

Companion Animals Advisory Committee Meeting Record 28 May 2020



Location:	Skype Meeting	
Date:	28 May 2020	
Time	Started at: 4.00pm	Closed at: 4.49pm
Chair	Councillor Greg Best	
File Ref	F2019/00998	

Present:

Councillor Greg Best, Councillor Jeff Sundstrom, Allan Benson, Louise Harding, Velma Harris, Greg Kelman, Te're Melrose

External Representative present:

Marilyn Jurlina – SOCARES Animal Care Facility Charmhaven, Deanna Walton – Central Coast Animal Care Facility

Council Staff present:

Brian Jones – Unit Manager Environment and Certification, Grant Foster – Section Manager Community Safety, Warren Murphy – Section Manager Contracts and Projects, Boyd McMillan – Landscape and Recreation Planner Open Space Projects and Planning, Donna Payne – Advisory Group Support Officer

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies

Apologies received: Mayor Lisa Matthews, Councillor Jillian Hogan, Councillor Kyle MacGregor, Terrie Lynn

Councillor Greg Best welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

Item 2 Disclosures of Interest

The Chairperson called for any disclosures of interest. No disclosures were received.

Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record

The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record of 27 February 2020.

The Action Log was reviewed.

Item 4 Review of Fostering of Companion Animals Information (Action 11)

This item was deferred to follow Item 7.

The Advisory Group discussed information that was provided following the previous meeting on the research Velma Harris conducted on fostering of companion animals. It was noted that at the Charmhaven Facility there are fostering programs in place which target young animals (puppies and kittens), animals recovering from surgery and animals requiring palliative care.

Quorum was lost at 4.49pm in accordance with Section Three of the Terms of Reference, due to departure of a voting member. Informal discussion continued as agreed by Advisory Group members, but no minutes were recorded beyond this point.

Item 5 Update on Cat Information (Actions 12 and 13)

This item was not addressed due to loss of quorum in Item 4.

Item 6 Update on the Control of Cats

This item was addressed as part of Item 8.

Item 7 Dog Parks and Dog Off-Leash Areas

This item was moved forward to follow Item 8. It was followed by Item 4.

Boyd McMillan (Landscape and Recreation Planner Open Space Projects and Planning) addressed the Advisory Group regarding dog parks and off-leash areas. It was advised that Council is currently reviewing the dog park/off-leash parks strategy. A revised strategy is expected to be available for community consultation before 30 December 2020.

The following points were noted:

- Central Coast region has 57 active dog exercise areas
- One of the largest sources of complaints to Council are open space areas (not necessarily animal areas)
- Council are looking at ranking areas and where other opportunities may be available.

Action: Boyd McMillan to provide in dot-point format the key points discussed in his update on dog parks and dog off-leash areas for circulation to Advisory Group members.

Item 8 Control of Cats: Council Meeting 25 May 2020 Resolution

This item was moved forward to follow Item 3. It was followed by Item 7

The Advisory Group discussed the *Response to the Notice of Motion – Cat Curfew for the Central Coast* that was distributed to the Advisory Group prior to the meeting for review. This item came from the Council Meeting held 25 May 2020 and was referred to the Companion Animals Advisory Committee for input.

The related resolution of Council was as follows:

- 408/20** ***That Council write to the NSW State Government requesting amendments to the Companion Animals Act 1998 so that cats have the same control requirements as dogs.***
- 409/20** ***That Council investigate mechanisms available under relevant legislation that may provide for cat containment within new subdivisions noting that containment occurs in a number of suburbs in the ACT and is recommended by numerous cat welfare organisations.***
- 410/20** ***That Council refer this item to the Companion Animals Committee for input.***

The consensus from the Advisory Group was:

- Resolution 408/20: Persuading the State Government to change the law under the Companion Animals Act may not be possible and that education towards responsible cat ownership is the best way forward. Acknowledged that staff would still be writing to the NSW State Government as determined by the Council resolution.
- Resolution 409/20: Investigating containment mechanisms is an option that could be worked with. This would benefit wildlife in the Central Coast region and also promotes a longer, healthier life for domestic cats.

Councillor Sundstrom provided a link to the [draft ACT Cat Plan](#) that provides an overview of the ACT Government's plan on cat management with regard to the health, welfare and safety of both cats and native animals.

Action: Advisory Group Support Officer to forward the ACT Cat Plan link to Advisory Group members for their information.

Action: Draft ACT Cat Plan to be reviewed by staff who will provide a briefing at the next meeting prior to any decision being made on any further course of action.

Action: Staff to make further enquiries on how the ACT Government measures control of cats and report back to Advisory Group.

Quorum was lost in Item 4 so the meeting did not proceed beyond this point.