



YOUNG SHIRE COUNCIL

REHOMING OF COMPANION ANIMALS

No. 92

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1.0 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Young Shire Council employs Ranger Staff that include in their duties; Animal; and Companion Animal functions. Included in these job roles are the location of straying companion animals (dogs in particular), impounding, siezing, returning and care of same. It also include making all reasonable attempts to reunite these companion animals with their owners where known or readily able to be established through identification.
- 1.2 Immediate re-uniting of companion animal and owner is not always possible and a number of these companion animals are transferred to Council's Companion Animal Impounding Facility (Pound) presently located at the Council Works Depot at Glensloy Street, Young.
- 1.3 This Policy has been created to establish clear protocols for re-homing. It is in no way to be construed as a Companion Animals Management Plan. This specific Policy will be reviewed and form a part of a number of Policies to be developed under a Companion Animals Management Plan, at a later date.

2.0 Purpose/Objectives

- 2.1 To return as may Companion Animals as possible to there owners where they are found to be micro-chipped and/or registered, and re-home as many as possible unclaimed suitable Companion Animals (as are suitable) from Young Shire Council's Pound through either the sale of the companion animal to the general public via Councils website, or the use of approved re-homing agencies for their further care and adoption-out processes.
- 2.2The object of this policy is to identify the steps Council will use from the time a Companion Animal comes into Councils possession through to the sale of the companion animal or use of re homing agencies to re home the animal or otherwise, disposal.

3.0 Capture/Receipt Procedure

- 3.1 At all times the capture and hold procedures set by the Companion Animals Act 2008 and empowered Regulation/s shall be observed.
 - 3.2 When the Impounding Officer locates or receives a stray, seized or unwanted companion animal, they scan the animal for the presence of a microchip. If the companion animal is **not** micro chipped or has no other distinguishing mark, collar tag or the like, it will be taken to the Young Shire Council pound where it will be held for 7 days before it can re-homed or euthanased with release/ sale fees enforced, where applicable if claimed.
 - 3.3 If the companion animal is micro chipped the following will occur:
 - a. Using the microchip number, the owners contact details from the NSW Companion Animals Database will be obtained by accessing the Companion Animals Register. Staff will then attempt to contact the owner and deliver the animal to its home. This service is not to be in any way taken to lessen the potential for applicable fines that may potentially apply.
 - b. If Staff are able to make contact with the owner, arrangements will be made to return the animal to its home if it has had to be relocated to the Pound in contrast with a. above. This may attract a release fee under Council fees and charges and any fines as may be applicable.
 - c. If Staff are unable to contact the owner, and are uncertain that the address on the NSW Register may not have been updated, a card may be left at the owners address advising that the animal has been taken to the Young Pound and the owner advised in writing that the animal is in Council's pound. Follow up contact with telephone or by mail will then be initiated immediately.
 - d. After being held at this facility for 14 days, the animal becomes the property of Council, ceasing to be that of the registered owner. It can then be legally sold, re-homed, or euthanased.
 - e. Council may hold any companion animal where the forfeit of ownership per 3.2 and 3.3(d) for up to 48 hours in excess of the minimum legislated hold periods if likely re-homing or sale is foreseeable.
- NOTE: Even though non-micro chipped and micro chipped companion animals are only legally required to be held for 7 and 14 days respectively, Council's Re-Homing Policy permits that they may be held for a further 48 hours, in order to give them a greater chance to be re-homed and avoid euthanasia.
- 3.4 Animals surrendered by their owners will be subject to the same hold periods as all other seized or captured animals in terms of duration of stay and availability then for disposal, with the exception of animals known to have

dangerous declarations or recent dangerous actions. The latter will be disposed of at Council's earliest opportunity via euthanasia.

- 3.5 Companion animals are only to be euthanased if they are not considered suitable for re-homing (temperament, dangerous, nuisance etc), are aged, frail or ill. In these cases it is considered more humane to have them euthanased rather than holding them indefinitely in the pound environment when re-homing is not likely.
- 3.6 The only times that Council's Staff will not take a found animal directly to the Young Shire Council Animal Holding Facility is when it can be readily returned to its residence and owner from enquiries made whilst still in the field, or it is injured/considered too sick to enter the facility. In these cases, the animal will be taken to the Young Vet for assessment and treatment.

4.0 Re-Homing – Specific Provisions

- 4.1 If subject to section 3. above, Council has identified that an animal is suitable for sale or re-homing, the following Policy and Procedure should be observed.
- 4.2 The Council shall regularly publish (and keep updated) a list of companion animals it holds and that are suitable for re-homing. This shall be on the website of Council at www.young.nsw.gov.au Such list is to be kept current to the animals available.
- 4.3 The list published shall include the following minimum details; animal type, breed, approximate age, sex. The list shall also have the clear notation that this list is published primarily for the benefit of Animal Rescue Organisations and their duly authorised delegates that claim and hold an exemption from the Minister for Local Government under section 16(d) of the Companion Animal Regulation.
- 4.4 Council will permit the sale of a companion animal to a member of the public, however that person must sign a waiver and indemnify Council that they take the animal in an “as is” condition with no comeback for disease, temperament, behaviour or the like. The sale will require payment of a Sale Fee as well as the cost of micro-chipping and registration if not already applicable to the animal. These fees are readily obtainable each year in Council's published Operational Plan.
- 4.4 A re-homing agency will be an organisation approved by Council and will hold an exemption from the Minister under section 16 (d) of the Companion Animal Regulation. It will provide Young Shire Council with its policy for re-homing, a list of approved persons to act on their behalf along with a copy of their public liability insurance for \$20,000.00 which identifies Young Shire Council as an interested party.

- 4.5 Council may enter into agreement with more than one (1) re-homing agency and/or volunteers duly authorised in writing with specific regard to the animal in question, and who may from time to time be acting on different agencies behalves.
- 4.6 Council will be the sole arbitrator in all re-homing and all decisions made by Council will be final. First contact to Council will be the reasonable grounds as to why one agency claims an animal over another.
- 4.7 All animals leaving Council's Pound must be micro-chipped and registered per the legislation. Registration is exempted to approved section 16(d) compliant organisations and after claiming this function becomes their responsibility prior to adopting the animal out.
- 4.8 Staff that are authorised to act in conformity for Council on this Policy include; General Manager, Director-Planning Environment & Strategic Services, Environmental Health and Waste Control Officer, Environmental Health & Community Services Officer, Ranger. Assisting or Relieving Rangers must get authority from another Staff Member nominated.

5.0 Inconsistency Of Policy To Legislation

- 5.1 Where any inconsistency is found to apply between this policy and the Companion Animals Act, 1998 and the Companion Animals Regulation 2008 or any Directive so issued by the Minister administering these legislations, the legislation and Ministerial Directives shall prevail for so much of that inconsistency which is in question.