

COUNCIL DOCUMENT

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

2022-2026

Contents

1.	Domestic Animal Management Plan Requirements.....	5
1.1	Councils to Prepare Domestic Animal Management Plan.....	5
1.2	Introduction.....	6
1.2.1	Purpose and Objectives of the Plan.....	6
1.3	Registration and Identification.....	6
1.3.1	Current Situation - Domestic Animal Statistics and Data.....	6
1.3.2	Service Levels.....	8
1.4	Training of Authorised Officers.....	8
1.4.1	Animal Management Staffing and Operational Structure.....	8
1.4.2	Current and Planned Training.....	9
1.4.3	Our Plans.....	10
1.5	Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures.....	11
1.5.1	Keeping Animals.....	11
1.5.2	Animal Housing.....	11
1.5.3	Removal of Animal Faeces.....	12
1.5.4	Objectionable Noises.....	12
1.5.5	Wandering Animals and Birds.....	12
1.5.6	Release from the Pound.....	12
1.5.7	Annual animal registration reminders.....	13
1.5.8	Enhanced response.....	13
1.5.9	Community Partnerships.....	13
1.5.10	Our Plans.....	14
1.6	Nuisance.....	14
1.6.1	Current Situation.....	14
1.6.2	Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures.....	15
1.6.3	Council local laws.....	15
1.6.4	Barking Dogs.....	15
1.6.5	Dogs and Cats at Large.....	15
1.6.6	Current Education/Promotion Activities.....	15
1.6.7	Summary.....	16
1.6.8	Our Plans.....	16
1.7	Dog Attacks.....	17
1.7.1	Current Situation.....	17
1.7.2	Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures.....	17
1.7.3	Current Education/Promotion Activities.....	17
1.7.4	Current Compliance Activities.....	18
1.7.5	Our Plans.....	18
1.8	Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs.....	19
1.8.1	Current Situation.....	19
1.8.2	Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures.....	20
1.8.3	Current Education/Promotion Activities.....	20

1.8.4	Current Compliance Activities	20
1.8.5	Our Plans.....	20
1.9	Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	21
1.9.1	Current Situation.....	21
1.9.2	Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures.....	22
1.9.3	Current Education/Promotion Activities.....	22
1.9.4	Current Compliance Activities	22
1.9.5	Our Plans.....	22
1.10	Domestic Animal Businesses	23
1.10.1	Current Situation.....	24
1.10.2	Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures.....	24
1.10.3	Our Plans.....	24
1.11	Annual Review and Reporting.....	24
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30/9/21	V2	Draft submission prepared for Council review
26/10/21	V3	Draft submission prepared for Council seeking approval for community consultation
19/01/22	V4	Draft document prepared for Council approval following completion of community consultation

1. Domestic Animal Management Plan Requirements

Alpine Shire Council (Council) considers Domestic Animal Management an important function in collaboration with the community. To support this, Council has prepared a Domestic Animal Management Plan in accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (The Act):

Section 68a of The Act sets out the required contents of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) as follows:

1.1 Councils to Prepare Domestic Animal Management Plan.

1. Every council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions), prepare at four-year intervals a domestic animal management plan.
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;
 - 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;
 - 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;
 - ii. to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations, and any related legislation;
 - iii. to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals;
 - iv. to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats;
 - v. to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats;
 - 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.
 - 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;
 - 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.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Domestic animals have an important role in our community. We know that many health benefits to humans occur through pet ownership. The benefits are not just physical, they can include improved emotional and psychological well-being as well. Animals are part of the community, and we recognise this in our actions and response to them in Alpine Shire.

This Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) has been developed by Council in accordance with the requirements stipulated under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, as well as Council's Local Laws and relevant policies applicable to this plan. The Plan will be reviewed annually, with a major review every four years, in consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR).

1.2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to provide Council and the community with a clear and concise statement as to how the Council will administer animal management through:

- Documenting processes and practices under the Council's animal management responsibilities;
- Minimising non-compliance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*;
- Improving community education on responsible care for domestic animals and enhancing community safety and awareness.;
- Supporting stated objectives of reducing the numbers of dogs and cats being euthanised;
- Maximising proportion of domestic animals that are registered in the Alpine Shire;
- Reducing the harmful effect of companion animals on the population of native wildlife;
- Taking into account the broader community views on animal management matters;
- Complying with the relevant provisions of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

1.3 REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

68A(2)(c)(v) of the *Domestic Animal Management Act 1994* outlines programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats and also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

1.3.1 Current Situation - Domestic Animal Statistics and Data

Table 1 constitutes known animal management data. The table shows an increase in dog registrations and a decrease in cat registrations.

Table 1 – Animal Management Data, Alpine Shire

Alpine Shire Council Key Statistics	2020/2021	2019/2020	2018/2019	2017/18
Population	12973	12812	12730	12515
Number of staff performing Local Laws including Animal Management	2.4	2.2	1	1
Hours training per officer annually	10	0	40	40
No. of Registered Dogs	2689	1989	2060	2516
No. of Registered Cats	466	631	503	645
No. of Registered Declared Dogs	19*	18	18	6
No. of Prosecutions Completed	0	0	0	0
No. of Successful Prosecutions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
No. of domestic animals collected	72**	88**	64	99
No. of domestic animals reclaimed or rehomed	69**	36**	59	89
No. of domestic animals euthanized	3**	10*	5**	10

*Not all dogs declared reside in the Shire.

**Records have not captured all impounds, in mid-2021 recording methods were changed to reflect true statistics that will be reported in successive years.

1.3.2 Service Levels

The following data provides an outline of current animal management service levels provided by Alpine Shire Council.

Table 2 – Service levels for animal management

Program Service	Service Level
Identification and registration of dogs and cats	95% of registrations received by 1 June each year
Domestic animal complaint	Respond within 24 hours and follow up within immediate action according to urgency
Dangerous dog complaint	Response within 2 hours or less during business hours
Pound open	38 hours per week by appointment only.
After hours emergency response	24 hours a day 365 days a year
Domestic animal business	Inspected and registered annually

Council's current identification and registration activities include:

- Issuing of identification tags and registration renewal notices.
- Compulsory micro-chipping of animals with first registration.
- Advertising in local papers about requirements for pet ownership and registration.
- Offering a loan cat trap for feral and wandering cats. There are several traps available for hire located at Mount Beauty, Bright and Myrtleford.

1.4 TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

68(A)(2)(b) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994 outlines requirements on council 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.

1.4.1 Animal Management Staffing and Operational Structure

Domestic animal management is a function of the Local Laws section of the Alpine Shire Council. Local Laws is part of the Planning and Amenity Department which is responsible for the delivery of regulatory services. The Planning and Amenity Department comprises

building services, planning, environmental health and local laws and animal management. Line management for Local Laws service delivery is shown in figure 2.

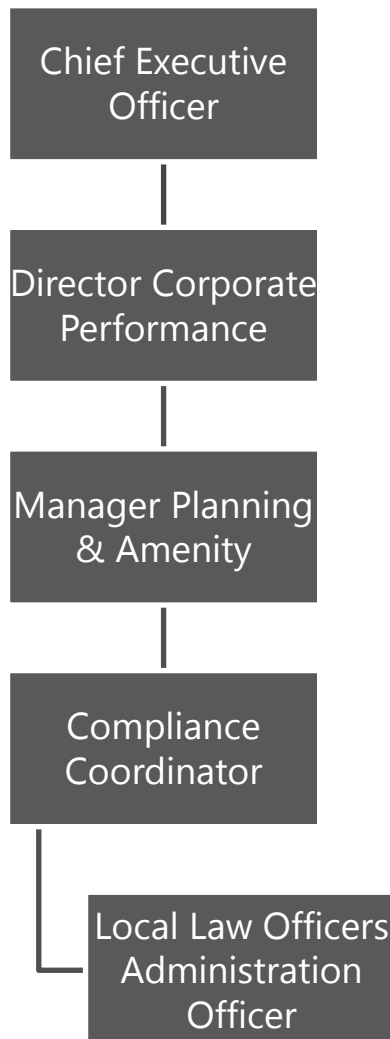


Figure 1 – Line Management of Local Laws

1.4.2 Current and Planned Training

Council has undergone some structural changes since the last Domestic Animal Management Plan was adopted. This has meant an increase in staffing levels now comprising of a Compliance Coordinator and Local Laws Rangers and administrative support.

The Local Laws Rangers have extensive experience in providing compliance functions and in handling animals, however dangerous dogs can impose additional risks. Officer Training is required obtain a Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation.

Council is a member of the North East Authorised Council Officers Association. Officers from across the Council's meet up twice a year, have an on-line forum to facilitate joint training and helping one another. This membership provides a valuable resource especially for smaller councils within the North East like Alpine Shire Council.

Below is a table that shows the training the Local Laws Ranger will participate in.

Authorised Officer Training	Current (2021)	Planned
Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation		2022
Certificate IV in Local Government (regulatory services)		2023
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Resources – training and information days	X	ongoing
Driving under emergency conditions		2022
First aid training	X	Yearly updates
Animal handling and assessment	X	
Statement taking and prosecutions		2022
Restricted dog breed training		2022
North East Authorised Council Officers Association	X	ongoing

Table 3 – Authorised officer training

1.4.3 Our Plans

Objective 1: Develop a training policy that clearly identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by Authorised Officers by November 2022.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements in consultation with management and staff	August to October 2022	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into an approved council training policy by November 2022
Identify additional training opportunities in consultation with management and staff	October 2022	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into an approved council training program by November 2022
Create a database/spread sheet to record all Officers completed and proposed training	June 2022	Staff annual performance review, to ensure training goals have been achieved
Create a matrix of current and required skills of each officer	June 2022	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into an approved council training policy by November 2022

Objective 2: To provide training to all authorised officers and review annually to monitor both relevancy and completion

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure participation in the induction program	When an Officer starts	Staff annual performance review, to ensure training goals have been reached and then log them

1.5 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Council's Community Local Law 2019

Council's Community Local Law provides the guidance on responsible animal keeping and expected behaviour of animal and owner.

The following is an extract of Part 4 of the Alpine Shire Council Community Local Law 2019. A full version is available on Council's website, www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au

1.5.1 Keeping Animals

An owner or occupier of property within a residential area must not without a permit keep or allow to be kept any more in number for each kind of animal than as set out in the following table:

Type of animal	Maximum number allowed in residential areas without a permit#
Cats	2
Dogs	2

There are limits for other animals as well, see Alpine Shire Local Law

1.5.2 Animal Housing

The owner or occupier of any land on which animals are kept must provide housing, which is adequate and appropriate in the circumstances, taking into consideration:

- the type and number of animals to be kept;
- the capacity to maintain the housing in a sanitary and inoffensive condition;
- the capacity to protect neighbours from noise from animals on the land; and
- any other matters considered by Council to be relevant.

All animal housing must be maintained so that:

- all manure and other waste is removed and/or treated as often as necessary so that it does not cause a nuisance or offensive condition;
- all manure and other waste is stored in a fly and vermin proof receptacle until removed from the premises or otherwise disposed of to the satisfaction of an Authorised Officer;

- the ground surrounding the housing is drained to the satisfaction of an Authorised Officer;
- the area of land within 3 metres of the area or structure in which the animal is kept must be kept free from dry grass, weeds, refuse, rubbish, or other material capable of harbouring vermin;
- all food, grain or chaff is kept in vermin proof receptacles; and
- it is kept in a clean and sanitary manner to the satisfaction of an Authorised Officer.

1.5.3 Removal of Animal Faeces

A person in charge of an animal must:

- remove any faeces deposited by that animal on Council land or land occupied by another person;
- dispose of the animals' faeces in a manner which does not cause any nuisance or health hazard to any person or detriment to the environment; and
- carry a suitable device for the collection of excrement from that animal.

1.5.4 Objectionable Noises

An owner or occupier of land within the municipal district must ensure that all animals and birds kept on that land do not:

- habitually make an objectionable noise at unreasonable times; or
- cause a nuisance by the emission of sounds.

If an Authorised Officer is of the opinion that an animal or bird is causing a nuisance, he or she may service a Notice to Comply directing the nuisance to be abated.

1.5.5 Wandering Animals and Birds

The owner or person in charge of any animal or bird must:

- a. not allow that animal or bird to wander from where it is normally kept; and
- b. ensure that the land on which the animal or bird is kept is adequately fenced to prevent the animal or bird from being at large or escaping.

The above section is an excerpt of the Local Law, however Sections 24 and 25 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 provide an exemption for Dogs and Cats unless Council makes an order. No such order has been made in respect to cats in the Alpine Shire. All dogs must be under effective control.

1.5.6 Release from the Pound

Council has policies for the registration of domestic animals and for animals that are taken to Council's pounds. This enables Officers to trace owners or re-home animals. The information is also used for Government reporting purposes. Most administration for the registration of animals is undertaken by Council customer service personnel.

While Alpine Shire does not have a high Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) it does have areas that are low socio-economic and therefore payment plans are offered for pound release, pet registration and microchipping.

Alpine Shire offer discounted registration fees that are payable on release of an animal from the pound or during first and ongoing registration, these include;

- Pensioners are 50% discount
- Desexed animals (proof of sterilisation is required)
- Animals over 10 years old
- Animals kept for breeding by the proprietor of a domestic animal business conducted on a registered premise
- Animals registered with an Association approved by Council i.e. Feline Control Council or Victorian Canine Association (proof of current registration must be supplied in each case)
- Dogs kept for working stock
- Obedience-trained dog(s)
- Guide Dogs are free.

1.5.7 Annual animal registration reminders.

Reminders for annual animal registrations are sent each year with a follow up letter if Council has not been notified of an animal's demise or other change in circumstance.

1.5.8 Enhanced response

In 2020 the Council introduced a new customer database "Datascape" replacing the previous "Tradify" system. The use of Datascape gives enhanced logging of customer service calls and enables a greater customer interaction and response. This allows Local Laws Rangers to be able to retrieve call information and contact the complainant quickly for assessment. This therefore enables quicker action to be taken particularly in the case of dangerous dogs and potential or actual attacks or nuisance.

1.5.9 Community Partnerships

Council has renewed its Section 84Y Agreement under the Domestic Animals Act with the RSPCA (in Wangaratta) for re-homing cats and dogs. This has been a good working relationship as the Alpine Shire Ranger provides a shared service for inspecting animal cruelty cases with the RSPCA Inspector. This enables resources to be shared for the best outcome especially in a shire that has a large geographic area including the Alpine Resorts.

Council is aware that dogs and cats that are not de-sexed can be inclined to wander. In this respect Council currently works with the local vets to offer a discount in de-sexing costs when coupled with registration and microchipping during national desexing month. Both veterinarians in Alpine Shire participate in Desex Your Pet month in July. It is hoped that this initiative will encourage people to register and microchip their animals as well as having them de-sexed.

1.5.10 Our Plans

Objective 3: To maximise the number of registered and identifiable domestic animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Follow up of animal non-renewal registration from previous year's record	June every year	Record number of animals found unregistered but still with owner, i.e. follow letters sent to owners and reminders placed on social media. Visits by Local Law Officers if resources allow.
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release.	Prior to every release	Review number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded who are not registered to their owner. No animal to be released unless registered and microchipped
Increase the number of registrations by 10%	Annual target	Review annual increase in registration numbers. This will take a shift in pro-active compliance.
Run an education campaign on the importance of registering and microchipping	bi-annually	Review increases in registration numbers and microchipping numbers. Use social media as the main tool to achieve compliance
Conduct a microchipping day	Selected days during one month of every year	Review increases in registration numbers and microchipping numbers.

1.6 NUISANCE

68A(2)(c)(vi) of the *Domestic Animal Management Act 1994* outlines programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance and also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

1.6.1 Current Situation

Current activities relating to nuisance animals are:

- Investigating nuisance complaints in a timely manner.
- Sending out barking dog formal complaint statements and barking dog log sheets with Statutory Declarations attached.
- The issuing of infringement notices for non-registration of animals.

- Report outcomes of prosecutions when appropriate regarding each area of nuisance to local media to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of preventing dog and cat nuisance.
- Issuing notices to comply, notices of objection, infringements where necessary and taking the matter to the Magistrates' Court.
- Providing cat traps to residents.
- Provide animal excrement bags around designated parks and streets to facilitate dog owners to clean up after their dogs.

1.6.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

1.6.3 Council local laws

Part 3 of the Alpine Shire Council Community Local Law 2019 deals with the control of animals within the municipality. To minimise nuisance from domestic animals it is a Local Law that:

- No more than two dogs/cats are to be kept on a residential property without a permit: and,
- Dogs must be on a leash within a municipal reserve or within a shopping district.

1.6.4 Barking Dogs

Council has a standard operating procedure for barking dog complaints to ensure all complaints received are handled in the same consistent matter by all authorised Officers. The procedure sets out the required processes involved to investigate the complaint, liaise with the dog owner and surrounding neighbours.

Where nuisances are found to be proven pursuant to Section 32 of the Act, Council can issue notices to the dog owner to abate the nuisance, issue infringements and/or have the matter heard in the Magistrate's Court to seek an order from the Court for the owner to abate the nuisance.

1.6.5 Dogs and Cats at Large

The Local Laws department has developed a procedure for dealing with domestic animals found at large.

Repeat offenders for roaming or trespassing cats or dogs are issued with an infringement and must pay the relevant pound release fees. In circumstances where infringements have been issued to an owner and continued breaches occur Council may pursue the matter through the Magistrates' Court to seek an order from the Court to require the owner to carry out works to ensure the animal is not able to escape from the owner's premises.

1.6.6 Current Education/Promotion Activities

The following activities are regularly undertaken by Council officers to minimise animal nuisance and to educate the community:

- Providing barking dog information.

- Providing information relating to building cat enclosures.
- Information provided on Council's website.
- Providing information brochures from the relevant state government department to the public.
- Regular media releases including Facebook posts and on the Council website.
- Encouraging the de-sexing of cats and dogs to reduce wandering and creating a nuisance.
- Encouraging dog owners to seek advice from professional dog trainers and trial barking dog citronella collars.
- Promote cat trapping.

1.6.7 Summary

Education and compliance activities are centred on dealing with complaints that have been received and ensure they are dealt with quickly. Education with owners to ensure they know their animals are being a nuisance and to assist them in overcoming the issue.

1.6.8 Our Plans

Objective 4: Reduce nuisance complaints by 5% per year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners in registration information packs each year.	Ongoing	Number of booklets distributed
Assist residents with dealing with cat trespass / nuisance problems by purchasing cat cages and provide them to local residents for trapping nuisance cats	Ongoing	Number of traps purchased Numbers hired out
Reduce number of barking dog complaints	Ongoing	Number of reported incidents and response time

Objective 5: To maximise compliance with domestic animal laws, orders, and regulations to reduce animal nuisance complaints.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review existing Council Local Laws and orders relating to dog and cat provisions, including Councils on leash areas	Ongoing	Assess public feedback and comments
Improve information about other wildlife welfare issues	Ongoing	Offer advice and information on website.

		Distribute brochures Direction to most appropriate agency (DEWLP)
Community education – via expos, brochures, handouts, social media, website	Ongoing	Increase in registrations and reduction in nuisance complaints
Investigate introduction of a cat curfew across the Shire	2022	Consideration of inclusion of a cat curfew

1.7 DOG ATTACKS

68A(2)(c)(iii) of the *Domestic Animal Management Act 1994* outlines programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals and also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

1.7.1 Current Situation

Authorised Council Officers thoroughly investigate reports of dog attacks.

Evidence pertaining to the incident is collated to formulate a prosecution brief. This includes taking statements from all parties involved, vet/medical reports, photographs and providing a summary with recommendations.

The brief is then reviewed by the Coordinator Compliance who makes further recommendations to the Manager of Planning and Amenity in order for Council to decide on an appropriate course of action.

Possible courses of action Council can choose include:

- Infringements.
- Surrendering dog to Council for destruction.
- Menacing/Dangerous dog declaration as per the *Domestic Animal Act*.
- Prosecution in Magistrates' Court.
- Seek destruction/compensation orders by Magistrates.
- Animal Management Agreements.
- Seek mediation between parties.
- No further action.

1.7.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's procedure for dealing with dog attacks whether on other animals or people is clear. It depends on the severity of the attack and can start with a menacing or dangerous dog declaration, issuing of an infringement and or a prosecution in the magistrates court.

1.7.3 Current Education/Promotion Activities

Council currently undertakes the following education activities to minimise the number of dog attacks within the municipality:

- Consideration of reporting outcomes of all dog attack prosecutions to local media to raise awareness in the community of the need to report dog attacks and Council's action in relation to attacks to promote responsible pet ownership.
- Media releases relating to livestock attacks.
- Promoting the effective confinement and control of dogs; and,
- Promoting puppy socialisation and obedience training.

1.7.4 Current Compliance Activities

Dog attacks are a serious matter that is dealt with as a priority by Council staff. In dealing with dog attacks Council currently undertakes the following:

- Investigates dog attacks thoroughly.
- Seizing and holding attacking dogs pending investigation/prosecution outcome.
- Providing an afterhours service to respond to reports of aggressive or attacking dogs.
- Issuing infringements.
- Proactive declarations for Menacing or Dangerous Dogs.
- May seek prosecuting matters pursuant to the Domestic Animal Act.
- Upon conviction in a Magistrates Court may seek destruction Orders from Magistrates' Court where necessary.
- Upon conviction in a Magistrates Court may seek confinement Orders from Magistrates' Court for dogs continually found wandering or not confined to property.
- Recording data of reported dog attacks in the municipality.

1.7.5 Our Plans

Objective 6: Increase reporting of dog attacks in the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Improve public awareness of what a dog attack is and how to report using media articles, public notices, website updates, etc.	Annually	Evaluate this activity (and overall objective) by comparing number of dog attacks reported to Council pre and post campaign.

Objective 7: Decrease the number of dog attacks across the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc.) through media articles, mail outs, website info, social media.	Ongoing	Interrogate data collection records around dog attacks to allow future comparison between years

Objective 8: Decrease the number of dog attacks on livestock.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Run an education campaign highlighting the responsibilities of dog ownership: -Distribute booklet "Responsible ownership of working dogs"	Ongoing	Number of booklets distributed. Number of complaints received.

1.8 DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

68A(2)(c)(vii) of the *Domestic Animal Management Act 1994* outlines 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 and also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

1.8.1 Current Situation

Alpine Shire Council has the following declared dogs currently registered within the municipality.

Table 4: Registered dogs

Registered restricted breed dogs	0
Registered declared dangerous dogs	5
Registered declared menacing dogs	14

The Act defines restricted breed dogs as any one of the following breeds:

- Japanese Tosa.
- Fila Brasileiro.
- Dogo Argentino.
- Perro de Prasa Canario (or Presa Canario); and,
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier).

Owners of restricted breed dogs are required to abide by specific regulations, in particular; secure enclosures, warning signs on premises, having the dog muzzled in public and on a lead at all times, as defined by the Act and the *Domestic Animals Regulations 2005* (the Regulations).

Section 34A(a) of the Act states:

A dog is a dangerous dog if—

The dog is kept as a guard dog for the purpose of guarding non-residential premises.

Owners of declared dangerous dogs must abide by the same regulations as owners of guard dogs other than the perimeter fencing requirements.

Section 41A (1) of the Act states:

1. A Council may declare a dog to be a menacing dog if—
 - a. the dog has rushed at or chased a person; or
 - b. the dog bites any person or animal causing injury to that person or animal that is not in the nature of a serious injury.

Alpine Shire Council currently has fourteen declared menacing dogs within the municipality. Owners of menacing dogs must abide by conditions specified by Council namely, when the dog is outside the premises of its owner it must be leashed and muzzled at all times.

1.8.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council must register all dangerous/menacing/restricted breed dogs with the Victorian Dangerous Dog Register (VDDR). This is a database that records all declared dogs for all relevant parties to see. Any dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dog entered into the VDDR is declared for the life of the animal and cannot be revoked by Council. Microchip registries are also updated.

1.8.3 Current Education/Promotion Activities

These are the current activities undertaken:

- Promoting the 'Dangerous Dog Hotline' (1300-101-080).
- Media releases relating to legislation/changes/updates; and,
- Providing information relating to declared dogs.

1.8.4 Current Compliance Activities

In dealing with restricted dog breeds and menacing and dangerous dogs Council currently undertakes the following:

- Ensuring all declared dogs are registered on the VDDR.
- Conducting inspections on premises housing declared dogs to ensure compliance.
- Seizing dogs suspected of being Restricted Breed Dogs.
- Dog declarations made where applicable.
- Prosecution/Infringements issued for any determined breach.
- Assessing suspected restricted breed dogs via the gazetted standard.
- Flagging certain breeds from registration database for assessment.

1.8.5 Our Plans

Objective 9: Ensure restricted and declared dogs within the Alpine Shire are compliant and in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Random property inspections of declared dogs to ensure compliance	Annually	Review checklists as occurs

Prosecute repeat offenders or serious breaches detected	As occurs	Reduce the number of prosecutions
Educate the community about what is a declared dog	Ongoing	Review complaints received
Inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are following the keeping requirements	Ongoing	Number of premises inspections carried out

Objective 10: Ensure certain breeds are on the registration database for restricted breed assessment.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Assess certain breeds with the gazetted standard for potential restricted breed dogs	On-going	Number of Restricted Breeds Declared from registration database
Cross reference microchip database information for potential restricted breed dogs requiring assessment	Annually	Number of declarations compared to number of assessments

1.9 OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

68A(2)(c)(iv) of the *Domestic Animal Management Act 1994* outlines programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats and also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

1.9.1 Current Situation

Table 5 below provides details on the number of animals impounded, euthanized, and rehomed across three financial years within the Alpine Shire.

Table 5 - Number of Animals Euthanized, Impounded and Rehomed

Category	2020/21	2019/2020	2018/19	2017/18
Dogs impounded	22*	37*	37	55
Returned to owner	17	32*	33	52
Rehomed	5	1	4	3
Euthanized	0	0	0	0
Cats impounded	50*	51	55	67

Returned to owner	9	4	9	7
Rehomed	38	37	13	17
Euthanized	3* (All feral)	10* (incl 9 feral)	33 (incl 28 feral)	43 (incl 33 feral)

*Records have not captured all impounds, in mid-2021 recording methods were changed to reflect true statistics that will be reported in progressing years.

Dog euthanasia rates are particularly low due to high rates of dogs being returned to owners immediately upon being seized if they can be identified through micro-chipping. The increased rate of micro-chipped dogs is mainly due to the requirement of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, which requires all newly registered cats and dogs to be micro-chipped.

Reduced animal euthanasia rates can also be attributed to Council's agreement with the RSPCA for any seized dogs and cats to be surrendered to the RSPCA as per Section 84Y of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

1.9.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's Community Local Law sets out how many and the type of animal that can be kept on a property and how animals should be housed. Therefore, an owner or occupier of property within a residential area must not without a permit keep or allow to be kept any more in number for each kind of animal as set out in the Community Local Law.

1.9.3 Current Education/Promotion Activities

The following education activities are undertaken by Council to minimise the number of animals impounded:

- Promoting benefits of de-sexing to decrease wandering animals.
- Promoting 'Who's for cats?' campaign.
- Promoting appropriate pet selection for the owner and accommodation; and,
- Promoting cat enclosures and build your own cat enclosures.

1.9.4 Current Compliance Activities

The following compliance activities are undertaken by Council staff:

- Cat trapping program enforcement of current legislation in relation to cats found at large.
- Investigating unregistered breeding establishments.
- Micro-chipping all unregistered impounded animals prior to release to the owner.
- Enforcing the local laws relating to prescribed number of animals on the property.

1.9.5 Our Plans

Objective 11: Encouraging de-sexing by 10% annually.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Participation in Desex Your Pet month annually in partnership with local veterinarians	Annually	Number of animals de-sexed as part of the scheme Cost to run scheme Any changes in the longer term re-proportion of de-sexed animals on pet registration database, proportion of impounded pets that are de-sexed etc.
Promote the benefits of de-sexing, via media, social media, website	Yearly (with additional educational and promotional material)	Increase in de-sexed animals known via registrations discount. This is traditionally completed in July of each year, it will be proposed to bring this forward to March of each year to coincide with the dog registration period in April to further encourage desexing.
Discount registration fees for cats and dogs that are de-sexed to encourage registration of animals over 3 months of age.	Ongoing	Number of new animals registered in category yearly

Objective 12: Develop programs to assist with compliance and management of domestic animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Increase microchipping of animals with free microchipping and registration in conjunction with de-sexing education program	Few days over one month of the year / Desex Your Pet month	Increase in animals microchipped and registered
Work with the RSPCA to ensure we retain RSPCA services.	Ongoing	Agreement in place

1.10 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

68A(2)(c)(ii) of the *Animal Management Act 1994* outlines programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that

people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation and also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)

1.10.1 Current Situation

The Alpine Shire Council area has three Domestic Animal Businesses (DAB). Two are boarding facilities and the other is the Municipal Pound. All these businesses are registered and inspected annually.

1.10.2 Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council regularly inspects authorised businesses to ensure they comply as well as inspecting new businesses to ensure registration.

1.10.3 Our Plans

Objective 13: Annually inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Audit DAB randomly to ensure compliance	Ongoing	Number of audits compared to number of follow ups required

1.11 ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORTING

Pursuant to section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council must prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years, review the plan annually, and publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

The DAMP 2022-2026 sets out how Council manages its responsibilities under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and delivers services to enhance and promote responsible pet ownership in the community.

Council's 2022-2026 DAMP was reviewed and formally adopted by Council on 1 February 2022. Key actions in the DAMP 2022-2026 were developed with input from staff and key stakeholders such as the RSPCA, customer request data, and service delivery statistics. They include:

- Documenting processes and practices under the Council's animal management responsibilities;
- Minimising non-compliance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*;
- Improving community education on responsible care for domestic animals and enhancing community safety and awareness.;
- Supporting stated objectives of reducing the numbers of dogs and cats being euthanised;
- Maximising proportion of domestic animals that are registered in the Alpine Shire;
- Reducing the harmful effect of companion animals on the population of native wildlife;
- Taking into account the broader community views on animal management matters;

- Complying with the relevant provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- Further initiatives in the 2022-2026 DAMP include:
 - Authorised Officer to undertake Certificate IV in Local Government (Regulatory Services) 2022.
 - Continue to renew agreement under section 84y with RSPCA in accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
 - Participation in the Vet discounted de-sexing month.
 - Improve use of existing systems; and
 - Further improve public awareness programs.

2. Approval

THE COMMON SEAL OF THE
ALPINE SHIRE COUNCIL was
hereunto affixed this 1 day of February 2022
in the presence of:

.....
COUNCILLOR

.....
COUNCILLOR

.....
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Please note:
The Domestic Animal
Management Plan was
adopted by Council on 1
February 2022. A signed
copy of the DAMP will be
uploaded in due course.