

# City of Adelaide Dog and Cat Management Plan

Tuesday, 7 April 2026  
City Community Services and Culture Committee

Strategic Alignment - Our Community

**Program Contact:**  
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Public

**Approving Officer:**  
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Community

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to release the draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030 (the draft Plan) for public consultation.

All councils have legislated obligations regarding animal management in the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*. The draft Plan delivers on Council's obligations, aligns with the intent of Council's Strategic Plan 2024–2028, and seeks to meet community expectations in relation to responsible pet ownership, safety and amenity.

Council's approach to animal management has been developed throughout previous plans. The draft 2026-2030 Plan does not materially alter the current approach. The plan builds on the existing foundations and outlines actions that will continue to improve animal management and encourage responsible pet ownership.

Subject to endorsement, the draft Plan will be released for public consultation in accordance with Council's Public Communication and Consultation Policy. A further report will be presented to Council following public consultation outlining feedback received, proposed amendments, and the final Plan for consideration.

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## RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 14 April 2026 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT COUNCIL

1. Endorses the draft *Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030* as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.2 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 7 April 2026, for the purposes of public consultation, prepared in accordance with Section 26A of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, as amended.
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to:
  - 2.1. Make minor editorial or administrative amendments to the draft Plan and consultation materials prior to release, provided these do not alter the intent.
  - 2.2. Notify the Dog and Cat Management Board upon preparation and, if applicable, amendment of the Plan, in the manner determined by the Board.
3. Notes that Administration will present a further report to Council following consultation, including a summary of feedback received, proposed amendments, and the final Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030 for consideration.

## IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	<b>Strategic Alignment – Our Community</b> Enable effective governance, risk management, accountability and transparency in decision making, and support community amenity, safety and responsible pet ownership.
Policy	Management of dogs and cats is a legislated function of Council. The draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 (draft Plan) does not significantly impact existing policies.
Consultation	The draft Plan will require public consultation in accordance with Council's Public Communication and Consultation Policy, including engagement with residents, community members, and dog and cat owners.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	The draft Plan addresses Council's approach to delivering the legislative obligations outlined in the <i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i> . The plan is also supported by City of Adelaide by-laws. Engagement has occurred with the Dog and Cat Management Board in preparing the draft Plan.
Opportunities	To modernise animal management practices following legislative reform, strengthen compliance approaches, and enhance community safety and amenity through responsible pet ownership.
25/26 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 26/27 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The Plan will operate from 2026–2030
25/26 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

# DISCUSSION

## Background

1. Section 26A of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) requires every council to prepare a plan relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area, consistent with guidelines issued by the Dog and Cat Management Board (DCMB) ([Link 1](#)).
2. Throughout 2024 and 2025 the State Government proposed changes to the Act, which were anticipated to impact requirements for Dog and Cat Management Plans.
3. Council's current *Dog and Cat Management Plan* expired in 2024 ([Link 2](#)). In consideration of the pending legislative reform and in consultation the DCMB, the City of Adelaide sought approval from DCMB to continue the use of Council's current plan until December 2025.
4. Reviewing the Dog and Cat Management Plan is a specific action of City of Adelaide's Strategic Plan 2024-2028.
5. An effective Dog and Cat Management Plan also supports other Strategic Plan actions, including:
  - 5.1. Provide services that encourage responsible pet ownership
  - 5.2. Enable community-led services which increase wellbeing, social connections and participation in active lifestyles
  - 5.3. Create safe, inclusive and healthy places for our community
  - 5.4. Protect and restore native habitat in our city

## Legislative Amendments

6. The *Dog and Cat Management (Breeder Reforms) Amendment Act 2025* was passed on 18 June 2025. ([Link 3](#))
7. The first amendments commenced on 17 November 2025, introducing updated compliance tools, increased penalties and revised document governance requirements for councils.
8. The amendments do not materially alter the delivery of animal management services in the City of Adelaide, but they require revised documentation processes and updated compliance considerations.
9. The key amended provisions made to the Act include:
  - 9.1. Allowing a council's Dog and Cat Management Plan to be incorporated into other strategic documents, rather than the previous requirement for a stand-alone plan.
  - 9.2. Requiring a council to notify the DCMB when a plan is prepared or amended, rather than seek endorsement of the board.
10. Whilst future City of Adelaide Dog and Cat Management Plans may be incorporated into broader strategic documents, due to the timeframe of Council's current Strategic Plan and the expiry date of the previous Dog and Cat Management Plan in 2024, progressing a stand-alone plan is recommended.

## Dog and Cats in the City of Adelaide

11. The City of Adelaide currently has 1,174 dogs and 510 cats registered.
12. Reported incidents relating to dogs and cats are shown in the table below.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 (Q1&2)
<b>Cat complaints</b>	13	20	3
<b>Dog attacks</b>	43	31	18
<b>Dog barking complaints</b>	70	70	22
<b>Dogs wandering at large</b>	119	91	46
<b>Dogs impounded</b>	4	5	2

13. In addition to dogs registered within the City of Adelaide, Administration note many dogs registered in other Council areas regularly visit City of Adelaide's Dog Parks and Park Lands.
14. While the data does not demonstrate an increase in the first six months of this financial year, it is noted as the city's population and activation increases, the volume of animal management incidents is also expected to increase.

## Overview of the draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030

15. The draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 (the draft Plan) does not propose material changes to Council's approach to animal management.
16. The plan outlines actions that will continue to encourage responsible pet ownership, increase dog registrations, microchipping and desexing, and reduce instances of animal nuisances and public safety risks.
17. The draft Plan supports, and is underpinned by key pillars of Council's approach to animal management:
  - 17.1. Administration of the City of Adelaide's Dogs By-law 2024 and Cats By-law 2024.
  - 17.2. Designated on and off leash areas in the City of Adelaide ([Link 4](#)), approved by Council in 2021 following public consultation.
  - 17.3. Two designated dog parks ([Link 5](#)).
  - 17.4. Appropriately trained Community Safety Officers (CSOs) undertaking proactive inspections and responding to community reports.
  - 17.5. Proactive community education initiatives on registration requirements and benefits and responsible pet ownership.
18. Administration has consulted the DCMB on the contents contained in the draft Plan to ensure it meets legislative requirements following the recent amendments.
19. The draft Plan has been developed through a review of the 2019-2024 plan; analysis of requests, registration statistics and animal incident/report data; consideration of legislative reforms; stakeholder engagement with the DCMB and animal welfare organisations; and internal engagement. Further public and external consultation will occur following endorsement of the draft Plan.

## Next Steps

20. Should the report be endorsed:
  - 20.1. The draft Plan will be released for public consultation in accordance with Council's Public Communication and Consultation Policy, with notification also provided to the DCMB as per Section 26A of the Act.
  - 20.2. Community and stakeholder feedback will be collected, analysed and incorporated into the Plan where appropriate.
  - 20.3. The draft document will be professionally designed prior to public consultation.
21. Following public consultation, Administration will provide a further report to Council for endorsement based on the feedback provided.
22. Once adopted and notified, the Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030 will guide Council's animal management activities and services.

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## DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

**Link 1** - The *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*

**Link 2** - City of Adelaide Dog and Cat Management Plan 2019 - 2024

**Link 3** - The *Dog and Cat Management (Breeder Reforms) Amendment Act 2025*

**Link 4** - City of Adelaide Dog On-Leash/Off-Leash Map

**Link 5** - City of Adelaide Dog Parks

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## ATTACHMENTS

**Attachment A** – The draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030