
4.1 AMENDMENT TO CITY STANDARDS & ANIMAL CARE FEES**REPORT OF:** City Standards & Animal Care Manager

REPORT OVERVIEW**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to recommend amendments to Council's animal management fees for 2019/20 in respect to:

- Cat and dog keeping an additional animal fee categories
- Cat and dog release fee categories

Criteria: Direction

CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY

Quality Lifestyles

REPORT DETAILS**BACKGROUND**

The amendments to *Subordinate Local Law No. 4.1 (Animal Management) 2002* approved by Council on 29 January 2020 changed the property size categories for the general keeping of cats and dogs. Owners wishing to keep an additional cat or dog can apply for an Animal Keeping Approval. Council's Register of Cost Recovery and Commercial Charges now needs to align to the amended local law. Fees only apply where a Council approval is required.

The review of Council's animal management fees is also a key action of the "*City of Logan Animal Care Strategy 2018-2022*" (the Animal Care Strategy). There is also opportunity to improve the transparency for Council's cat and dog release fees.

The *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008* provide the legal framework for the establishment of animal management fees.

Cat and Dog Categories for Keeping an Additional Animal

Council's animal management local law allows for the general keeping of a maximum number of cats and dogs based on property size. The local law also allows for additional cats and dogs to be kept, subject to Council approval. Applications to keep an additional cat or dog are assessed under criteria in *Subordinate Local Law No. 4.1 (Animal Management) 2002*.

Councils' recent animal management local law amendments changed some property sizes for the general keeping of cats and dogs, with and without Council approval. The new general keeping of cats and dog numbers according to the new property sizes are summarised below:

(a) The property criteria for general keeping of dogs:

Animal Type	Property Type/Size (m ²)	Allowable Number without Council Approval	Allowable Number with Council Approval
Dogs	Units, Townhouses, Multi-Dwelling Premises including retirement/mature age villages	1	2
	0 to 350	1	2
	351 to 500	2	NA
	501 to 1,000	2	3
	1,001 to 2,000	2	4
	>2,000	4	NA

Note 1: All the above are subject to Landlord/Real Estate approval if a dog owner is renting.

Note 2: Owners of special purpose dogs and recreation dogs may keep up to 9 dogs subject to Council approval. Special purpose dogs are show dogs, agility dogs and herding/trial dogs. This is approved where the owner is a member of an organisation with an approved code of practice. Foster carers may also keep up to 9 dogs with Council approval. This was not subject to this review.

(b) The property criteria for general keeping of cats:

Animal Type	Property Type/Size (m ²)	Allowable Number without Council Approval	Allowable Number with Council Approval
Cats	Units, Townhouses, Multi-Dwelling Premises including retirement/mature age villages	2	NA
	0 to 350	2	NA
	351 to 2,000	2	4
	Over 2,000	4	NA

Note 1: All the above are subject to Landlord/Real Estate approval if renting.

Note 2: Foster Carers and Cat Breeders may keep more cats with Council approval.

Council's current Register of Cost Recovery and Commercial Charges provides a fee for an application to keep an additional cat and/or dog that requires Council approval. The amendments to Council's *Subordinate Local Law No. 4.1 (Animal Management) 2002* requires alignment in the Register of Cost Recovery and Commercial Charges. The fee categories and amounts are proposed to be rationalised and aligned respectively. The fee to amend an existing approval for additional cats and dogs is also proposed to be reduced to \$0.00. the reason for this is that cats and dogs are already subject to annual registration. Other animals are not subject to an annual registration.

The new category descriptions are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 – Amended Animal Keeping Categories and Relevant Application/Amendment Fees

Change to Animal Keeping Fee Definition	Non-Pensioner	Pensioner
General Animal Keeping – Additional animal/s	\$150.00	\$77.50
General Animal Keeping – Amendment to Approval – cats and dogs	\$0.00	\$0.00
General Animal Keeping – Amendment to Approval – other animals	\$77.50	\$36.50

Cat and Dog Release Fees

A release fee is charged to an owner whenever their cat or dog is released from impound at the Animal Management Centre. When a cat or dog is released it can comprise a combination of fees. These include the actual impound release fee, sustenance, registration, microchipping, and desexing (with the owner's consent). The longer the animal is impounded, the higher the release cost becomes due to ongoing costs associated with keeping the animal. Council's daily sustenance fees are comparative to other local governments.

All dogs impounded at the Animal Management Centre (subject to no prevailing medical condition or being aggressive) are:

- Vaccinated
- Provided a flea and tick rinse (seasonal).

These services are provided without cost to the owner and uphold Council's strict disease management practices.

Cats and dogs that are registered, desexed and microchipped when impounded are released for free on the first impound in two years. Sustenance fees may apply where the animal stays longer than one night (excluding public holidays and weekends).

Owners sometimes find the release fee confusing and confronting. It is proposed to restructure the release fees to make them more transparent.

Council's "Animal Management – Unidentified Impounded Cats and Dogs Registration and Microchipping" Policy requires:

"The animal must be registered with Logan City Council or a Council within Australia and microchipped prior to release and prior to the owner/keeper taking possession of the animal. Logan City Council will update the microchip registry with the animal's ownership details at the time of implant."

Owners releasing their cat or dog are also provided the opportunity to desex it at the time of release. There are a number of health benefits associated with desexing, not just preventing unwanted litters. All desexing procedures are undertaken by Council's veterinary services contractor, unless an owner requests to utilise the services of their own veterinarian.

Owners of desexed pets receive significantly discounted annual registration fees in Logan City.

The opportunity for Council to streamline its cat and dog release fees, enhance transparency and community understanding. This includes the identification of each fee component.

Table 2 illustrates the proposed new fee structure to achieve these outcomes.

Table 2 – Proposed Cat and Dog Release Fees

Release of Seized and Impounded Cats and Dogs	Proposed
<i>The release fee is a single charge. Sustenance, microchip, registration and desexing fees may apply and are additional.</i>	
Registered, microchipped and desexed prior. Not impounded in last 2 years.	\$0.00 + Sustenance
Registered, microchipped and desexed prior. Previously impounded in the last year.	\$134.00 + Sustenance
Registered, not microchipped, not desexed prior. Released microchipped and not desexed.	\$134.00 + Sustenance + Microchip

Registered, microchipped, not desexed prior. Released not desexed.	\$134.00 + Sustainance
Registered, not microchipped, not desexed prior. Released microchipped and desexed.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Microchip + Desex*
Registered, microchipped, not desexed prior. Released desexed.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Desex*
Registered, not microchipped, desexed prior. Released microchipped.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Microchip
Unregistered, microchipped, desexed prior. Released registered.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Registration
Unregistered, not microchipped, desexed prior. Released microchipped and registered.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Microchip + Registration
Unregistered, microchipped, not desexed prior. Released registered and desexed.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Registration + Desex*
Unregistered, not microchipped, not desexed. Released registered, microchipped and desexed.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Registration + Microchip + Desex*
Unregistered, microchipped, not desexed. Released registered, not desexed.	\$154.00 + Sustainance + Registration
Unregistered, not microchipped, not desexed. Released registered, microchipped and not desexed.	\$154.00 + Sustainance + Registration + Microchip
Dog / Cat – Already registered with another Council and microchipped.	\$62.00 + Sustainance
Dog / Cat – Already registered with another Council. Not microchipped. Released microchipped.	\$62.00 + Sustainance + Microchip
Cat / dog – Not registered with another Council, is microchipped.	*\$134.00 + Sustainance
Cat / dog – Not registered with another Council. Not microchipped. Released microchipped.	*\$134.00 + Sustainance + Microchip
Microchip	\$20.00
*Note for Desex: Desexing fees for release of impounded and seized cats and dogs (with owner's consent)	

DOG	0-15kg	15-30kg	30-45kg	>45kg
Male	\$150.00	\$160.00	\$170.00	\$200.00
Female	\$170.00	\$185.00	\$210.00	\$230.00
CAT	All types	<i>These fees are unique to cat and dog releases only to assist in the reunification with owners and are not applicable to other Council promotions and initiatives. Prices may be subject to additional veterinary requirements which will be discussed with the owner prior to surgery following their consent.</i>		
Male	\$75.00			
Female	\$120.00			

CONCLUSION

Council's animal keeping fee categories have been reviewed to reflect the changes to property size categories as a result of recent local law amendments. The incorporation of new animal keeping criteria and respective fees are detailed at Table 1.

There is an opportunity to streamline cat and dog release fees to enhance transparency for customers and to promote responsible pet ownership. This includes defining a specific release category and associated fee relevant to the status of the cat or dog at the time of impounding and release. Council's animal release fees for cats and dogs provide an incentive for the animal to be desexed at the time of release. Owners of desexed pets pay a substantially discounted registration fee annually in Logan City. It is also important not to disadvantage dog owners who choose to keep their pet entire at the time of release. The release fee and existing registration fees incentivise the cost of desexing at the time of release. A comprehensive release fee schedule is proposed at Table 2 of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IT IS RECOMMENDED:-

That the City Standards & Animal Care Manager be requested to amend Council's Register of Cost Recovery Fees for 2019/2020, as follows:

- (a) Special Animal Keeping Approvals - delete the existing categories for "General Animal Keeping" and replace with those detailed in Table 1, as detailed in the report of the City Standards & Animal Care Manager dated 12 February 2020; and
- (b) Release of Seized and Impounded Cats and Dogs – delete the existing categories and replace with those detailed in Table 2, as detailed in the report of the City Standards & Animal Care Manager dated 12 February 2020.