

Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026 - 2030

Tuesday, 4 August 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 adoption of the Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 (the Draft Plan), which incorporates feedback following a public consultation process.

On 14 April 2026, Council endorsed the Draft Plan for public consultation. A summary of the public consultation and key themes is provided in the report and in **Attachment A**.

During the consultation period there were 1,083 unique visits to the webpage, with 40 contributions received. This is a significant increase on the three responses received during consultation for the previous Plan.

Key themes arising from the public consultation include:

- A desire to review dog on-leash, off-leash and prohibited areas within the duration of this Plan, noting mixed feedback on which areas should be increased or reduced.
- A greater focus on cat management, including suggestions of registration and confinement.
- Support for further monitoring and enforcement of existing rules and by-laws.
- Suggested investment in dog infrastructure, including extra waste bins and bag dispensers.

The Draft Plan (**Attachment B**) has been updated to incorporate feedback, with the changes highlighted within this report.

The Draft Plan delivers on Council's legislative obligations, aligns with the Strategic Plan 2024–2028, and seeks to meet community expectations in relation to responsible pet ownership, safety and amenity.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 11 August 2026 for consideration

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

1. Notes the Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 public consultation summary report as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 4 August 2026.
2. Adopts the Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030, contained in Attachment B to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 4 August 2026.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Community Enable effective governance and transparency in decision making, and support community amenity, safety and responsible pet ownership.
Policy	The management of dogs and cats is a legislated function of Council. The Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 does not significantly impact existing policies or by-laws.
Consultation	Consultation was undertaken from 18 May to 7 June 2026. Results of the public consultation is provided in Attachment A .
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	The Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 addresses Council's approach to delivering the legislative obligations outlined in the <i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i> . Delivery of the plan is also supported by City of Adelaide by-laws.
Opportunities	To modernise animal management practices following legislative reform, strengthen compliance approaches, and enhance community safety and amenity through responsible pet ownership.
26/27 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 27/28 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.
26/27 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Implementation of the plan is funded within operational budgets.
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. On 14 April 2026, Council endorsed the Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 (the Draft Plan) for public consultation.

Public Consultation Summary

2. Public consultation on the Draft Plan was open for three weeks from 18 May to 7 June 2026.
3. During the consultation period there were 1,083 unique visits to the Our Adelaide webpage, with 40 online responses submitted via Our Adelaide.
4. Consultation material was also provided directly to stakeholders including the Dog and Cat Management Board, the Animal Welfare League, all registered pet owners residing in the City of Adelaide, as well as signage placed in dog parks.
5. The consultation highlights include:
 - 5.1. 458 downloads of the Draft Plan.
 - 5.2. Over 8,300 people reached across social media channels.
 - 5.3. 1,514 registered pet owners notified electronically via email distribution lists.
 - 5.4. 40 responses lodged, with 65% of respondents living within the City of Adelaide. This is a significant increase on the three responses received during consultation for the previous Plan.
6. A public consultation summary report is provided as **Attachment A**.

Public Consultation Results

7. Survey responses demonstrated a desire for a review to be undertaken on the dog on-leash, off-leash and prohibited areas within the duration of this Plan, with 55% in favour and 22.5% unsure.
 - 7.1. Feedback regarding on-leash and off-leash areas was mixed, with some respondents calling for more off-leash areas, while others wanted additional dog-free spaces, with suggestions to restrict off-leash areas to fenced locations only.
 - 7.2. A majority of respondents were comfortable with dogs being allowed in playgrounds provided they remain on-leash and under effective control. There was however some support for dedicated dog-free areas.
8. Thematic analysis of the survey responses and written submissions highlighted key priorities, including:
 - 8.1. Respondents called for stronger measures to be implemented to reduce roaming cats and improve management of stray cats within the city and North Adelaide, including more education to pet owners.
 - 8.2. Further monitoring and enforcement of existing rules, specifically relating to dog-attack incidents, off-leash and on-leash compliance and increased patrols by Council staff.
 - 8.3. Suggestions for more investment in dog infrastructure, such as increased waste bins, bag dispensers, water stations and ongoing maintenance of existing dog parks.

Incorporating feedback in the Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030

9. Feedback received during public consultation has informed changes and additions to the Draft Plan.
10. The following table presents the strongest themes raised by the community during consultation as per the thematic analysis undertaken on all written responses received:

Theme	Summary of feedback	How feedback has been addressed
Cat management	22.5% of respondents requested greater emphasis on responsible cat ownership, management of roaming and stray cats, community education and consideration of impacts on wildlife.	The Draft Plan strengthens education regarding responsible cat ownership, promotes microchipping and desexing and includes additional actions relating to community education and monitoring legislative changes.
Compliance and enforcement	Respondents requested increased visibility of Community Safety Officers and stronger enforcement of existing dog control	The Draft Plan continues Council's compliance work and includes actions focused on education, compliance monitoring and community awareness.

	requirements, particularly in relation to dogs off-leash in designated on-leash areas.	
Community safety	Respondents highlighted the importance of balancing responsible pet ownership with community safety, particularly for children and the elderly.	The Draft Plan continues to prioritise responsible pet ownership, education and enforcement to support safe shared use of public spaces.
On-leash and off-leash areas	Views were mixed. Some respondents supported additional off-leash areas and dog parks, while others preferred more on-leash or dog-free areas and suggested restricting off-leash exercise to fenced locations.	Additional action included in the Draft Plan committing to a review of dog access arrangements to ensure they continue to reflect changing community needs.
Infrastructure and amenities	Respondents identified opportunities to increase the availability of dog waste bins, bag dispensers, water stations, signage and dog park maintenance.	These suggestions will help inform future operational planning and consideration of infrastructure improvements.
Population growth	52.5% of respondents considered that increasing residential density would increase demand for pet facilities, services and open space, while also requiring ongoing review of pet management arrangements.	The Draft Plan recognises population growth as a key consideration and commits to reviewing arrangements over the life of the Plan.
Dogs in playgrounds	Feedback was mixed. Most respondents (52.5%) supported dogs remaining in playgrounds provided they are on-leash and under effective control, while others (27.5%) supported some dedicated dog-free playgrounds.	Council will continue to monitor community feedback and will now review dog access arrangements as a specific action in the Draft Plan. Existing arrangements will remain whilst the review is undertaken.

11. In summary, changes to the Draft document include:

11.1. Additional Actions

- 11.1.1. Commitment to review dog on-leash, off-leash and prohibited areas in Year 2 of the Draft Plan. This process will involve further public consultation.
- 11.1.2. Specific commitments regarding the promotion of responsibilities to cat owners, and proactive engagement with cat owners to encourage greater compliance.
- 11.1.3. Modified language in various actions to better reflect community feedback.

11.2. Document Changes

- 11.2.1. Readability improvements which do not alter the overall intent of the Draft Plan, such as minor changes in the preface, and combining the content of 'Partnerships (Section 5)' into 'Management of Dogs and Cats (section 6)'.

12. All changes made to the Draft Plan since Council adoption in April are shown as track changes in [Link 1](#).

Next Steps

- 13. The updated Draft Plan is provided as **Attachment B**.
- 14. If adopted, the Draft Plan will be finalised and made public on the City of Adelaide website, and implementation will commence.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – Annotated version of the Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030 Public Consultation Summary Report

Attachment B – Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026-2030

- END OF REPORT -