

Information Sheet

Proposed New Cat By-law in The City of Tea Tree Gully



We are inviting our community to let us know their views on a proposed new cat by-law for the control and management of cats within the City of Tea Tree Gully (CTTG) Council area.

Background

Councils in South Australia can establish by-laws under the Local Government Act 1999. By-laws are local laws established by councils to deal with issues specific to the relevant council area.

In June 2023, Council consulted with the community to understand views on cat management and control in the City of Tea Tree Gully. Over 3,400 people participated in a survey about their views on cat management and control. The Majority of survey respondents (80%) supported rules or legislation to address cat management and control in CTTG. 58% of those who own or care for a least one cat were supportive.

At a Council meeting in August 2023, Council requested a report with a draft cat by-law if the state government did not progress state-wide cat control legislation by 30 June 2024. Council have long advocated for a state-wide approach to cat management, an issue which has been left to councils to deal with on an individual basis by way of a by-law or not at all.

Council staff initially received the consultation paper “Dog and Cat Management (Breeder Reforms) Amendment Bill 2024” and provided feedback to the state government, noting there was a missed opportunity with the current bill with respect to cat management. Council had understood that the proposed amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act would include amendments addressing the challenges face by local government about cat management.

Council has received further proposed amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act through the “Dog and Cat Management (Cat Management) Amendment Bill 2024”. Proposed changes include:

- revising and updating local council powers and functions for seizing and detaining cats to allow councils to implement their by-laws and manage cats
- clarifying the powers and removing barriers for landscape boards, National Parks and other stakeholders to manage feral cats better

There has been some progression on cat management through this latest amendment bill however the proposed legislation is yet to be passed. In the meantime, Council has decided to proceed with community engagement on a draft cat by-law, as per the previous decision of Council in August 2023.

The draft By-law 7 – Cats notes the following requirement for cats:

1. Must be registered every 12 months with provision for a registration fee – a \$0 fee is proposed for a maximum initial 2-year period
2. Identification by means of a collar around the cat's neck with a tag setting out the name of the owner and address or phone number of the owner
3. Prescribing the limit on the number of cats to be kept on premises to two (2) cats (unless in a prescribed premises, ie cattery, veterinary practice, pet shop or with Council permission)
4. To be confined to their owner's property between 10.00pm and 6.00am

The following are already legislated requirements for cats:

1. To be microchipped
2. Desexed before it is six months old
3. Not allow cats to cause a nuisance

Should the Cat By-Law proceed Council's "Community Safety Policy" would require changes in relation to how Council would deal with cat management.

Council's "Cat Management Policy" would also likely be revoked given it was established in the absence of a suitable state government approach to cat management and which is now what a cat by-law looks to solve.

Based on legal advice provided to Council, a key change that would need to take place regardless of the introduction of a cat by-law is to cease the practice of trapping cats and providing traps to residents for this purpose.

Have your say

For more information, including a copy of the draft cat by-law, and to comment:

- visit our Have Your Say website: haveyoursay.cttg.sa.gov.au/catbylaw
- view the draft By-Law No. 7 – Cats
- View the FAQs on the website listed above
- provide your feedback by completing the online feedback form
- send an email to community.engagement@cttg.sa.gov.au with your feedback
- Pick up a paper (hard copy) feedback form by visiting the below locations:
 - Council's Civic Centre reception, 571 Mntague Road, Modbury
 - Tea Tree Gully Library
 - Golden Grove or Turrumurra Recreation Centres
 - A community centre (Holden Hill, Surrey Downs, Jubilee or Greenwith), or
 - Call us on 8397 7444 and we'll post a feedback form to you

We value your comments and would appreciate your feedback by 5pm, 17 September 2024.

All feedback received on this proposal will be presented to Council for consideration before any further decisions are made. Those who provide feedback will be advised of the Council meeting date when the matter will be considered and following this, the Council's decision.

Questions

If you have any questions you can use the Question & Answer tool at the website listed above, or you are welcome to email us at community.engagement@cttg.sa.gov.au or call on 8397 7444.