to our local environment.

Council's Animal Management team provide an essential service to our community, targeting the major issues relating to cats and dogs. Our Animal Rangers are there to educate the community on responsible pet ownership, investigate dog attacks, address animal welfare concerns and animal hoarding, minimise the negative impacts on our local wildlife by domestic animals, capture wandering dogs and prosecute breaches of relevant laws.

The team operates one of the largest country Council owned animal shelters in the state, with over 2,000 animals being cared for each year at the Shepparton Animal Shelter. Officers care for each and every animal that comes through its doors, either as a lost stray or because their owners can no longer care for them. The animal shelter also operates a successful animal adoption program, provides advice on the most suitable pet and breed for your circumstances and reunites lost animals with their owners.

For those that completed the survey in November 2021, thank you for taking the time to provide feedback and help sculpt our Animal Management service over the next four years. We have listened to your feedback and are excited to get to work improving the health and welfare of our communities' animals.

Over the next four years, Council will focus on a number of issues including the large semi-owned cat population and will investigate construction of a brand new animal shelter facility, to allow for community engagement and education activities on responsible pet ownership.

We will develop a targeted media campaign and continue to provide the community with a responsive, trusted, knowledgeable resource for pet owners, providing relevant advice to our residents.

Our Animal Management team aim to make Greater Shepparton a safe and harmonious place to live where quality of life is not negatively impacted by irresponsible pet owners and are available to provide advice and guidance on animal issues. Please do not hesitate to contact the team for advice and we look forward to working with you.

Kind regards,

Greater Shepparton City Council Mayor,  
Cr Shane Sali

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT?

Council plays an important leadership role in supporting and promoting responsible pet ownership, community safety and healthy living through a well-informed community.

In accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council adopted Domestic Animal Management Plans in 2008, 2013 and 2018 with each plan providing a formal approach to service delivery and animal management initiatives over 4 years.

This latest plan builds on the foundation of the initial plans and will guide service delivery and actions through to the year 2025. This plan outlines Council's strategic direction and objectives towards animal management and provides a structured framework for Council's animal management service to address responsible pet ownership and animal welfare.

Council has spent the previous four years working towards operational efficiency and streamlining processes at the Shepparton Animal Shelter to improve practices. Over the next four years Council will begin to shift towards more aspirational strategies that can directly impact responsible pet ownership and improve the health and wellbeing of our domestic animals. Council seeks to address animal management issues by undertaking the actions outlined in the Action Plan.

### **Council Responsibilities**

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, every Council must prepare a domestic animal management plan (DAMP) every four years. Council is required to set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by Council are adequate to give effect to the requirements of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (The Act) and the regulations. Other domestic animals are exempt from this plan. Councils are responsible for developing a domestic animal management plan which:

- ✓ Promotes responsible pet ownership and the welfare of dogs and cats in the community
- ✓ Protects the community and the environment from nuisance dogs and cats
- ✓ Outlines the training programs for their Authorised Officers to ensure these Officers are capable in administering and enforcing the provisions of the Act
- ✓ Identifies a method to evaluate whether the animal management services provided by them are adequate

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Greater Shepparton City Council is a semi-rural Council located in north-central Victoria, about 180 kilometres north of Melbourne.

The City of Greater Shepparton includes the major centre of Shepparton, as well as significant rural hinterland. Three quarters of the population live in the main urban centres of Shepparton and Mooroopna.

The municipality encompasses a total land area of 2,422 square kilometres. Rural land is used mainly for dairy farming and agriculture, including wineries and orchards, with the region being a major fruit and vegetable processing centre.

The resident population for 2020 is 67,070, an increase of 3% since 2016 (65,072). The municipalities' population is expected to grow to an estimated population of 83,234 in 2036. In 2016 there were 24,404 total households in the municipality with 14.7% of the population speaking a language other than English at home.

In 2016, 9 478 people were born overseas, with 22.3% arriving in Greater Shepparton in the previous five years. The major religious affiliations of persons born overseas is 43.2% Christianity and 22.6% Islam.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The DAMP is required to set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by Council are adequate to give effect to the requirements of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) and the regulations.

Section 68A of the Act states;

- (1) Subject to subsection (1A), each Council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare a domestic animal management plan on 4 December 2021 and at the end of each period of 4 years after that day.
- (1A) A Council may apply to the Secretary for an extension of time within which to prepare a domestic animal management plan.
- (1B) The Secretary may grant an extension of time under subsection (1A) if the Secretary believes that special circumstances exist that warrant the granting of an extension.
- (2) A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must—
  - (a) set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and
  - (b) outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and
  - (c) outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—
    - (i) to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
    - (ii) to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
    - (iii) to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
    - (iv) to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
    - (v) to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
    - (vi) to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
    - (vii) to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
  - (d) provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
  - (e) provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
  - (f) provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.
- (3) Every Council must—
  - (a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
  - (b) provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
  - (c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.



## OBJECTIVES

Greater Shepparton is regarded as a safe and harmonious place to live where quality of life is not negatively impacted by irresponsible pet owners

Shepparton Animal Shelter provides effective housing and adoption programs with a high focus on animal welfare

The negative impacts on the environment and wildlife by domestic animals are minimised

There is a simple and clear process to register your pet with Council through multiple channels

Provide a responsive, trusted, knowledgeable resource for pet owners, including relevant advice to residents and pet owners

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF PREVIOUS PLANS

### **Domestic Animal Management Plan 2018-2021**

The DAMP 2018-2021 steered Councils animal management activities with the following achievements;

- ✓ The delivery of four new Ranger vehicles so Animal Rangers can safely transport animals;
- ✓ Supported and cared for over 2,000 animals per year at the Shepparton Animal Shelter;
- ✓ Provided ongoing animal management support at bushfire locations;
- ✓ Increased the number of animals that were rehomed;
- ✓ Continued to decrease euthanasia rates;
- ✓ Issued desexing vouchers to those in need;
- ✓ Worked with dog owners to reduce impound rates;
- ✓ Responded to over 2,000 requests and reports from the community per year;
- ✓ Monitored and inspected all declared dangerous, menacing and guard dogs;
- ✓ Upgraded the cat holding facilities at the Shepparton Animal Shelter;
- ✓ Monitored and audited all domestic animal businesses;
- ✓ Implemented new puppy farm legislation;
- ✓ Provided a 24hr animal emergency response service;
- ✓ Successfully prosecuted 100% of serious dog attack incidents at court; and
- ✓ Promptly investigated animal welfare, cruelty and puppy farm reports.

### **Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013-2017**

The DAMP 2013-2017 Action Plan steered Councils animal management activities with the following achievements;

- ✓ Investment of resources into the animal shelter to move toward legislation compliance, with building maintenance and equipment upgrades, improved disease control and enhanced animal comfort;
- ✓ Development and implementation of major philosophical and cultural changes resulting in significant reduction in euthanasia and a considerable increase in animal adoption;
- ✓ Employment of an additional Animal Shelter Officer to ensure that the service can be delivered efficiently and in line with Code of Practice;
- ✓ All Community Rangers and Animal Shelter Officers are now appropriately qualified and experienced to enforce the Act with the department showing a continued commitment to training through attending Bureau of Animal Welfare sessions and various conferences;
- ✓ Development of educational programs surrounding animal management including primary school and high school education packages and Shepparton Animal Shelter visits;
- ✓ Improvement in enforcement and prosecution practices with an increase
- ✓ in the number of prosecutions undertaken;
- ✓ Completing a number of successful prosecutions for serious dog attacks resulting in substantial penalties for dog owners including convictions and orders banning offenders for owning dogs for 3-5 years;
- ✓ The establishment of Councils first Off leash Dog park at Ducat's Reserve Shepparton;
- ✓ The development and promotion of a desexing subsidy scheme to further support the community in the quest for responsible pet ownership.

## ACTION PLAN KEY

The following key is utilised throughout the DAMP 2022 – 2025 Action Plan.

<b>O</b>	Ongoing	<b>A (by date)</b>	Annually, due by date	<b>Q</b>	Quarterly each year
<b>2022-2023</b>	2022-2023 financial year	<b>2024-2025</b>	2024-2025 financial year	<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>2023-2024</b>	2023-2024 financial year	<b>2025-2026</b>	2025-2026 financial year	<b>VDDR</b>	Victorian Declared Dog Registry
<b>DAA</b>	Domestic Animals Act 1994	<b>EAWP</b>	Emergency Animal Welfare Plan	<b>MEMP</b>	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
<b>DAB</b>	Domestic Animal Business	<b>HMP</b>	Health Management Plan	<b>MEMPC</b>	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
<b>DAMP</b>	Domestic Animal Management Plan	<b>DJPR</b>	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions		



**STRATEGIC LINKS**

**GREATER SHEPPARTON 2030**

**TOPIC:** TOPIC: COMMUNITY LIFE - Enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and wellbeing, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve liveability and a greater range of community services

**THEME:** Health and Social Services

**STRATEGY 2.2 Ensure that special interest groups are included in community activities and the provision of services.**

**TOPIC:** COMMUNITY LIFE - Enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and wellbeing, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve liveability and a greater range of community services

**THEME:** Safe and accessible environments

**OBJECTIVE 1. Address community safety in the planning and management of the urban environment**

**TOPIC:** COMMUNITY LIFE - Enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and wellbeing, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve liveability and a greater range of community services

**THEME:** Recreation and open space

**STRATEGY 2.5 Protect open space areas from pest plants and animals**

**TOPIC:** COMMUNITY LIFE - Enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and wellbeing, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve liveability and a greater range of community services

**THEME:** Health and Social Services

**OBJECTIVE 2: Encourage and implement activities that will strengthen community spirit**

**TOPIC:** TOPIC: COMMUNITY LIFE - Enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and wellbeing, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve liveability and a greater range of community services

**THEME:** Safe and accessible environments

**STRATEGY 1.1 Encourage the creation of safe streets, public parks and spaces, and integration with Victoria Police' community safety programs.**

**2017 COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY**

**Create and maintain safe public areas which enhance perceptions of safety, liveability and encourage community engagement and connectedness**

## ACTION PLAN – 1. REGULATION

## 1.1 AUTHORISED OFFICERS

**Objective: Outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of Domestic Animals Act 1994 in the Council's municipal district.**

**Council Rangers**

- ✓ Council has been committed to increasing authorised officer qualifications by amending position descriptions for new employees to require further qualifications and experience.
- ✓ To ensure Council continues to deliver the requirements of the Act, the resources dedicated to the essential service will be reviewed to ensure Council can cater for the ongoing demand and community expectations. Service requirements will be reviewed statistically on an ongoing basis in line with Council's service planning.
- ✓ Council will also focus on ensuring Officers are appropriately trained and experienced to educate and enforce the amendments to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and to stay abreast of industry development and best practice.
- ✓ The aspirational training needs will focus on ensuring that technical knowledge is developed in relation to animal investigation techniques, prosecution capability, animal handling and behaviour, with a focus on developing people skills that allow positive partnerships and relationships to develop across the industry and with the community.

	Objective	Key Activities	Performance Indicators	Year	
Service Review	Review positions with department to ensure provision of service is appropriate	Review of any vacant position within department to ensure service operating appropriately in line with Council policies and procedures	Service operating at appropriate levels	O	
Position Descriptions	Ensure Officers can properly administer and enforce the DAA	Review Position Description of staff clearly identify minimum qualifications and experience required	Ongoing review of Position descriptions and turnover of staff have assisted to ensure that staff have the relevant qualifications and experience required	O	
Training Plan	Develop a training plan that clearly identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by Authorised Officers to ensure Officers can properly administer and enforce the DAA	Develop and maintain a Training Plan and current and required skills of each officer	Training plan developed	2022-2023	
		Submit budget bid for recommended training opportunities in January each year	Budget bid submitted each January as part of Training Budget process	A (by 15 Jan)	
New Officer Training Program	Develop and implement a training program for new officers	Audit matrix annually, ensure all Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements and identify needs for the following year	Audit matrix annually, ensure all Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements and identify needs for the following year	O	
		Develop a training program for new officers	Training Program developed	O	
External Training sessions	Bureau of Animal Welfare	Ongoing review of training plan	Ongoing evaluation of success of training program through feedback from management and staff	O	
		Attendance by at least one Officer at every Bureau of Animal Welfare seminar and information day is desired dependent on resourcing	Report on sessions as attended by staff	O	
		Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM)	Maintain membership and attend meetings and seminars where opportunities exist	Sessions attended by staff	O
		Getting 2 Zero	Maintain membership and attend meetings and seminars where opportunities exist	Sessions attended by staff	O
	North East Authorised Officers Association	Maintain membership and attend meetings and seminars where opportunities exist	Sessions attended by staff	O	
Internal Training Sessions	Internal Training sessions on new Domestic Animals Act 1994 amendments	Conduct internal training sessions on new legislation	Training sessions conducted	O	

**Council Contractors**

- ✓ In 2018, Council awarded a contract for an external contractor to operate Councils after-hours Animal Management service with the Authorised officers having limited authorisation under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and no authorisation under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*.
- ✓ To ensure Council continues to deliver the requirements of the Act, the resources dedicated to the after-hours emergency service will be reviewed to ensure Council can cater for the ongoing demand and community expectations.
- ✓ Council will also focus on ensuring Officers are appropriately trained and experienced to educate and enforce the amendments to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and to stay abreast of industry development and best practice.

	Objective	Key Activities	Performance Indicators	Year
After hours contract	Provide after-hours service to the community in accordance with the DAA	Review contract / tender and consider options for ongoing service	Review completed	2022-2023
		Develop service plan and adopt as required	Plan created and adopted	2023-2024
		Ensure Council provides After Hours Emergency service	Service provided	2024-2025 2025-2026
After Hours Officer training	Develop and implement a training program for section 72A officers and ensure all Officers are appropriately trained	Review level of training of after-hours Officers and legislation amendments and develop training plan	Training plan developed	2022-2023
		Implement training plan for any contracted authorised officer	Training plan implemented	O



## 1.2 COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

*Objective: Outline compliance and enforcement activities to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation.*

- ✓ Provision of effective education and enforcement activities to improve the welfare of animals and to protect the environment.
- ✓ Officers will focus on enforcement of Animal Registration and serious offences such as dog attack, animal cruelty or illegal breeders.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Authorisation and Delegations	Ensure Officers are authorised in accordance with Position Description and delegations	Ensure Officers are authorised in accordance with Position Description and delegations	Officers are authorised in accordance with Position Description and delegations	O
Compliance and Enforcement	Maximise compliance with state and local domestic animal laws, orders and regulations	Conduct reactive and proactive investigations and regular patrols	All complaints received are appropriately investigated and finalised	O
	Authorised officers have access to all required databases (DJPR Database includes VDDR and Banning Order Databases)	Conduct annual audit to ensure Authorised officers have access to all required DJPR databases	All authorised officers have access to required DJPR databases	A
Multiculturalism Awareness	Language interpretation	Liaise with local community groups to ensure enforcement activities and documentation are able to be interpreted in other languages other than English	Documentation provided in languages other than English	2023-2024
		Implement new documentation and processes	Documents implemented	2024-2025 2025-2026
Prosecutions	Commence legal action for all serious or multiple offences	Prepare Brief of Evidence for all serious offences and submit to lawyers for review	Number of successful prosecutions	O
		Approve all prosecutions on advice from lawyer	Number of successful prosecutions	O
Infringements	Review Statutory and Local Law Infringement documentation	Review Infringement documents annually to ensure compliance with legislation	Review documents	A (by 01 Aug)
	Electronic Infringement systems	Investigate feasibility of electronic issuing of infringements	Feasibility of electronic infringements undertaken	2025-2026
Statutory Infringements	Lodge Infringements with Fines Victoria	Lodge unpaid infringements to Fines Victoria	Lodge all unpaid infringements to Fines Victoria	O
		Develop SOP on how to lodge and preventing lodgement errors	SOP developed and implemented	2022-2023
		Review SOP to ensure process is streamlined	SOP reviewed	2023-2024
Local Law Infringements	Lodge Infringements with lawyers	Lodge unpaid Local law Infringements with the Magistrates Court	Prosecution outcomes are successful	O
		Review process to lodge unpaid Local law Infringements	Process streamlined	2023-2024
		Implement new SOP to lodge Local Law Infringements	SOP Implemented	2024-2025 2025-2026
Official Warnings	Set up and implement Official Warnings as an educational tool	Set up Official Warnings database and documentation	Official Warnings database implemented	2023-2024
		Include Official Warnings in Enforcement Guidelines	Official Warnings included	2023-2024
		Implement Official Warnings as tool for education	Official Warnings implemented	O
Legislation	Monitor current legislation	Monitor current Legislation and legislation changes and implement accordingly	Monitor current Legislation and legislation changes and implement accordingly	O
SOP's	Develop new SOP's and enforcement strategies	Review and develop required SOP's	SOP's developed and implemented as required	O
Service Review	Ensure EFT adequate for Animal Management department, including Rangers Administration staff and Animal Shelter Officers	Conduct service review	Service Review conducted by 01 December each year	A (by 01 Dec)
		Develop business case for more Officers if Service Review identifies further requirements	Business case developed and submitted	A (by 01 Feb)
External agencies	Develop relationships with external agencies to ensure a collaborative approach to Animal Welfare and Animal Management	Develop relationships with external agencies to ensure a collaborative approach to Animal Welfare and Animal Management	Develop relationships with external agencies to ensure a collaborative approach to Animal Welfare and Animal Management	O

### 1.3 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Objective: To review of existing equipment utilised by Rangers to increase officer safety in the field**

✓ A risk assessment and review of available equipment will be undertaken to ensure officers are provided with require personal protective clothing and equipment in the field.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Risk Assessment	Educate management on identified risks within department and implement approved recommendations	Undertake Animal Management Risk Assessment for all activities	Risk Assessment undertaken	A (by 01 Nov)
		Submit Risk Assessment to management for review	ELT report submitted	A (by 01 Nov)
		Submit Budget bid to implement recommendations	Budget bids submitted	A (by 15 Jan)
		Adopt approved recommendations	Recommendations implemented	O
Equipment and Fleet	Review all Ranger and Animal Shelter Equipment	Audit all equipment provided to ensure OHS requirements	Equipment Audited Missing or damaged equipment ordered	A (by 01 Sep)
	Fleet meets all OHS and Legislative requirements in relation to Traffic management	Audit all fleet, consider OHS and legislative requirements and submit budget bids for modifications as required	Audit undertaken Budget bid submitted	2022/2023
Covid Safe Plans	Develop and implement Covid safe risk assessment and Covid Safe Plans for Animal Rangers and Shepparton Animal Shelter	Undertake a risk assessment and develop Covid Safe plans for Rangers and the Animal Shelter	Plans developed and implemented	2022-2023
		Implement plans and review as required	Plans reviewed as Chief Health Officer changes occur	O
Vaccination Program	Ensure all animal management staff have access to an appropriate vaccination program	Review current vaccination requirements for staff and ensure staff are provided access to recommended vaccinations	Vaccination Program implemented for all animal management staff	O
Traffic Management	Ensure appropriate Traffic Management Plans are in place for Officers working on Council Roads	Develop Traffic Management Plans for Community Rangers / Officers working on Council roads	Plans developed and implemented	O

### 1.4 ORDER REVIEW AND LEGISLATION

**Objective: To 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**

✓ Council will undertake a review of each of Councils orders under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, to ensure that the Orders are relevant and effective.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Compulsory Cat Desexing order review and implementation	Review and implement Compulsory Cat Desexing Order	Investigate if compulsory cat desexing Order is having an effect on preventing unwanted litters	Evaluation conducted and reported	2023-2024
		Review Order under section 10 of the DAA - Cat desexing and implement recommendations if required	Order reviewed and recommendations undertaken	2023-2024
Cat Curfew Order	Review and implement Cat Curfew Order	Review Order under section 25 of the DAA - Cat curfew and implement recommendations if required	Order reviewed and recommendations undertaken	2023-2024
Dog On Leash/Off Leash Order	Review and implement Dog On Leash / Off Leash Order	Review Order under section 26 of the DAA - Off Leash Dog Parks	Order reviewed and recommendations undertaken	2022-2023
		Review of section 26 Order in relation to dogs at the Australian Botanic Gardens Kialla and consider if a specific Council Order prohibiting dogs and cats is required for the entire site	Order reviewed and recommendations undertaken	2022-2023
		Create SOP on how to increase enforcement action	SOP created and implemented	2023-2024
No Animal Areas Order	Review and implement No Animal Areas Order	Review Order under section 26 of the DAA - Dogs on lead at all times	Order created and implemented	2024-2025
		Investigate potential of 'no animal areas' under section 42(b) to protect native fauna	Feasibility of section 42(b) of the Act undertaken and recommendations implemented	2023-2024
		Consider if the Australian Botanic Gardens Kialla should be a potential 'no animal area'	Order reviewed and recommendations undertaken	2022-2023
Advocacy	Become an advocate for development of legislation and research trials	Create SOP for Enforcement and Compliance	SOP created and implemented	2023-2024
		Participate in Advocacy through providing feedback on legislation to State Government	Responses submitted when feedback requested by state government	O



## 1.5 MEDIA AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats.**

- ✓ Council has undertaken various community education activities to promote responsible pet ownership, animal welfare and the services provided by Council. The activities and strategies aimed to reach the wider community through multiple avenues with a strong focus on the requirements of the Act.
- ✓ Support and promote responsible pet ownership, community safety and healthy living through a well-informed community.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Media Strategy	Media Communication strategy	Develop media communication and education strategy in various formats including brochures, media releases, timelines, social media, documents, newsletters, posters and signs including the following topics; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work of the Animal Management department</li> <li>• Responsible Pet Ownership</li> <li>• Registration and Identification</li> <li>• Wandering cats and Semi-owned Cats</li> <li>• Pick up after your dog</li> <li>• Dog on leash laws</li> <li>• Excess Animals</li> <li>• Semi-owned and feral cats and effects they have on Wildlife</li> <li>• Keeping Cats confined and how to build cat enclosures</li> </ul>	Media strategy implemented and number of methods utilised	O
		Develop, implement and review annually or as required Apply for funding during budget for education programs	Media strategy developed, implemented and reviewed annually Funding applied for in Budget bid process	A (by 01 Feb) A (by 01 Feb)
Website	Ensure Councils website contains educational material	Develop Website, including the following topics; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-owned and feral cats and effects they have on Wildlife</li> <li>• Keeping Cats confined and how to build cat enclosures</li> <li>• How to report dog attacks and dog rush incidents</li> <li>• Vet information</li> <li>• Information to educate the community on pet selection</li> <li>• Domestic Animal Businesses including microchip requirements, DAB Number or Pet Register number (when applicable) on advertisements for sale</li> </ul>	Website developed	O
		Review webpages and ensure information is accurate	Review completed	A (by 15 Jul)
Multicultural response	Ensure Education and Enforcement written material is available in appropriate language	Review material and identify what is required to be translated	Material is developed and utilised	2022-2023
		Translate Material and have available in brochures and on website	Number of material developed and utilised Material translated and made available	2023-2024
		Review Material to ensure effectively being utilised	Review conducted	2024-2025
	Develop relationships with multicultural awareness agencies	Develop relationships with internal and external agencies to ensure multiculturalism is included in Media Communication Strategy, Website, Education material and Enforcement Material	Multiculturalism included in Media Communication Strategy, Website, Education material and Enforcement Material	2022-2023
Agency relationships	Develop relationships to increase awareness of animal management issues	Develop relationships with internal and external agencies to promote animal management issues and responsible pet ownership	Relationships developed and information provided	O
Kits	Review 'New resident kits' to include animal management information	Review 'New resident kits' to include animal management information	Kits reviewed and updated	2023-2024
	Responsible Pet Ownership kits created for community housing tenants	Responsible Pet Ownership kits created for community housing tenants and provided as required	Kits developed and supplied	2023-2024 O
	Dog Attack Prevention	Dog attack prevention kit on website with information on how to prevent and avoid dog bites, what to do if bitten, seeking medical attention, how to report dog attack to Council	Kit developed and available on website	2023-2024
Education Programs	Educational Programs and visits	Education programs conducted at community houses / groups, schools by Councils authorised officers	Council Officers conduct talks to community/schools	O
		Promote Responsible Pet Ownership Schools Program and 'We Are Family' Program	Responsible Pet Ownership Schools Program and 'We Are Family' Program investigated and promoted to community development team	2025-2026
		Education program conducted by DJPR staff	Join DJPR school education program database and utilise for schools. Arrange visits by DJPR staff to municipality	2025-2026
Positive Education and Reward Scheme		Investigate feasibility of a Positive Education Program such as providing owners with dog poo bags or leads	Scheme implemented	2023-2024
		Review Budget and/or make budget bid for next year	Budget bid completed	A (by 01 Feb)
		Implement positive education program to encourage compliance	Program implemented	O
Ranger Vehicle Signs	Purchase signs for Ranger vehicles for campaigns	New signage on Ranger vehicles to show presence of Rangers and for targeted campaigns	Number of signs utilised	O
		Rangers to utilise signs for campaigns when driving through municipality	Signs utilised	O

Shepparton Animal Shelter	Develop a Media Campaign to educate the community on the work undertaken at the Animal Shelter	Identify lost animals on the Council website	Lost animals that are unable to be identified included on website	O
		Investigate the feasibility for a 'friends of the shelter' group	Feasibility conducted and results implemented	2025-2026
		Implement media strategy to promote the Shepparton Animal Shelter as the first point for animal adoption and surrender	Media strategy implemented Increase in the number of dogs and cats entering the animal shelter as surrendered and number of animals being adopted	O
		Liaise with the community regarding the possibility of implementing new community engagement initiatives	Report on outcome of feasibility study	2025-2026
		Investigate and increase use of social media	Use of social media investigated Social media presence increased	2023-2024

## 1.6 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

**Objective: Prepare an Emergency Animal Welfare Plan and provide emergency animal welfare support in the event of an emergency.**

- ✓ Council has committed to provide assistance to animals in the event of a large scale emergency situation.
- ✓ Council will develop the Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP), a plan for the management of domestic animals in a municipal emergency which forms part of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPC).
- ✓ Once the EAWP is completed, Council will undertake a number of community education initiatives in accordance with the Action Plan, to educate the community on their responsibilities.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Emergency Animal Welfare Plan (EAWP)	Plan for the management of domestic animals in a municipal emergency which forms part of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPC)	Develop EAWP in consultation with the MEMPC to ensure EAWP is included in the MEMPC	A holistic EAWP that manages resources, people and animals to protect our community developed and implemented. EAWP approved by the MEMPC	2022-2023
	Develop Livestock Disease Plan for animal shelter and Rangers to Reduce the risk of disease incursion and spread – including new and emerging disease risks	Develop Livestock Disease Plan for animal shelter and rangers	Plan developed and implemented	2022-2023
	Review EAWP Annually	Review EAWP annually to ensure information is up to date	Review completed	A (by 01 Oct)
	Provide support to animals in crisis situations	Investigate how to support animals in crisis cases. eg: animal food, animal shelter, vet supplies, pet friendly accommodation	Report in conjunction with the EAWP	2023-2024
Emergency Management education	Inform the community of what they should do with their domestic animals in an emergency	Develop information for the community on what to do with their pets in emergencies	Report in conjunction with the EAWP	2022-2023
		Ensure information is available for the community on what to do with their pets in emergencies	Information provided	2022-2023
Emergency management supplies and Equipment	Create Emergency Management kits	Create Emergency management kits for Rangers to utilise at relief centres	Kits created	2022-2023
	Animal Management trailer for events and emergencies	Undertake feasibility study to purchase and build an animal management trailer for events and emergency situations	Feasibility study conducted and trailer purchased (if required)	2024-2025
		Trailer purchase (if approved)	Trailer purchased	2025-2026



## ACTION PLAN – 2. SHEPPARTON ANIMAL SHELTER

**Objective: Outline projects, programs, services and strategies to increase the service provided at the Shepparton Animal Shelter.**

- ✓ The Shepparton Animal Shelter, located on the same site as the Shepparton Transfer Station at 125 Wanganui Road Shepparton was opened in 2002. Over the last 20 years, the shelter has cared for thousands of animals. However the facility is showing signs of wear and no longer meets the communities expectations for the level of service provided to the community. Council will undertake a feasibility study into the design and location of a new animal shelter, along with the development of new community education programs surrounding responsible pet ownership and animal welfare.
- ✓ Council is committed to continually reducing the euthanasia rates at the Shepparton Animal Shelter through the development and implementation of a Health Management plan and animal adoption programs.
- ✓ To enable Council to deliver the new initiatives, the number of resources dedicated to the Animal Shelter has increased. This has enabled Council to form positive partnerships and relationships across the animal shelter industry, with local businesses and the community.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
New Shepparton Animal Shelter Facility	Provision of a new Shepparton Animal Shelter Facility, including a community vet clinic and an area that can conduct responsible pet ownership seminars and events	Commence project management process Investigate regional demand Investigate funding options	Concept and costings completed	2022-2023
		Engage consultant to provide concept plan and costings Secure land	Capital bid submitted and approved	2023-2024 (by 01 Mar)
		Detailed design completed Procurement processes implemented	Approval process completed	2024-2025
		Commence construction of new Shepparton Animal Shelter facility by 2025-2026	Construction commenced by 2026	2025-2026
Euthanasia	Decrease euthanasia rates of impounded and unclaimed animals	Review and implement protocols to reduce euthanasia	Reduction in euthanasia rates per year Increase in number of animals rehoused	O
		Review Health Management Plan including admission procedures for feral animals, behaviour assessment processes, adoption pathways and opportunities	Health Management Plan implemented including programs for behaviour assessments and rehousing practices	O
		Review Health Management Plan in relation to implementation of new facility	Review undertaken	2025-2026
Volunteer Programs	Engage the community to increase fostering of young or ill animals	Implement foster carer program	Foster carer program implemented	O
		Review Foster Care processes and monitoring procedures	Scheme reviewed	O
	Investigate a Volunteer at Shelter program	Conduct feasibility study on the establishment of an Animal Shelter volunteer program	Feasibility study conducted	2023-2024
		Develop program including position descriptions, SOP's, rosters and shelter requirements	Program developed and implemented	2025-2025
Work Experience Programs	Increase the opportunities for young people to experience working at the shelter	Implement Work Experience program in accordance with People and Development	Report on students and volunteers who have worked or volunteered in the Animal Shelter	O
Animal Adoptions	Increase Animal Adoptions	Investigate different methods of animal adoption available for Shelter animals	Different methods investigated	O
		Investigate further opportunities for animal adoption directly from shelter once new cat adoption facility operating	Actively promote adoptions directly from the Animal Shelter	O
		Promote adoption of older animals and long term foster care	Number of older animals (over 7 years) adopted or in permanent foster care	O
		Review Animal Adoption page of website to make more appealing and more accessible	Website updated	2023-2024
		Develop database of wording and phrases for animal profiles	Database developed	2023-2024
		Investigate 84Y's and a procedure for rescue groups to adopt from the Animal Shelter	Number of animals adopted to Rescue Groups	O
		Partner with local Pet Shops for animal adoption in accordance with legislation	Pets Shops having animals available for adoption	O
Fees and Charges	Review Fees and Charges	Review fees and charges to ensure adequate fee structure as part of annual budget development	Annual review undertaken	A (by 01 Feb)
Statistics and Monitoring	Review annual statistics	Undertake annual statistics collection and review	Statistics kept to indicate compliance with target plans	O
		Consider options for monitoring of statistics such as new computer program and submit budget bid accordingly	Statistics kept to indicate compliance with target plans	2022-2023
		Implement new statistics and monitoring programs	Implement new program	2023-2024
		Review statistics against previous years	Ensure statistics kept meet requirements to ensure compliance with target plans	O
Vet Contract	Review current, develop new and implement Vet contract in accordance with COP	Review Vet Contract requirements to ensure meets ongoing requirements of shelter	Contract reviewed	A (by 01 Feb)
		Complete Tender Contract process	Tender process completed by October 2022	2022-2023 (by 01 Oct)
		Award new contract	Tender awarded by 13 January 2023	2022-2023 (by 01 Jan)
		Implement new Vet Contract	Contracted implemented	2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026
	Ensure Animal shelter is conducted in accordance with legislation and Codes of Practice	Audit animal shelter annually to ensure compliance under the Code of Practice and report to management	Annual audits to ensure compliance with Code of Practice and best practice	O

Code of Practice Audit and facility management of current location		Report to management on audit findings and recommendations	Audit and recommendations reported	A (by 01 May)
		Report to Building Maintenance any issues with facility	Issues reported and actioned	O
		Implement Improvement project with new cat room, dangerous dog enclosure, vet clinic, admission room and walkway	Improvement project completed	2022-2023
		Develop program of capital and other works required to maintain compliance with the Code of Practice and best practice	Program developed and budget bid submitted	A (by 01 Mar)
User Friendly facility		Ensure the facility is as user friendly as possible	Review access and amend as required	O
Service Review	Complete a service review of the animal shelter	Conduct service review of the animal shelter, including opening hours, operating hours, potential for weekend hours, staff availability, use of appointments for animal intake, adoptions and collections	Feasibility study conducted and results implemented	2023-2024
		Implement recommendations from service review	Recommendations implemented	2023-2024
Getting 2 Zero	Work with Getting 2 Zero to improve overpopulation	Liaise with the Getting 2 Zero(G20) and work towards implementing ideas to improve euthanasia rates and reduce overpopulation	Report on additional statistics generated to date	O
Emergency Management	Emergency management process for animal shelter site	Ensure emergency management procedures are in place and Review existing emergency management procedures and update in consultation with Vet and OHS Team Leader	SOP's reviewed and staff trained	O
		Officers are nominated as OHS/Fire Warden/First Aid Officers	All positions are filled and training has been provided	O

## ACTION PLAN – 3. COMMUNITY RANGERS

## 3.1 REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.**

- ✓ Registration and identification of domestic animals has the greatest impact on providing animal control services to the community.
- ✓ Animal registration provides limited funding to the operational running of the animal shelter and other animal management services. Council needs to focus on ensuring that the financial burden is shared equitably amongst all pet owners and has limited reliance on general rates.
- ✓ While Officers have encouraged and promoted the benefits of animal registration to the community, the number of animal registrations has declined and the number of animals being reclaimed from the shelter has not improved.
- ✓ Council will focus on increasing the number of animal registrations within the municipality.
- ✓ Council will manage dedicated campaigns and incentives to register, desex and microchip domestic animals.
- ✓ Processes for registering, renewing and updating details will be reviewed to streamline and improve the service.
- ✓ Council will take discount microchipping to the community to improve the ease of identification and promote responsible pet ownership, with the overall aim of increasing the number of animals reclaimed from the shelter.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Registration	Ensure Animal Registration records are accurate and correspondence is timely	Order Animal Registration tags within specified time period	Tags received	A (by 15 Dec)
		Order Animal Registration Renewal notices and reminder notices within specified time period	Renewal notices and reminder notices ordered and printed	A (by 15 Jan)
		Ensure all renewal notices are issued within specified time period	Renewal notices issued	A (by 15 Feb)
		Ensure all reminder notices are issued within specified time period	Reminder notices issued	A (by 31 May)
		Implement pro rata fee to encourage registration within specified time period	Number of registrations specifically over that period	A (by 15 Jan)
		Investigate feasibility of sending 'update your details' letters to registered animals prior to renewal period	Feasibility study completed. New process Implemented if approved	2023-2024
		Investigate feasibility of SMS animal reminders to be sent	Feasibility study completed. New process Implemented if approved	2023-2024
		Investigate the feasibility of lifetime registration tags to determine if it will result in a reduction in number of registered animals found with old tags and reduction in costs of purchasing new tags	Feasibility conducted and results implemented	2024-2025
		Investigate the feasibility of environmentally friendlier animal registration tag options	Feasibility conducted and results implemented	2024-2025
		Increase the percentage of registered domestic animals in the municipality	Proactively seek unregistered animals	Report on the number of properties inspected Increase in animal registrations as a direct result of the proactive campaign
	Apply for new Animal Registration Compliance officer position		Job Analysis and Authority to Recruit submitted to management for considerations	2022-2023
	Follow up properties where animal registration has lapsed		Report on the number of properties inspected	O
	Develop and implement strategies and incentives to register animals		Implement one strategy/incentive to register animals	A (by 15 Jan)
	Improve the Animal Registration Application process	Investigate the feasibility of registrations being completed by Veterinary clinics under 84Y agreements to determine if it will result in an increase in registration compliance	Feasibility conducted and results implemented	2023-2024
		Increase the number of locations / outlets where animal registration is promoted and provide directions to access registration forms	Number of outlets promoting animal registration	2024-2025
Review Animal Registration process regarding notifying Council of deceased animal		Review completed and improvements implemented for 2023-2024 registration period	2023-2024	
Advocate for a review by the state government of the Animal Registration scheme		Write to State Government regarding possible improvements of the Animal Registration scheme	2024-2025	
Microchipping		Improve the accuracy of registration and microchip records	Contact microchip registries to request details of dogs and cats in the municipality that are microchipped and cross reference if information available	Actions undertaken including ongoing monitoring of database and education activities
	Educate the community to ensure all pet owners are aware they need to keep their details up to date with the City and Central Animal Records		Media Strategy implemented and material disseminated	2023-2024
	Run free microchip detail checks on registries for animal owners		Process implemented	O
	Create Standard Operating Procedures on how to improve the accuracy of databases		SOP created and implemented	2023-2024
	Increase number of animals microchipped	Consider or develop a reduced microchipping incentive scheme	Incentive scheme developed and deliverable	O
		Council Officer as authorised implanted to microchip animals	Number of microchipped animals completed by authorised implanter	O



### 3.2 NUISANCE DOGS

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.**

- ✓ The number of reports of dog nuisance complaints continues to increase.
- ✓ Officers will focus on educating dog owners on ways to manage their animals that minimises the potential nuisance to others.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Wandering Dogs	Reduce the number of wandering dogs throughout the municipality	Officers to respond to reports of wandering dogs	Officers responded to dog wandering reports on the same day	O
		Increase patrols to minimise dogs wandering at large and attend to dog wandering reports promptly	Number of dogs proactively located	O
		Install Dogs on leash signs around municipality	Number of dog on leash signs	A (by 01 Nov)
		Undertake enforcement action to prevent repeat offending	Number of reports received and dogs proactively located	O
Barking Dogs	Manage barking dog complaints with a focus on resolution outside formal enforcement	Continue managing barking dog complaints to focus on resolution outside formal enforcement	Number of barking dog reports managed in accordance with Council procedures	O
Dog faeces	Educate dog owners to pick up after their dogs in parks and gardens and at home	Install Pick up after your dog signs around municipality	Number of signs installed	A (by 01 Nov)
		Officers to respond to reports of people not cleaning up after their dog	Officers responded to reports of people not cleaning up after their dogs	O
		Increase proactive patrols to minimise owners not cleaning up after their dogs	Number of proactive patrols undertaken	O

### 3.3 OFF LEASH PARKS AND PARK FACILITIES

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs to create a nuisance in public parks.**

- ✓ Council has developed and opened two off Leash Dogs Parks, located at Ducat Reserve and Princess Park.
- ✓ *Domestic Animals Act 1994* Section 26 Order under adopted to allow dogs to be exercised off leash within this areas.
- ✓ Council will continue to investigate the potential for a third off leash dog park site and a review of the legislation regarding Greyhounds.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Ducat Reserve Off Leash Dog Park	Continue with Off Leash Dog Park	Rangers to investigate dog issues as reported	Rangers respond to all complaints	O
Princess Park Off Leash Dog Park	Continue with Off Leash Dog Park	Rangers to investigate dog issues as reported	Park and Committee established and operating with feedback from management and park users received	O
Third Off Leash Dog Park	Investigate the trial of a third off leash dog park site	Investigate the trial of a third off leash dog park site	Research to ascertain community acceptance and desire for a permanent location of site	2024-2025
		Implement Third Off Leash dog park if approved	Implement third Off Leash Dog Park	2025-2026
Greyhounds Off Leash Dog Area	Consider if Greyhounds can be exercised off leash at a secure park	Investigate the trial of a Greyhound approved site	Research to ascertain possibility of Greyhound approved off leash area	2023-2024
		Implement Greyhound Off Leash dog park if approved	Implement Greyhound Off Leash Dog Park	2025-2026

### 3.4 NUISANCE CATS

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for cats to create a nuisance.**

- ✓ There is an increase in the number of reports of cat wandering complaints.
- ✓ Wandering cats and the damage to our wildlife is a major concern for residents.
- ✓ Council is committed to educating the community on the semi-owned cat population; and
- ✓ Council is committed to implementing a number of activities regarding the stray cat population, desexing requirements and educating cat owners to ensure their animals are adequately confined to their premises.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Wandering Cats and semi-owned cat population	Reduce the number of wandering cats throughout the municipality	Review the Cat Trap Hire process to ensure process is efficient and effective	Number of cat traps hired and the number of residents requesting cat traps	2022-2023
		Review number of cat traps hired and the number of cat pens required at the animal shelter	Review completed	2022-2023
		Purchase more cat traps to increase number of cat traps utilised in Cat trap hire scheme	Number of cat traps utilised in hire scheme increased	A (01 Mar)
		Develop SOP's regarding the destruction of cats found at large in certain areas	SOP's and guidelines developed	2023-2024
	Educate the community on wandering cat issues	Provide education material and information on website about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners	Amount of education material distributed and accessed Increase in the amount of information provided to the community and the number of hits to webpage	O
		Establish focus group around addressing wandering cats	Focus group established Number of strategies identified, researched and implemented	2023-2024
		Rangers to proactively work with local community groups to increase number of feral cats trapped in areas where wildlife are active	Number of Ranger cat trapping programs implemented Number of cat trapping programs undertaken Number of community groups actively trapping feral cats in wildlife areas	O
		Rangers to work with community groups to increase awareness of cats wandering and building cat enclosures	Number of visits attended	2024-2025 (in line with Focus group recommendations)
	Support scientific research into cat population issues	Support scientific research studies to reduce cat populations such as the Community cat research study	Support provided	O

### 3.5 DOG ATTACKS

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.**

- ✓ The majority of dog attacks occur when the attacking dog is wandering at large or not securely confined to its property. Council is committed to implementing education and enforcement programs to effectively reduce the number of dogs wandering and reducing the potential and risk of dogs attacking.
- ✓ Council has focussed on encouraging the community to report dog attacks to Council for investigation and have shown an improved commitment to prosecute dog owners for serious offences. This strategy has seen the number of dog attacks reported to Council increase, resulting in Council investigating and prosecuting dog owners for serious offences. All of the prosecutions for serious dog attacks have been highly successful in reducing the number of highly aggressive dogs within the municipality and to obtain compensation for victims of dog attack.
- ✓ Council continues to focus on educating the community on dog attack, dog attack prevention and the importance of confining a dog to its own property;
- ✓ Officers will undertake various enforcement activities in situations where dogs continually wander; and
- ✓ Officers will encourage the community to report dog wandering, dog attack and dog rush incidents to Council for investigation through media campaigns and by working closely with relevant agencies.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Reporting	Ensure dog attacks and dog rush are reported to Council	Encourage reporting of dog attacks and dog rush in the community	Number of dog attack and dog rush reports recorded	O
		Include reporting dog attacks and prosecution outcomes in Media Campaign	Included in Media Campaign	O
		Further develop the relationship with Veterinarians, Police, Government agencies and larger businesses to report all dog attacks, rushes and wandering animal to Council	Relationships developed and evidence of communication with agencies	O
Compliance and Enforcement	Enforce legislation regarding dog attacks, dog rush and dog wandering at large	Develop SOP's and guidelines regarding dog attack investigations and prosecution process	SOP's and guidelines developed and implemented	O
		Undertake prosecutions for serious dog attack incidents	Number of prosecutions conducted, number of incidents reported and outcomes	O
		Develop SOP's regarding the destruction of dangerous dogs found at large where risk to public is imminent	SOP's and guidelines developed	2023-2024
		Develop a database to monitor dog attack location hot spots and increase patrols in these areas	Database developed	2023-2024

## 3.6 DECLARED DOGS

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations.**

- ✓ Council has undertaken annual audits of the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and have monitored all declared dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs for compliance with the Act.
- ✓ Council will continue to declare dangerous and menacing dogs, to monitor all declared dogs to ensure compliance with the Act and to focus on identifying guard dogs.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Victorian Declared Dog Registry (VDDR)	To maintain accuracy of database through regular audit process	Audit VDDR annually against Councils animal registration database to ensure information is accurate	VDDR Database is inspected and up to date annually	A (by 01 May)
	Ensure any dog destroyed under s84TA/TB/TC, destroyed under s84T(2) or surrendered for euthanasia under s33A is reported on VDDR within 28 days	Develop SOP on reporting procedure and guidelines	Every situation reported on VDDR within 28 days	O
Annual Audits	Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are kept in accordance with the Act	Inspect all declared dogs at least annually, identify any breaches, investigate and enforce in accordance with the Enforcement Guidelines	Annual audit completed	A (by 01 May)
Complaint investigations	Investigate complaints regarding dangerous, menacing and restricted dog breeds	Ensure every complaint is investigated and actioned including prosecutions when required	Complaints actioned	O
Animal Registration Declaration	Ensure Registration Application forms has declaration as required under DAA	Check Registration Application form template each year prior to printing to ensure the template has declaration as required under DAA	Review of Animal Registration form completed in December each year	A (by 31 Jun)
	Develop a culture where Council staff advise animal owners to correctly identify restricted breed dogs or declared dogs and actively question the accuracy of information in the system	SOP developed on how staff correctly identify dogs of concern from Animal Registration form and report accordingly	SOP developed and implemented	2023-2024
Declaration process	Ensure Declaration process meets procedural fairness guidelines	Implement procedural fairness and declaration SOP as required	SOP developed and implemented	O
Menacing Dogs Revoke process	Ensure Menacing Dog revocation considers risks to public and Council	Develop guideline on when menacing declaration may be revoked with consideration of risks to public and Council	Guidelines developed and utilised	2023-2024
Guard dogs	Identify and register all Guard Dogs	Patrol industrial and commercial areas for guard dogs	Patrols conducted and results found	O
		Develop SOP on declaring guard dogs dangerous	SOP developed and utilised	2023-2024
Restricted Breed dogs	Restricted Breed dogs	Develop SOP on declaring Restricted Breed dogs	SOP developed and utilised	2024-2025



### 3.7 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation regarding Domestic Animal Businesses and dog and cat breeders**

- ✓ Council has undertaken numerous audits of all registered Domestic Animal Businesses to ensure that a level of compliance with legislation and relevant Code of Practice is maintained.
- ✓ Council has undertaken a number of investigations into potential unregistered or non-compliant domestic animal businesses and have prosecuted accordingly.
- ✓ Council is motivated to ensure that a minimum level of animal care is maintained in all pet shops, animal breeders and boarding kennels.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Domestic Animal Businesses (DAB) monitoring	Ensure all DAB's are registered with Council and comply with the requirements of the Act	Audit every DAB each year for compliance. Enforce compliance with minimum requirements. Ensure all registered DAB have work plans	All businesses audited and permits renewed or work plans issued. Evidence of audits collected and collated	A (by 01 Jul)
		Review Work Plans and conditions, limitations and restrictions on permits	Work Plans reviewed	A (by 01 Aug)
		Inspect domestic animal businesses in response to complaints	All complaints investigated and compliance with legislation reached	O
Enforcement of non-compliance	Legislation / Enforcement	Identify new businesses that should be registered DAB's in the municipality, using advertisements, social media, pets for sale ads, newspapers etc. Follow up to determine whether they are a DAB and should be registered with council	Compare number of registered DAB's before and after activity  Identified businesses are either registered and compliant or have enforcement proceedings	O
	Relationships	Develop relationships with Planning Officers and Building Officers to ensure they are aware of the DAA requirements	Officers are aware of requirements under the DAA with relevant applications referred to the department for review	O
	Advertisements	Research all ads for puppies/kittens for sale	Process undertaken	O
New businesses	Council Guidelines and Policies	Consider Council Guidelines / policies on; limiting the number of DAB's in municipality, process to refuse to register, transfer of registration, revoking registration and dealing with VCAT	Guidelines considered and developed as required	2024-2025
Permit process	Fees and Charges	Review fees and charges to ensure adequate fee structure for DAB permits	Review completed and fee structure adopted by Council	O
	Refunds	Develop policy regarding refunding fee costs	Policy reviewed and changes implemented	O
	Conditions, limitations and restrictions SOP	Establish list of conditions for each Domestic Animal Business permit	All DAB permits have relevant conditions listed	O
		Develop SOP on the conditions, limitations and restrictions process	SOP created and implemented	O

### 3.8 EXCESS ANIMALS

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to increase compliance with Councils Local laws regarding excess animals.**

- ✓ Officers investigate all reports of people with more than the number of animals permitted

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Excess Animals	To ensure compliance with Council Local Laws in relation to excess animals	Properties with excess animals identified, Notices to Comply issued and compliance obtained	Number of complaints where compliance obtained	O
Proactive identification	To proactively identify properties with excess animals	Audit numbers of Animal Registered at each property to identify excess numbers Create request for Ranger investigation	Number of Requests created Number of permits issued	O
		Investigate new methods of identifying properties with excess animals and submit budget bid as required	Investigation and budget bid undertaken	2023-2024 (by 01 Feb)
Recreational breeders	To identify recreational breeders, DAB's or excess animal issues	Inspect properties with excess animal permits to ensure they are not a breeding business	Number of properties inspected and outcomes	O
	To raise awareness of code of ethics for recreational breeders	Provide information to the public as advised by DJPR on Code of ethics for recreational breeders	Information provided to public	2023-2024

## 3.9 OVERPOPULATION AND EUTHANASIA

**Objective: Outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and euthanasia rates for dogs and cats**

- ✓ Council is committed to reducing the number of unowned and unidentified cats and dogs in the community and to increase the number of animals being reclaimed by their owners.
- ✓ Council will continue to liaise with industry leaders in order to seek opportunities that may assist to reduce overpopulation and euthanasia and have become involved in an Australia wide scientific community cats research program aimed at reducing unowned and semi-owned cat populations.

	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	Year
Desexing Schemes	Increase the number of dog and cats that are desexed within the community	Continue to implement ongoing subsidised desexing for pets of low income earners via agreements with local vet clinics, and /or organisations such as the National Desexing Network and /or Australian Veterinary Association / Municipal Association of Victoria	Number of animals desexed as part of the scheme. Cost to run scheme.	O
		Research if Voucher scheme is appropriate for the community and implement any improvements	Research completed, changes implemented and budget bid submitted	A (01 Feb)
		Include Vouchers in Media Campaign	Media campaign conducted	2023-2024
	New Desexing Initiatives	Research feasibility of new desexing initiatives Include in Budget submission Implement recommendations if approved	Feasibility study conducted and implemented if feasible	2023-2024
	Animal registration desexing incentive to increase number of animals desexed	Review animal registration fee schedule review to increase incentive to desex dogs and cat	Review conducted	2023-2024
Pest controllers / other organisations	Develop relationships with licensed pest controllers and organisations regarding cat trapping	Assist pest controllers and other organisations about cat trapping conditions, animal welfare standards and legislation requirements	Relationships formed and results of cat trapping programs	O
Over Population Issues	Support scientific research studies or new initiatives on addressing over population issues	Support scientific research studies or new initiatives on addressing over population issues by considering implementing new ideas	New initiatives considered	O
	Encourage community to adopt semi owned cats	Promotions to encourage people to take full ownership of cats eg discount desex / microchip / vaccinate offers, free products	Measure uptake on any promotions to encourage people to take ownership of cats.	2023-2024
	Data collection of semi owned cats populations	Gather data and undertake research to determine if there's an overpopulation problem and what is the priority for community	Data identified if overpopulation an issue and areas to target for campaigns.	2024-2025
	Investigate free kitten advertisements	Investigate free kitten adverts and owners of farm cats to determine how we can promote desexing to owners	Number of adverts investigated and the number of cats desexed and registered as a result of investigations	2023-2024

## ACTION PLAN – 4. ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORTING

**Objective: Every Council must; review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; provide the Department of Primary Industries' Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.**

- ✓ In accordance with the Act, Council will review the DAMP annually as part of service delivery planning and budget preparations. This review will ensure the Action Plan is relevant and identified objectives can be completed.
- ✓ Officers will report on the strategies, identified amendments and objective results with an evaluation of the DAMP's implementation included in Councils annual report.
- ✓ In the final year of the plan, Council will undertake a major review and commence preparations for drafting the next Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Annual Review and Reporting	Objective	Key Activities	Evaluation	2022-2023
Know Your Council Annual Report (LGPRF)	Ensure data is submitted for inclusion	Collate data and submit results for Know your Council to management	Submit draft Know your Council results to management by due date	A (by 01 Aug)
Annual Review and reporting of DAMP	Conduct Evaluation of Plan including its effectiveness	Conduct Evaluation of Plan	Complete Evaluation and submit to Media and Communications by due date	A (by 01 Aug)
	Amend Plan as required	Amend Plan as required	Amend Plan if required	A (by 01 Aug)
	Results of Evaluation utilised for Councils Annual Report	Utilise Evaluation in Annual Report preparation	Utilise Evaluation when preparing Animal management section of Councils Annual Report	A (by 01 Aug)
	Amended Plan and Evaluation submitted to State Government	Submit amended plan and Evaluation to State Government	Submit to State Government	A (by 01 Nov)
Council Annual Report	Prepare Animal Management section for Councils Annual Report	Prepare Animal management submission for Councils annual report utilising DAMP Evaluation	Submit to Media and Communications	A (by 01 Aug)
DAMP Development	Develop New DAMP	New DAMP developed	New DAMP developed	2025-2026
Budget Review	Manage Budget in accordance with finance procedures	Review Budget and Actuals	Budget actuals reviewed and reported	Q
		Prepare Draft Budget	Draft Budget completed by due date	A (by 05 Jan)
Fees and Charges Annual Review	Ensure Fees and Charges meet financial requirements	Review Fees and charges	Fees and Charges reviewed	A (by 15 Dec)
		Prepare new Fees and Charges	Draft Fees and Charges completed by due date	A (by 05 Jan)
		Change all documents and website with new Fees and Charges	Documents and website updated and implemented	A (by 31 Jun)
Capital Budget Bids	Submit Capital Bids as required	Submit Capital Bids	Capital Bid submitted by due date	A (by 01 Mar)







## WE ARE LISTENING!

From the results of the community consultation and a review of Council data, the following major issues have been identified and will be addressed within the Action Plan:

Feedback	Response to Feedback
Education on responsible pet ownership is required	✓ Develop and implement targeted media and education plan
	✓ Consult multicultural groups to ensure services are all inclusive
	✓ Engage community groups to target specific issues
Wandering cats and the damage to local wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Council needs to focus on targeted education campaign around responsible pet ownership and the effects cats have on local wildlife</li> <li>✓ Continue support for scientific research into methods to reduce cat population</li> <li>✓ More cat traps available for hire</li> <li>✓ Desexing initiatives</li> <li>✓ Advocate for feral cat management</li> </ul>
People not picking up after their dogs	✓ Review dog poo bag dispensers and signage at Council parks
Dogs in our local Parks and Botanic gardens	✓ Review the current Domestic Animals Act 1994 Orders regarding dogs in Councils parks and gardens
Animal Registration numbers are reducing	✓ Investigate methods to increase Animal Registrations including media campaign
	✓ Investigate incentives to register
	✓ Review cost of Animal Registration to ensure value for money
Animal Registration scheme should be changed	✓ Advocate for a review by the state government of the Animal Registration scheme
Feedback on Animal Shelter	Response to Feedback
A new animal shelter facility is required, including a community vet clinic and an area that can conduct responsible pet ownership seminars and events	✓ Commence feasibility study into new Animal Shelter Facility.
Increase Animal Adoptions	✓ Increase Animal Adoptions locally by increasing capacity of the Animal Shelter
Make the facility as user friendly as possible	✓ Continue to undertake necessary improvements
Open the Animal Shelter on weekends	✓ Undertake a Service review to move towards opening the Animal Shelter on weekends.
Should be able to drop off a stray cat any day during business hours with no booking.	✓ Review Animal Shelter intake processes.

In November 2021, an animal management community consultation survey was released to gain feedback on a number of animal management issues.

The community consultation survey aimed to gather feedback on a number of animal management services, facilities and activities the Council provides with the information gathered being used to develop actions within the new plan. Council encouraged residents and stakeholders to have their say and participate in the consultation through advertising on the Shaping Greater Shepparton website, social media, media release, internal staff consultation and numerous emails to stakeholders, local community groups and schools. The animal management survey was completed by 128 participants, with 67% participants owning a dog and 29% owning a cat. The survey consisted of a number of questions, with Council receiving a mixed response. The more significant responses are as follows:

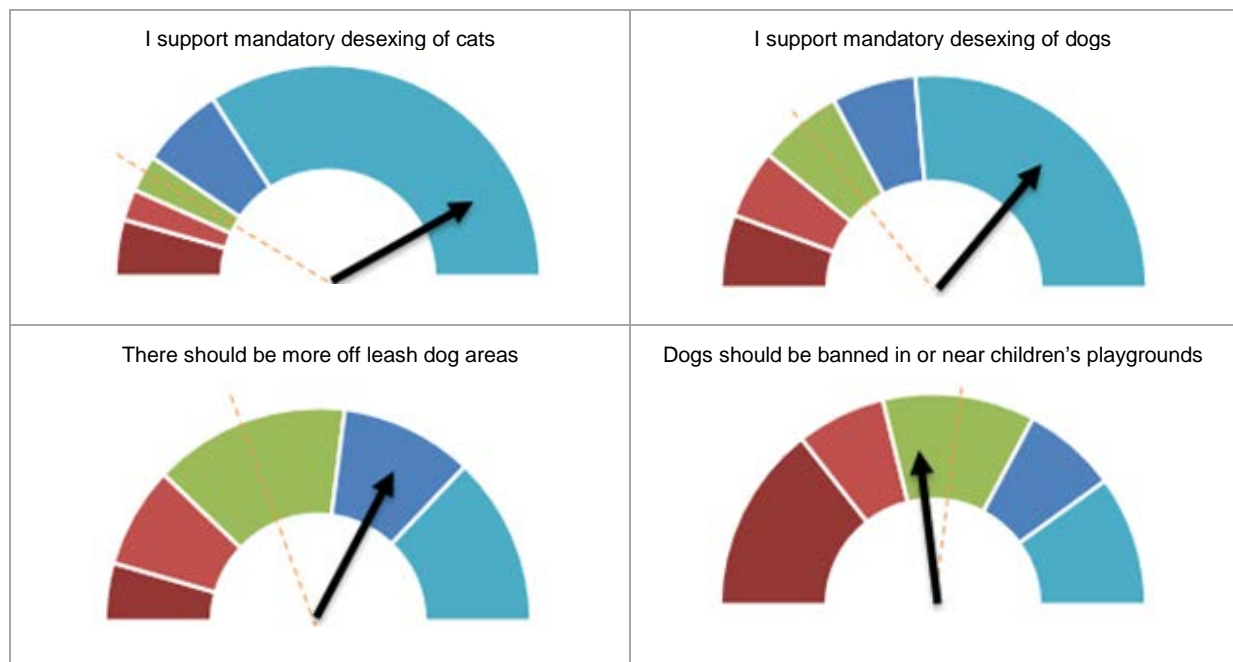
**Animal Management issues experienced**

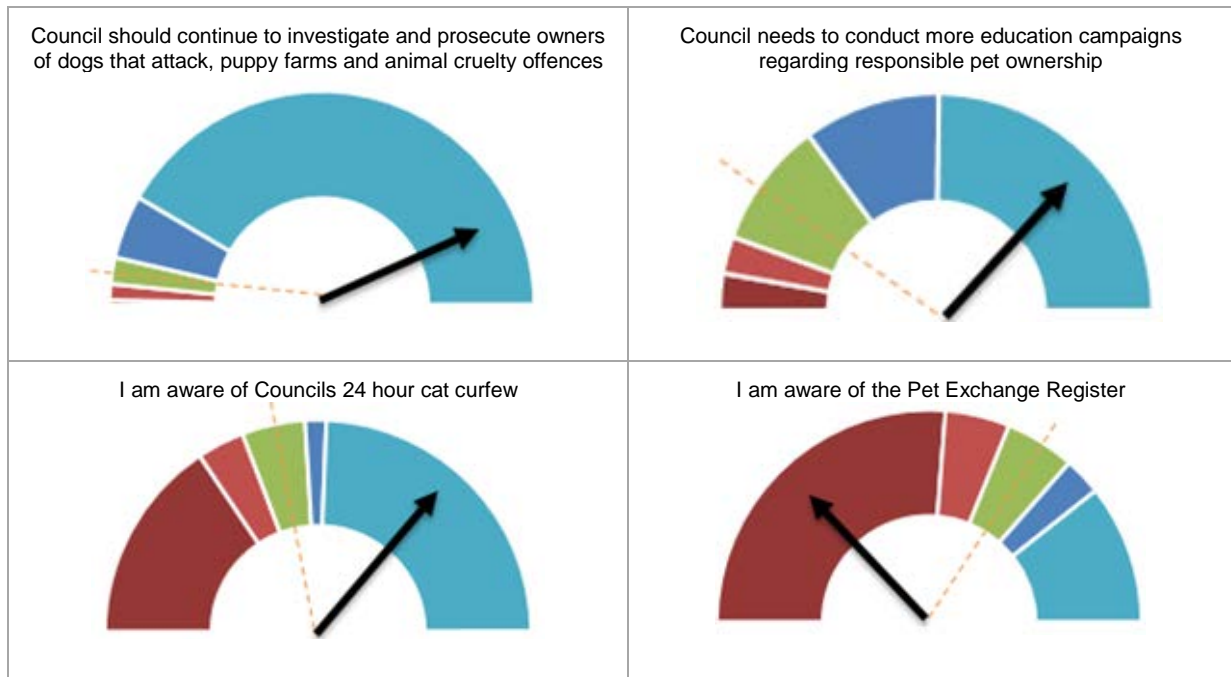
Of the animal management issues experienced in the last 12 months, the most concern to the least concern were as follows:

	<b>Most Concern</b>	Owned cats trespassing on private property
		Owners not picking up dog droppings after their dogs
		Cat curfew laws
		Semi-owned, feral or farm cats
		People not desexing their pets
		Dogs wandering at large or off leash
		Unowned cats that people feed but do not take full responsibility for
		Dogs barking excessively
		People not microchipping their pets
		People not registering their pets with Council
		Puppy farms and dog breeders
		The welfare or treatment of an animal in my neighbourhood
		People keeping more than two cats on a residential property
		Livestock wandering onto roads
		Cat breeders
	<b>Least Concern</b>	Dangerous or aggressive dogs
		Animals homeless due to Domestic Violence issues
	People keeping more than 2 dogs on a Residential property	
	The operation of pet shops and boarding kennels	
	Dog attacks	
	People keeping livestock such as goats, sheep or poultry on a residential property	

**Awareness and support of Animal Management issues**

Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements.





**Animal Registration, microchipping and desexing**

What do you think is the reason why some people do not microchip, desex and register their animals?

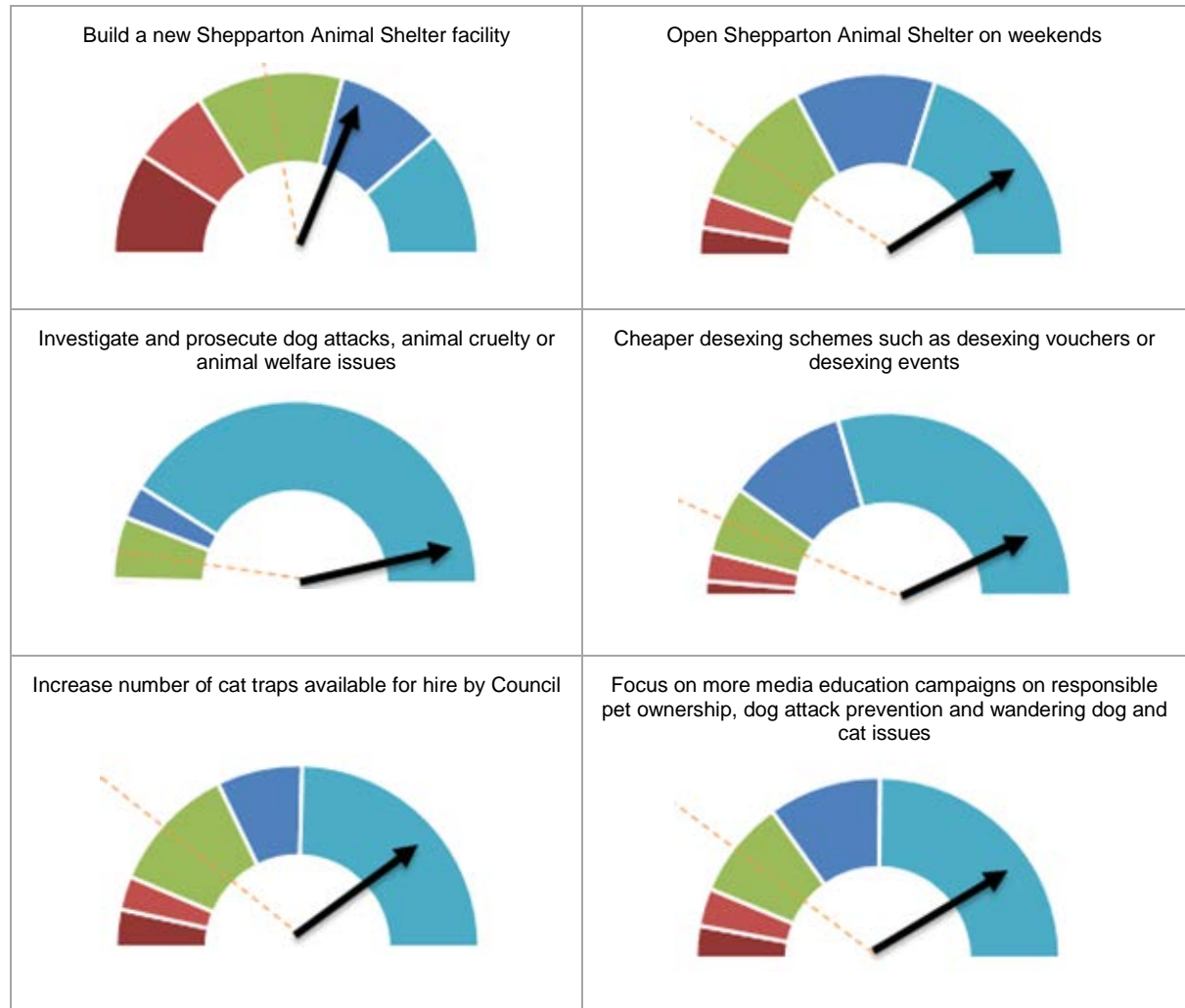
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-left: 2px solid blue; border-right: 2px solid blue; height: 100%; width: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; color: white;">Most Concern</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border-left: 2px solid blue; border-right: 2px solid blue; height: 100%; width: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; color: white;">Least Concern</div> </div>	Cost of microchipping and/or desexing
	Do not understand that registration provides value for money for animal management services
	Not aware of the requirement to register a dog or cat with Council
	Unable to get animal to Vet Clinic
	Unable to get to vet or Council
	Registration process is confusing / difficult
	Online Registration process is confusing / difficult



**Campaigns and concerns to address**

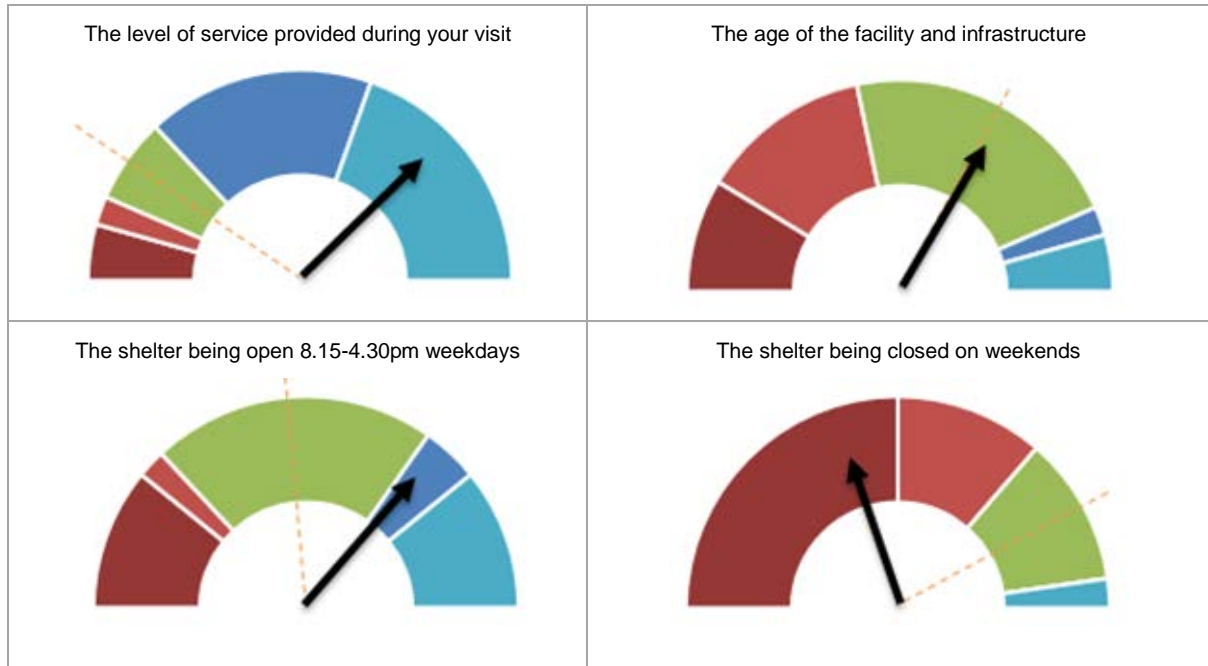
There are a number of different campaigns and concerns that Council can consider in the next four years.

**Key**



### The Shepparton Animal Shelter

Please indicate how you would rate the following about the Shepparton Animal Shelter?



In June 2022, the draft plan was presented to Council and approved for public consultation which occurred in August 2022 with a public survey, stakeholder meetings and staff engagement workshops that asked two main questions: What are your priorities? Did we miss anything?

The public consultation phase was advertised via a media release, postcards at prominent locations, social media posts and a summary of the plan on Councils website with a link to the survey.

The animal management survey was completed by 28 participants. From the results of the community consultation and a review of the draft plan, the following major issues have been identified and will be addressed within the Action Plan:

Topic	Feedback summary	Response to feedback
<b>1. Cat management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feral / semi-owned and wandering cats</li> <li>Cats killing native wildlife and damage to environment</li> <li>Proactive cat trapping on Council land</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 3.4
<b>2. Animal Shelter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New animal shelter</li> <li>Open animal shelter on weekends</li> <li>Increase Adoption Services</li> <li>Review of Adoption Fees</li> <li>Explore Volunteer opportunities</li> <li>Review Surrendered animal process</li> <li>Adoption education programs</li> <li>Review of animal adoption questionnaire</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in Action Plan 2
<b>3. Dogs on/off Leash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Council Order in relation to dogs at the Australian Botanic Gardens Kialla and consider if a specific Council Order prohibiting dogs and cats is required for the entire site</li> <li>Review dog off leash areas and consider a third off leash dog park area outside of Shepparton</li> <li>Consider an off leash dog area suitable for Greyhounds and amend Order as required</li> </ul>	✓ New Action in 1.4. Review the current Domestic Animals Act 1994 Orders regarding; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dogs at the Botanic Gardens</li> <li>off leash Greyhound area</li> <li>a third off leash dog area</li> </ul>
<b>4. Dog Faeces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owners picking up after their dogs</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 3.2
<b>5. Council Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal Management staff training</li> <li>Service Review</li> <li>Consider how Council employees can conduct community education in parks and gardens</li> <li>Vaccination Programs</li> <li>Occupational Health and Safety requirements</li> <li>Traffic Management when working on roads</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 1.1  ✓ New Action in 1.3 Review Vaccination program for staff ✓ New Action in 1.3 Develop Traffic management plans for officers
<b>6. Education initiatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education – new owner kits educate community on what Animal Management team does</li> <li>Fridge magnets</li> <li>Education in schools</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 1.5
<b>7. Desexing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider Desexing program / initiatives</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 3.9
<b>8. Enforcement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enforcement of Local law – animal numbers</li> <li>Increased enforcement and infringements for non-compliance</li> <li>Return animal to its owner if escapes as a once off</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 3.8 ✓ Addressed in 1.2
<b>9. Registration process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review how to notify of an animal passing away</li> </ul>	✓ New Action in 3.1 Review Animal Registration process regarding notifying Council of deceased animal
<b>10. Barking dogs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Barking dog process</li> </ul>	✓ Addressed in 3.2





## CONTACT US

**Business hours:** 8.15am to 5pm weekdays

**In person:** 90 Welsford Street, Shepparton





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Join the conversation:    

Greater Shepparton City Council is NRS friendly. If you are deaf, hearing-impaired, or speech-impaired, we ask that you call us via the National Relay Service:

**TTY users:** 133 677 then ask for (03) 5832 9700.

**Speak & Listen users:** (speech-to-speech relay) 1300 555 727 then ask for (03) 5832 9700.

**Internet relay users:** Connect to the National Relay Service via [www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au) and then ask for (03) 5832 9700.

A hearing loop is also available at Council's customer service centre and Council meeting rooms.



Interpreter service available.