

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT REFERENCE GROUP

Environmental Health and Regulatory Services Team



1 Introduction

In an environment of continual legislative and social change, the challenging task of cost-effectively managing responsible pet ownership is best achieved through a collaborative effort between council and the community.

The Animal Management Reference Group will enable community members and organisational representatives to provide a whole of community perspective around animal management issues.

2 Purpose

The Animal Management Reference Group (the Group) is intended to assist council's Environmental Health and Regulatory Services Team with the development and management of animal management policies and practices.

These terms of reference describe the governance arrangements around the group, to ensure that the group fulfils its purpose in an efficient and effective manner.

3 Responsibilities of the group

The group will aim to:

- a) Promote the responsible care and ownership of animals, around issues such as :
 - the potential for nuisance behaviours
 - dog registration and cat approvals
 - over-population and abandonment
 - dog attacks on people and animals
 - microchipping
 - desexing
 - euthanasia
- b) Provide guidance on domestic animal initiatives in the community
- c) Provide a conduit between community and council on animal management issues
- d) Provide advice on mechanisms to enable council to effectively engage with the community on animal management issues.

4 Scope

Townsville City Council will seek input on a variety of issues, including:

- a) Advice on animal management services required in the community
- b) Local priorities such as public education campaigns
- c) Local laws reviews

Excluded from the scope of group consideration are fees and charges reviews, and any other matters that are not within the realms of Council's local laws and state legislation responsibilities or not financially sustainable for Council.

5 Guiding principles and values

The principles and values for the group include, but are not limited to:

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- a) Open to collaboration and partnership
- b) Decisions must be evidence based
- c) Strategies must be tailored and relevant to our local government area.
- d) Conflict of interest disclosure must apply
- e) All aspects must have the highest level of confidentiality.

6 Membership

6.1 Group membership

The group will consist of seven members.

Membership will include both individuals with particular expertise, and representatives of particular organisations, as well as Council representatives. The group will aim, as far as possible, to be representative of community views.

The membership will comprise the following:

- Chair – General Manager Planning, Townsville City Council or nominee
- Team Manager Environmental Health & Regulatory Services, Townsville City Council or nominee
- Local professionals in an animal related field – two representatives
- Veterinary surgeon
- Foster and rehoming organisations – one representative
- Community member – one representative

Community members will be appointed by Council following an expression of interest process.

6.2 Attributes required of community members

Selection will be based on an individual's ability to:

- a) Demonstrate an understanding of future trends and contemporary issues relating to animal management
- b) Demonstrate that they have established industry networks or relevant industry, technical or community experience
- c) Demonstrate an understanding of council's legislative obligations and constraints
- d) Communicate a viewpoint and provide considered feedback
- e) Respect the confidentiality of the group
- f) Work as a team
- g) Identify and disclose potential or actual conflicts of interest.

6.3 Role of Chair

The General Manager Planning will be the Chair of the Reference Group. The Chair will:

- a) Oversee the secretariat functions for the group, including ensuring that agendas and minutes are distributed in a timely manner
- b) Chair the meeting according to the agenda and time available
- c) Ensure that all discussion items end with a decision, action or definite outcome
- d) Approve and/or organise visitors or specialists to attend the meetings

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- e) Report on meeting outcomes to the General Manager Planning
- f) Undertake other meeting matters as described elsewhere in these terms of reference.

6.4 Role of group members

Members of the group must be prepared to:

- a) Dedicate sufficient time to carry out their role effectively, including reading or viewing any documentation provided with the agenda prior to the meetings
- b) Provide feedback on matters discussed in the group
- c) Provide input into strategic documents as requested by council
- d) Propose any agenda items well in advance of the scheduled meeting (prior to the agenda being distributed)
- e) Respect the confidentiality of the matters raised in the meetings
- f) Adhere to council's policies as relevant
- g) Attend all meetings (an apology is not counted as attendance)

Note that members may be asked to undertake activities outside scheduled meeting timelines.

6.5 Council staff

Townsville City Council will be represented on the group by the Chair and the Team Manager Environmental Health and Regulatory Services as described in 7.3, and other staff as required for the efficient and effective running of the meetings.

6.6 Other attendees

Visitors or presenters may also attend all or part of a meeting to provide input in to the discussions or observe the proceedings of the meeting, at the Chair's discretion.

6.7 Term of membership

Membership of the Animal Management Reference Group is for a maximum of two years or until such time as their replacement becomes necessary as described in 6.8 Vacating members. For the purposes of retaining core group knowledge at any one time, the replacements may be staggered. The Chair of the group has the discretion to the termination and appointment of members to ensure the purpose of the group is not compromised.

6.8 Vacating members

A vacancy arises if a member:

- a) resigns in writing;
- b) ceases to reside in the Townsville City Council local government area;
- c) is absent from two consecutive meetings without leave being granted by the Chair; or
- d) fails to abide by the requirements of the group, including, but not limited to, council's Code of Conduct.

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Vacancies will be filled via a public nomination process, and a selection made as per Section 6.2.

6.9 Leave of absence

Members of the group must give notice to the Chair of their ability or inability to attend a scheduled meeting. It is at the discretion of the Chair to accept a more extended leave of absence.

The Chair has the discretion to cancel a person's membership of the group if the person is absent from two consecutive meetings without leave being granted by the Chair (refer to 6.8 Vacating members).

6.10 Secretariat support

Secretariat support will be provided by council's Planning Section.

7 Meeting procedures

7.1 Frequency of meetings

Meeting will be held as required, with a minimum of four times a year. These meetings will be held at council's offices, 143 Walker Street, Townsville City. Meetings will be called by the Chair.

7.2 Quorum

The quorum is half of all members plus one. Decisions where required will be by majority.

7.3 Conflict of interest

Any conflict of interest or perceived or potential conflict of interest, or material or personal interest must be declared prior to any discussion of an issue. The Chair will determine if the member can take part in any discussions.

7.4 Agenda distribution

Agendas and other documentation necessary for conducting a meeting will be made available to group members at least 3 days before each meeting.

7.5 Meeting records

A record will be kept of the subject matter discussed, comments received and recommendations made.

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8 Code of conduct

8.1 Conduct of members

All members of the group must abide by council's Code of Conduct as published on council's website. Copies will be provided to all members. Members must also abide by council's social media policy.

8.2 Confidentiality

All material provided for discussion and consideration is confidential unless publicly available. Meeting discussions and outcomes cannot be disclosed to outside parties without endorsement from council.

8.3 Sensitive information

Members may occasionally come into possession of sensitive information, including information classified as personal information under the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Members may not disclose any such information to any person outside the group.

8.4 Security of information

All written materials provided by Townsville City Council to the group must be kept secure by the member, destroyed, or returned to Townsville City Council.

8.5 Public representation

Membership of the Animal Management Reference Group does not allow members to hold themselves as representing Townsville City Council or the Animal Management Reference Group, or their opinions.

9 Review

The terms of reference will be reviewed bi-annually from the date of approval. They may be altered at an earlier time to meet the current needs of the Animal Management Reference Group.