

Companion Animals Advisory Committee Meeting Record 10 October 2019



Location:	Central Coast Council Wyong Office Level 2 Committee Room 2 Hely Street, Wyong	
Date:	10 October 2019	
Time	Started at: 4.04pm	Closed at: 5.56pm
Chair	Councillor Greg Best	
File Ref	F2019/00998	

Present:

Councillor Greg Best, Councillor Kyle MacGregor, Councillor Jeff Sundstrom, Nicole Florczak, Louise Harding (arrived 4.22pm), Velma Harris, Te're Melrose

External Representative present:

Deanna Walton – Central Coast Animal Care Facility, Marilyn Jurina – SOCARES Animal Care Facility Charmhaven (arrived 4.22pm, left 5.30pm)

Council Staff present:

Brian Jones – Unit Manager Environment and Certification, Grant Foster – Section Manager Community Safety, Warren Murphy – Section Manager Contracts and Projects, Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies

Apologies received: Councillor Jillian Hogan, Terrie Lynn, Scott Cox – Director Environment and Planning

Brian Jones (Unit Manager Environment and Certification) welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

Councillor Kyle MacGregor completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

Item 2 Introductions

Each member of the Advisory Group briefly introduced themselves.

Item 3 Nomination of Chairperson

The Advisory Group discussed the election of a Chairperson, noting that a Councillor is required to chair meetings as per the standard Terms of Reference for Advisory Groups.

Brian Jones (Unit Manager Environment and Certification) called for nominations of Chairperson. Councillor Greg Best was nominated and accepted the appointment.

Recommendation: That Council appoint Councillor Greg Best as Chairperson of the Companion Animals Advisory Committee.

Item 4 Disclosures of Interest

Councillor Greg Best called for any disclosures. No disclosures were received.

Item 5 Terms of Reference

The Advisory Group reviewed the draft Terms of Reference, noting they conform with the standard template for all Advisory Groups.

Action: The Terms of Reference be reported to Council for adoption as soon as practicable.

Item 6 Consideration of Late Membership

The Advisory Group considered an application for membership that was received after the Expression of Interest period had closed.

Recommendation: That Council appoint Greg Kelman as a voting member of the Companion Animals Advisory Committee as a community representative and update the Terms of Reference accordingly.

Item 7 Regional Impounding Facility Strategy Update

Brian Jones (Unit Manager Environment and Certification) spoke to the report that was provided to Advisory Group members regarding the Community Safety Facilities Needs Assessment and Report.

The Advisory Group noted the report and agreed that further consideration was required.

The Advisory Group generally discussed animal management including fostering potential as a potential solution to growing numbers in animal care facilities.

Action: Staff to provide the Advisory Group with further information about options for fostering.

Item 9 was moved forward to follow this Item.

Item 8 Consideration of a 'Cat Curfew'

The Advisory Group discussed the possibility of having a cat curfew. There were concerns raised about the ability to enforce such a thing. It was suggested that focus should instead be on positive education of pet owners.

It was noted that other states have legislation that enforces a cat curfew (SA, VIC, ACT). While the *Companion Animals Act NSW* encourages a curfew, there is no legislation to enforce it.

Action: Advisory Group members to submit any ideas for implementation of a cat curfew to the Advisory Group Support Officer for discussion at a later date.

Action: Staff to provide further information on establishing a cat curfew to Advisory Group members.

Item 9 SOCARES Presentation: Compulsory Desexing of Companion Animals

This item was moved forward to follow Item 7.

Marilyn Jurina (SOCARES Animal Care Facility) tabled a petition to legislate the mandatory desexing of companion animals in NSW for the Advisory Group's information and support.

It was noted there have been recent changes to *Companion Animals Act NSW* to reduce unwanted litters and unlawful trade of animals, however further action is required.

Recommendation: That Council note the Companion Animals Advisory Committee supports the SOCARES petition to the NSW Government to legislate mandatory desexing of companion animals in NSW.

Action: Advisory Group Support Officer to circulate links to NSW State Government report on animal breeding practices to Advisory Group members, as provided by Councillor Jeff Sundstrom.

Item 10 Advisory Committee Action Plan for Next 12 Months

The Advisory Group discussed the meeting frequency and indicated a preference for monthly meetings on Thursdays.

It was noted that Council has requested the Advisory Group meet at least 3 times before September 2020 and that most Advisory Groups meet bimonthly or quarterly.

Action: Next meeting to be held in November 2019. Advisory Group Support Officer to check calendars and notify Advisory Group members when an appropriate appointment is determined.

Advisory Group members confirmed agreement to share contact details with each other and would prefer BCC not be used in email communications.

Item 11 General Business and Close

The below matters were discussed by the Advisory Group.

- a) Dog attack reporting and statistics: concerns that stats are extremely poor and Central Coast is reported as being worst in NSW (staff are in process of reviewing stats and areas for improvement as stats may not correctly reflect reality).
- b) Ranger stray services: concerns about overwhelming number of dogs and limited resources available to react to incidents.
- c) Off leash areas: need for more safe and secure off leash areas.
- d) Dog owner education: underpins all issues, potential for owner licensing (encourages accountability and responsible pet ownership), promotion of free services and information for community members, explore opportunities for educating new pet owners when registering/microchipping, doing well with education of children (e.g. interactive program on website) but need improvement with adults.

It was noted that all the above topics are connected, with education being the core issue.

Action: Advisory Group members to forward any ideas on the above topics in preparation for the next meeting, with a view for matters to be considered in 20/21 budget.

Advisory Group members were provided with one of the pet resource packs that Council makes available through its libraries.

The meeting closed at 5.56pm

Next Meeting: November 2019 (TBC)
4pm – 6pm
Central Coast Council Gosford Office
Level 1 Committee Room