

Item 8.10

Further Additional Information Ordinary Meeting

Thursday, 24 June 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| ITEM | SUBJECT | PAGE NO |
|-------------|--|----------------|
| 8.10 | MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR DOMESTIC ANIMALS (CATS AND DOGS) 2021– 2030 | |
| | ATTACHMENT 4 FURTHER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION..... | 5 |

Related Report / Additional Information Request

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| Meeting: | Ordinary Meeting | Date: | 24 June 2021 |
| Requesting Councillor: | Councillor Natoli | | |
| Item: | 8.10 Management Plan for Domestic Animals (Cats & Dogs) 2021-2030 | | |
| Circulation | 23 June 2021 | | |
| Officer: | Manager Customer Response | Approving Group Executive: | Customer Engagement and Planning Services |

In response to questions raised by Councillor Natoli, please note the following additional information for your consideration.

The Management Plan for Domestic Animals (Cats and Dogs) 2021 – 2030 is a high-level strategy which addresses Council’s ongoing approach to managing the growing population of cats and dogs in our community.

The queries provided by Councillor Natoli have been reviewed and responses provided in the table below:

| Comment / question | Response |
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| Council does not capture the enforcement aspect of animal management in the Plan. | <p>This information is outlined under the “Our Goal” heading on Page 8 which references the Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008, the Local Laws and the Compliance and Enforcement Policy as tools used to ensure effective animal management.</p> <p>The Action Plan defines the initiatives that will be used to ensure our community has educated and informed people, happy healthy pets, and safe and inclusive places in more detail.</p> <p>As an example, Item 10 in the Action Plan addresses an ongoing commitment to proactive patrols in public places to educate and enforce responsible pet ownership behaviours. How we then enforce the relevant behaviours is guided by the Compliance and Enforcement Policy and the relevant legislation. In the case of animal management Council is taking a strong approach to non-compliance and issuing infringements in most instances.</p> |
| The Plan does not provide clear action and relies too heavily on education and “feel good” messages | The Management Plan for Domestic Animals (Cats and Dogs) 2021 – 2030 is designed to be a high-level strategy examining how pets are currently and will continue to be an important part of our community in various ways. |

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| | <p>The actions delivered over the 10 years of the Plan will continue to focus on various mechanisms to achieve the Plan’s goals and enforcement is an important element of Council’s responsibilities.</p> <p>This has been included on page 25 of the Plan:</p> <p><i>Council takes a strong stance in relation to responsible animal ownership with regulation and/or enforcement action undertaken where animals and/or owners are found to have acted contra to the relevant legislation or laws.</i></p> |
| <p>The Plan does not discuss a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to non-compliance. There is an emphasis on voluntary compliance.</p> | <p>The Compliance and Enforcement Policy 2018 sets out Council’s approach to enforcement in conjunction with the relevant legislation. This connection is detailed on Page 8 of the Plan.</p> <p>Page 25 of the Plan also provides a commitment to Council’s strong stance to responsible animal ownership and utilising enforcement action such as infringements and prosecution action where appropriate.</p> |
| <p>Education is not effective at managing non-compliance by dog owners</p> | <p>Over the life of the Domestic Animal Management Strategy (Cats and Dogs) 2014 – 2020 Council noted an improvement in key indicators of responsible pet ownership. The Plan has been written to continue and build on this work which has a strong educational element supported by enforcement action.</p> <p>As an example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of dog attacks has decreased year on year since 2017 • the number of registrations has continued to increase in line with the population • the percentage of microchipped and desexed animals has increased • the number of complaints in relation to animal activity has decreased over time (Appendix A) |
| <p>The patrol program is not sufficiently resourced Financial breakdown of how the actions in the Plan will be delivered</p> | <p>The Beach Patrol and Monitoring Program and all activities under the Plan are resourced by the Operational Budget and animal registration fees.</p> <p>A Patrol Team is currently scheduled daily taking inclement weather into consideration as well as unplanned staff absences. Patrols are</p> |

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| | <p>scheduled to respond to complaints or activity within the community.</p> |
| <p>There is a lack of data collection on the level of issues experienced by community members in relation to dogs</p> | <p>Council collects a range of information in relation to customer requests, infringements, and patrols. To supplement this existing information Council is investigating options for monitoring the levels of use by owners and their pets at a trial site in La Balsa Park Point Cartwright to inform planning and decision making for the area.</p> <p>Council will be exploring options to measure noise impacts on residents at La Balsa Park in Point Cartwright created by dogs using areas such as Half Moon Bay to inform planning and decision making for the area.</p> |
| <p>What are Council's obligations in providing safe open spaces where dogs are permitted?</p> <p>How is Council assessing the risks and meeting these requirements?</p> <p>Particularly in relation to uncontrolled dogs and dog faeces.</p> | <p>The responsibility for the use of public spaces falls back to each individual, with Council providing advice through signage, the provision of bags and bins, supported by monitoring and regulation of public spaces.</p> <p>In designing, or reviewing spaces, Council conducts assessments of the activity and use of the area to inform any improvements or changes that are required.</p> <p>Council sought advice from Queensland Health in relation to the accumulation of dog faeces in public spaces and were provided advice that existing Local Laws and the <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i> provided mechanisms to manage animals in public spaces, including the removal of faeces by dog owners.</p> |
| <p>People are at risk of being mauled or killed by uncontrolled dogs in off-leash areas</p> | <p>Council takes a strong stance in relation to responsible animal management, included on Page 25 of the Plan. While the responsibility of managing a dog sits with the owner Council provides education and enforcement programs across the region to mitigate issues before they become serious.</p> <p>Council undertake prosecutions in all instances where the evidence is sufficient and seek penalties which act as a general deterrent to the community for irresponsible dog ownership. This financial year Council has successfully prosecuted 25 dog owners.</p> <p>Since 2017 in response to increased patrols, prosecution activity and education programs</p> |

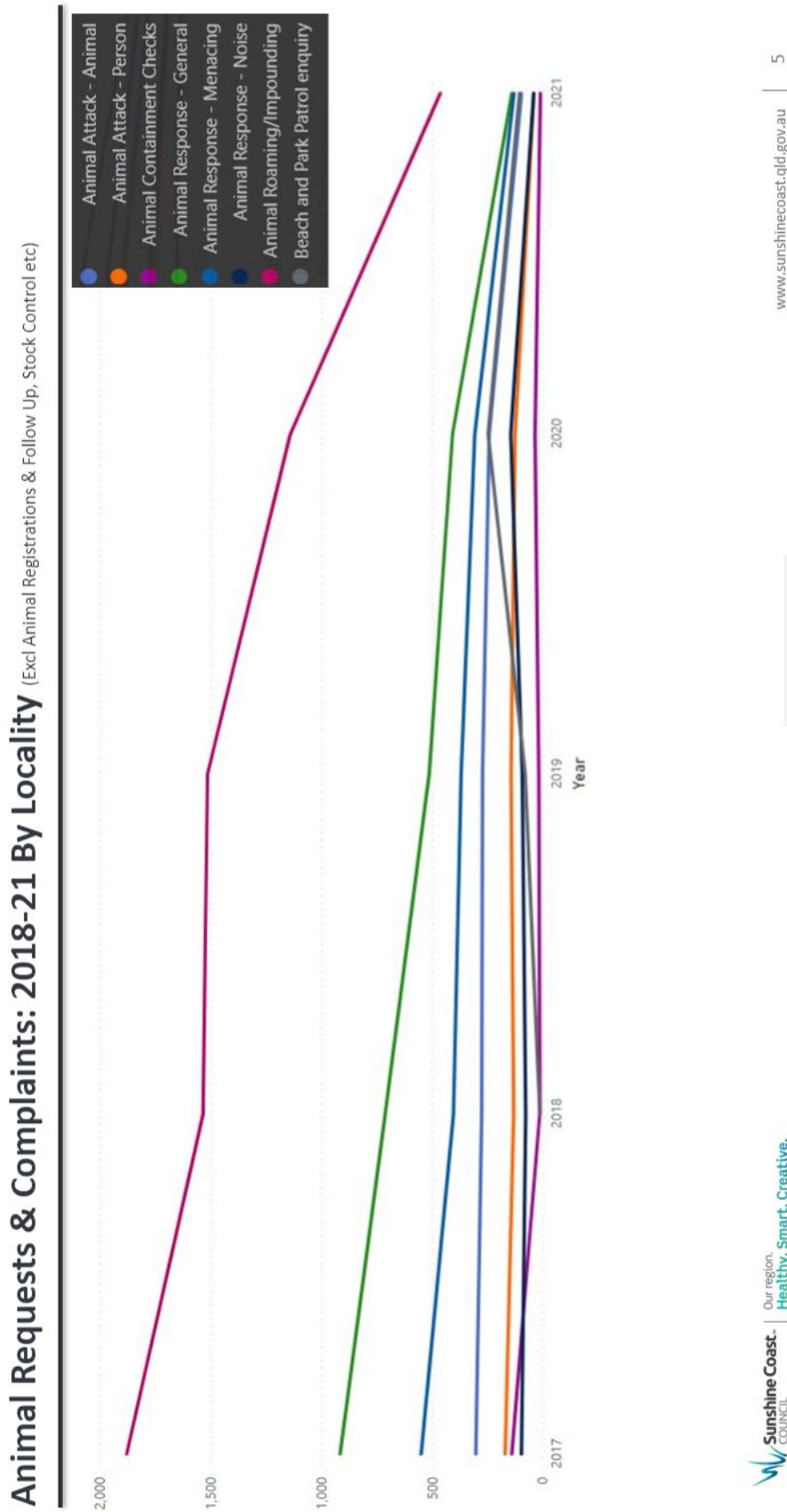
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| | reported dog attacks have decreased year on year. |
| How does Council manage noise impacts created by dogs using council-controlled land? | <p>Noise impacts are considered by Parks and Gardens when identifying new off-leash areas or during reviews of spaces. Consultation with the local residents is also undertaken once an area has been identified and is in a concept phase.</p> <p>Council will be arranging to measure noise impacts on residents at La Balsa Park in Point Cartwright created by dogs using areas such as Half Moon Bay. This will inform any review of the area.</p> |
| A request for Council to consider prohibition of dogs at Point Cartwright due to mixed use and proximity to residences or reduced off-leash spaces where there is conflict. | Council intends to undertake data collection and review to establish the levels of use and impacts at Point Cartwright to determine whether a review of the use of the area by animal owners is required. |
| The identification and creation of fenced off-leash spaces for the future growth of the region | <p>Parks and Gardens assess requests for new dog off-leash areas and is developing criteria in the Draft Recreational Parks Plan for determining appropriate locations moving into the future.</p> <p>Through the current processes internal stakeholder consultation is undertaken in the initial phase of identification of an area to be utilised for exercising dogs.</p> <p>This would include considerations around access, parking, amenity, and other facilities available in the locality.</p> |
| <p>What year were the Local Laws and policies introduced?</p> <p>When were they last reviewed?</p> | <p>A first review was undertaken (extensive) for a new suite of local laws adopted in 1 January 2012 and based on the State model local laws to combine the three previous local laws for the Noosa, Maroochy and Caloundra Shires, post amalgamation.</p> <p>Since then a number of reviews have been undertaken which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New dog off leash parks (in line with them being delivered through the capital works program) • Prohibition of dogs from Caloundra Sporting precinct (2013/2014) • Prohibition of dogs from Mooloolaba Beach (2014) • Permitting dogs on lead in a small section of Buderim Forest Park (2015) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing requirements to have a lead on you in a dog off leash area • Red and yellow collar for dangerous dogs <p>The last comprehensive review that was undertaken on the local laws was 2014/2015. This review included the entire suite of Local Laws.</p> |
| Number of complaints regarding dogs not under effective management | Refer to Appendix B for animal related service requests from 2018 – 2021 by locality. |
| <p>Community consultation was not balanced and feedback not captured in the Plan</p> <p>The Plan does not reflect the views or rights of non-dog owners</p> | <p>Council undertook an extensive consultation campaign, detailed in the report. This feedback was used to confirm the general principles of the plan, incorporated into the detail of Plan, and resulting annual Action Plan.</p> <p>Page 12 of the Plan talks to the feedback received from the community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of education • residents value the environment (flora and fauna) • views on high-density living and the increasing volume of pets and • the need for compliance to be achieved in all off-leash and on-leash areas and the need to feel safe within our community. <p>The Action Plan includes an ongoing commitment to balancing the needs of all our community members in relation to the impacts which can be created by unmanaged pets.</p> |
| The local laws and amenity are not maintained or regulated as per the information referred to under the Corporate Plan heading | The Management Plan for Domestic Animals (Cats and Dogs) 2021 – 2030 supports the Corporate Plan providing a specific strategic approach to managing animals as part of our growing community. The Plan is designed to provide a holistic approach which includes a combination of education and enforcement. |
| Councillor consultation on the Plan, including feedback | Councillor consultation was undertaken by providing Councillors with a copy of the draft Plan for feedback. A workshop was held on the 1 February 2021 in which Councillors provided support of the draft Plan as well a support for proceeding to community consultation with the |

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| | <p>draft Plan. Further Councillor feedback provided was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Services to provide information on identifying hotspots and discussing an approach to these hot spots • Investigation into the suitability of a 'yellow dog' identification program where anxious or nervous dogs are identified by a yellow bandana / ribbon or collar • Investigation into additional signage at parks showing a 'Code of behaviour' for dog owners • Information to be added into the Plan regarding considerations when buying a pet i.e. Adopt don't shop and a suitable breed for your lifestyle <p>These actions have been noted for completion as part of the implementation of the Action Plan.</p> |
| Internal consultation on the Plan, including feedback | <p>Internal consultation was undertaken with Corporate Governance, Parks and Gardens and Placemaking and Design.</p> <p>No concerns or issues were raised through this consultation process.</p> |
| External consultation on the Plan, including feedback | <p>The report provides detail on the consultation undertaken with the community including the various channels and external stakeholders contacted for consultation.</p> <p>A post-survey review was undertaken for each response with the required amendments, actions or referrals noted for each piece of feedback.</p> |
| In relation to the disclaimer which appears in Appendix A of the Report - " While the Sunshine Coast Council has exercised reasonable care in preparing this document it does not warrant or represent that it is accurate or complete" What does this mean? | <p>This is a standard disclaimer on all external council documents.</p> <p>The Disclaimer at front of documents was put in place in 2014 after consultation with Legals. It is meant to be a generic disclaimer that covers Sunshine Coast Council and its intellectual property. The disclaimer is tailored depending based on the content of the document. The standard disclaimer has been used in this case.</p> |
| The Plan does not adequately address the increasing population and increase in animal numbers. | <p>The Plan captures this information on Page 26 referring to the Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017 to guide planning for new dog parks and off-leash areas. Council is conscious</p> |

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| <p>What impacts have been identified for the environment, residents, and other users of parks?</p> <p>When are decisions reviewed to consider changing circumstances in a park, such as an increase in users or dogs?</p> | <p>that increasing use of our parks and open spaces can impact the local environment through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing or changing use of the area • conflicting needs for open space and • impacts on local residents through issues such as parking, noise and waste collection <p>Council is continuing to monitor and review changing circumstances including impacts from increased use. While there continues to be a need to respond to change within our community it is important that all the needs in the community are carefully considered and balanced.</p> <p>Any review and recommendations may result in a change to an area which would require community consultation and a local law amendment. This process can take approximately 12 months.</p> |
| <p>What does this statement on page 274 mean? "We will strive to ensure that our animal management services support and appropriately regulate: Events that are culturally and significant to the region and attract tourism and that are permitted to allow pets for leisure or support".</p> | <p>This is a grammatical error, the 'and' needs to be removed. This will be noted as an amendment at the Ordinary Meeting should the Plan be adopted.</p> <p>The correct text would read:</p> <p><i>"Events that are culturally significant to the region and attract tourism and that are permitted to allow pets for leisure or support"</i></p> <p>This refers to supporting events where dogs are included such as the Paws Walk, Guide Dogs QLD events, dog obedience club events or other events of a similar nature that may have cultural significance and attract tourism to the area.</p> |

Appendix A – Animal Requests and Complaints from 2018 – 2021



Appendix B – Animal Requests and Complaints 2018 – 2021 (by Locality)

Animal Requests & Complaints: 2018-21 By Locality (Excl Animal Registrations & Follow Up, Stock Control etc)

| Area | Animal Attack - Animal | Animal Attack - Person | Animal Containment | Animal education and events enquiry | Animal Response - General | Animal Response - Menacing | Animal Response - Noise | Animal Response - Regulated Dogs | Animal Response - Roaming/Impounded | Barking dog | Beach and Park Patrol enquiry | total |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| BUDDERIM | 51 | 36 | 2 | 9 | 101 | 84 | 21 | 3 | 344 | 306 | 28 | 985 |
| NAMBOUR | 42 | 21 | 5 | 12 | 104 | 71 | 32 | 7 | 305 | 205 | 8 | 832 |
| MAROOCHDORE | 34 | 18 | 1 | 11 | 80 | 61 | 11 | 4 | 218 | 199 | 18 | 644 |
| BLI BLI | 37 | 17 | 5 | 3 | 48 | 34 | 14 | 2 | 152 | 115 | 7 | 436 |
| BEERWAH | 26 | 11 | 2 | 3 | 49 | 39 | 14 | 1 | 160 | 107 | 2 | 414 |
| COOLUM BEACH | 32 | 14 | 1 | 1 | 35 | 44 | 2 | 2 | 127 | 116 | 25 | 397 |
| CURRUMUNDI | 33 | 13 | 1 | 1 | 29 | 29 | 7 | 1 | 121 | 110 | 30 | 381 |
| MOUNTAIN CREEK | 24 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 42 | 17 | 4 | 1 | 125 | 144 | 5 | 370 |
| LITTLE MOUNTAIN | 18 | 17 | 2 | 2 | 46 | 27 | 8 | 1 | 134 | 110 | 4 | 369 |
| CALOUNDRA WEST | 22 | 10 | 1 | 3 | 41 | 22 | 7 | 1 | 102 | 140 | 4 | 353 |
| TANAWHA | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 48 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 271 | 4 | 3 | 346 |
| SIPPY DOWNS | 24 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 33 | 33 | 1 | 2 | 91 | 120 | 7 | 328 |
| PALMWOODS | 22 | 15 | 5 | 2 | 36 | 33 | 14 | 4 | 106 | 59 | 6 | 302 |
| GLASS HOUSE MOUN | 18 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 44 | 34 | 11 | 2 | 95 | 68 | 1 | 285 |
| LANDSBOROUGH | 18 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 42 | 34 | 11 | 1 | 103 | 53 | 2 | 273 |
| WURTULLA | 14 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 30 | 32 | 5 | 1 | 75 | 259 | 21 | 273 |
| GOLDEN BEACH | 21 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 35 | 26 | 5 | 1 | 53 | 88 | 11 | 245 |
| CALOUNDRA | 10 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 26 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 142 | 40 | 4 | 249 |
| MOOLOOLABA | 15 | 14 | 1 | 3 | 35 | 21 | 1 | 1 | 84 | 56 | 13 | 243 |
| PEREGIAN SPRINGS | 18 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 23 | 23 | 3 | 2 | 56 | 89 | 9 | 231 |
| YANDINA | 14 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 18 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 99 | 46 | 1 | 207 |
| PELICAN WATERS | 2 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 26 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 50 | 94 | 5 | 203 |
| BUDDINA | 30 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 40 | 41 | 30 | 191 |
| WARANA | 14 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 15 | 1 | 1 | 71 | 48 | 5 | 175 |
| MARCOOLA | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 26 | 15 | 2 | 1 | 52 | 36 | 15 | 165 |
| WOOMBYE | 13 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 12 | 19 | 9 | 3 | 60 | 31 | 1 | 160 |
| MOUNT COOLUM | 9 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 17 | 18 | 4 | 1 | 44 | 59 | 4 | 158 |
| BARINGA | 5 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 28 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 38 | 58 | 4 | 156 |
| MOOLOOLAH VALLE | 14 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 20 | 25 | 8 | 1 | 36 | 42 | 1 | 153 |

Please note that some of these requests are repeat requests related to the same incident/ matter. E.g. Since the start of 2021 Council has received 38 requests regarding animals in Buddina. However some external customers called multiple times, reducing the requests to 29.

