PURPOSE

The *Dog Control Act 2000* (the Act) requires that all councils develop a policy relating to dog management in their municipal area.

COMMITMENT

The Central Coast Council is committed to delivering a safe, welcoming and well-managed community in line with its Strategic Plan commitments to create a Safe, Vibrant and Welcoming Community, promote Social Equity, foster Environmental Focus, empower our community, and support Growth that is sustainable.

This Policy also reflects the priorities of the Term Plan – particularly Pillar 1, Our Organisation, which seeks to reduce wasted effort, strengthen culture and improve accountability, alongside Pillars that promote Quality of Life, Growth, Transport & Connectivity and Our Environment.

In implementing this Policy, the Council will act consistently and transparently, guided by the values of Customer Focus and Safety. We will place our community at the centre of our decisions, ensuring that services are delivered efficiently, respectfully and with a focus on wellbeing. By doing so, Council will align its work with the expectations of our community, building trust and fostering a municipality that is connected, inclusive and resilient.

SCOPE

This policy applies to any owner or person who has control of a dog in Central Coast, either as a resident or as a visitor. It is general in nature (e.g. it does not address specific requirements relating to greyhounds, restricted breeds or dangerous dogs) and does not address every aspect of the Act or other applicable laws (e.g. *Animal Welfare Act 1993*). All dog owners should familiarise themselves with their responsibilities under the Act, which can be found online at www.legislation.tas.gov.au.

DEFINITIONS

Act means the *Dog Control Act 2000*, which governs dog ownership, control, and management within the state.

Authorised Person means a Council officer who has been appointed under the Act to enforce dog management provisions, investigate complaints, and take appropriate action in accordance with the legislation.

At Large means a dog that is found in a public place or outside its registered premises without being under effective control. This includes roaming dogs or those unattended in a public area.

Declared Area means an area formally designated by Council under the Act as either a Dog

Exercise Area, Dog Training Area, Restricted Area, or Prohibited Area.

Dog Exercise Area means a location declared under Section 20 of the Act where dogs are permitted to be off-lead, provided they remain under effective control at all times.

Dog Free Beach means a beach where dogs (excluding guide dogs or hearing dogs accompanying their owner) are not allowed at any time. These areas are declared to protect wildlife or to provide dog-free recreation spaces.

Dog Training Area means a location declared under Section 21 of the Act where dogs may be exercised off-lead for the purpose of training, while remaining under effective control.

Effective Control means that a dog is either on a lead not more than two metres long and held by hand or, in an off-lead area, is in close proximity, in sight of the person responsible, and immediately responsive to voice commands.

Kennel Licence means written permission granted by Council that allows a person to keep more than two dogs (non-working) or more than four working dogs on a property.

Prohibited Area means any area where dogs are not permitted under any circumstances, including but not limited to school grounds, shops, shopping centres, public pools, and playgrounds, as prescribed under the Act.

Restricted Area means an area where dogs are permitted only if they are on a lead. This includes most public spaces such as footpaths, parks, roads, and the non-playing surfaces of sportsgrounds.

Registration means the process of officially identifying and recording a dog with the Council, as required by the Act once the dog reaches six months of age. Registration must be renewed annually.

RSPCA means the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, an animal welfare organisation that Council must consult as part of its statutory responsibilities.

Working Dog means a dog that is used specifically for droving or tending livestock. Working dogs are subject to different provisions under the Act and are generally exempt from certain registration limits.

POLICY STATEMENT

1 CODE OF RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

Dog ownership has proven benefits to the community through better health, well-being, companionship and social interaction. Conversely, irresponsible dog ownership can have a negative impact on the health and well-being of those affected and can result in on-going poor inter-community relationships. The Council's Code of Responsible Ownership is provided to assist dog owners to enjoy the benefits of dog ownership whilst reducing any negative impacts on others.

Responsible dog ownership means:

a) Selecting a breed and temperament that meets the owner's personal needs and is

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suited to their budget, lifestyle, household composition, and where they live. People should be aware that certain breeds are identified as restricted breeds under the Act and may not be suitable in many circumstances. Greyhounds and dogs that have been declared dangerous, are also subject to additional requirements. "Restricted breeds" include:

- *dogo Argentino;*
- fila Brasileiro;
- Japanese tosa;
- American pit bull terrier or pit bull terrier;
- Perro de Presa Canario or Presa Canario;
- any other breed, kind or description of dog whose importation into Australia is prohibited by or under the *Customs Act 1901* of the Commonwealth.

b) Providing a dog with proper health care and attention, sufficient exercise, appropriate training, and adequate food, water and shelter.

c) Maintaining adequate knowledge about the proper care and management of a dog. The RSPCA, Tasmanian Canine Defence League, veterinary practitioners, and training and kennel organisations are good sources of information about how to keep a dog safe, happy and healthy.

d) Recognising that not all people like or feel comfortable with dogs, and that such people have a right not to feel threatened or inconvenienced by a dog.

e) Keeping a dog under effective control at all times. This generally means:

i. On a lead not more than (i.e. a maximum length of) 2 metres long, held by hand or (for a maximum of 30 minutes) tethered to a fixed object.

ii. In an area where not required to be on a lead, this means a dog must be in close proximity to the person who is responsible for it, in sight of that person and immediately responsive to that person's commands.

iii. When on private premises, securely confined to prevent the dog from leaving the property unattended (i.e. roaming).

iv. At any one time, only having two dogs on a lead on a footpath, or four dogs in a public place.

f) As per the *Road Rules 2019*, the rider of a bicycle must not lead an animal, including by tethering the animal to the bicycle.

g) Immediately cleaning-up any mess, including faeces, caused by a dog in a public place, carrying bags suited to this purpose, and disposing of them in a rubbish bin.

h) Making sure a dog does not create a nuisance to any person by persistent or loud barking or by behaving in a manner that causes inconvenience or interference to another person's peace, comfort or enjoyment of any place or premises, including by chasing any person, animal, car or bicycle.

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i) Making sure a dog is not allowed, encouraged or provoked to threaten, attack, harass, endanger or otherwise cause apprehension or distress to any person or to any agricultural, domestic or native animal when in a public place or to any person having business at the premises where the dog is being kept.

j) Making sure a dog is wearing a collar and a registration disc whenever in a public place.

2 AREAS WHERE DOGS CAN BE EXERCISED OFF-LEAD

Council has declared several Dog Exercise Areas (Dog Exercise Beaches) and Dog Training Areas under S. 20 and 21 of the Act respectively (see Appendix 1). Dogs must remain under effective control in these areas.

3 AREAS WHERE DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED

3.1 Dog Free Beaches

Dogs (other than guide dogs or hearing dogs accompanying their owner) are not allowed at any time on the "Dog Free Beaches" (see Appendix 1). Council has declared some of these as Prohibited Areas under S. 22 of the Act, to protect sensitive habitat for native wildlife, whereas others have been declared Restricted Areas under S. 23 of the Act to provide residents with a dog free recreational beach in the main centres of Penguin and Ulverstone.

3.2 The Playing Surface of all Sportsgrounds

Dogs (other than guide dogs or hearing dogs accompanying their owner) are not allowed at any time on the surface of any sportsground in the municipality including ovals, cricket pitches and tennis courts. Council has declared these Restricted Areas under S. 23 of the Act, to protect sports users.

3.3 Other Prohibited Public Areas

The Act lists the following additional places as Prohibited Public Areas where dogs must not be taken:

(a) any ground of a school, preschool, kindergarten, creche or other place for the reception of children without the permission of a person in charge of the place.

(b) any shopping centre (defined under the Act as a collection of shops in an enclosed area covered by a roof or forming a courtyard or square) or any shop.

(c) the grounds of a public swimming pool.

(d) any area within 10 metres of a children's playground.

4 AREAS WHERE DOGS CAN BE EXERCISED ON A LEAD

The remainder of the municipality have been declared a Restricted Area under S. 23 of the Act, with dogs able to be exercised on-lead. This includes any public place or public street not listed in the sections above as defined by the *Police Offences Act 1935,* that is managed or

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controlled by Council (e.g. parks, pathways, roads, road reserves and the non-playing surface of sportsgrounds).

5 FEES AND REGISTRATION

The fee structure and all fees payable under the Act are set annually by the Council as part of its budget process.

All dogs over the age of six months must be micro-chipped and registered with the Council and registration must be renewed annually. The Council must be informed of any change in ownership or address of the dog, and of the loss or the death of a dog. A pro-rata refund will be provided upon the death of a dog.

A maximum of two dogs (other than working dogs) over the age of six months or four working dogs over the age of six months, can be kept at any premises without obtaining a kennel license.

6 AFTER-HOURS SERVICE PROVISION

The Council will provide an emergency after-hours service to collect dogs at large provided the dog has been secured. The Council will provide an emergency after-hours service to collect dogs responsible for a dog attack, provided the dog's whereabouts are known.

Enquiries regarding sick and/or injured dogs should be directed to the RSPCA or you should take the animal to a veterinarian.

7 COMPLAINTS

The Council recognises the right for individuals to own and keep dogs; however, it also balances the rights with the community's right to seek assistance in dealing with nuisances created by dogs.

Any valid complaint will be investigated as quickly as is practical and in accordance with Council's Customer Service Charter.

Council staff will not deal with complaints of a frivolous or vexatious nature, and as such Council will not deal with anonymous complaints.

It is essential that Council has access to the complainant's name, address and contact details as well as the details of the complaint. This information is strictly confidential, unless the matter goes to Court, and is not passed on to any other member of the community without the permission of the complainant. The complainant must be prepared to lodge a formal complaint (if required) and/or appear as a witness in any court proceedings.

Details on how to make a complaint can be found online on the Council's website at www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au or by contacting Customer Services staff.

7.1 Barking/Howling Complaints

Barking dogs can be a difficult issue to rectify as every situation is different. The Act defines a barking nuisance as a noise "that consistently occurs or continues to such an extent that it

unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of any person in any premises or public place".

Residents are encouraged to attempt to resolve these matters by directly dealing with the owner before making contact with Council. If this is not possible or the problem persists then the complainant should contact Council.

If the issue persists then Council will require the complainant to complete a formal complaint form before an authorised person investigates.

Council may issue a caution, an Abatement Notice and/or fines. This type of complaint can take time to resolve as what works for one situation may not work for another.

When making a barking/howling complaint, a noise log covering a 14-day period must be provided and a fee paid. Upon confirmation that the complaint has been substantiated, Councill will reimburse the fee.

7.2 Dog at Large/Chasing Vehicles

The owner of any dog that leaves its registered premises without being under effective control, is contravening the Act. This is referred to under the Act as being 'at large'. This is an offence, and the dog can be impounded and infringement notices may be issued.

If a dog is found 'at large' (i.e. roaming or unattended), or is causing a nuisance by chasing cars, bicycles, scooters, people or animals, a member of the public can contact Council at any time and report it to Council's Customer Service or After-Hours personnel.

7.3 Dog Attack on Person or Animal

If a dog attacks a person or animal whether it causes injury or not, it is an offence under the Act. Witnesses to the attack are encouraged to call Council's Customer Services or After-Hours personnel, giving them a description of the dog(s) involved, the complaint and their contact details as soon as possible.

In these circumstances an investigation will be commenced. Those involved will be required to file a Statutory Declaration including such information as veterinary reports, medical reports, photos and any other relevant information.

8 SIGNS

The Act requires that the Council erects and maintain signs to identify any exercise area, training area, prohibited area or restricted area.

STANDARDS

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the following:

External

- *Dog Control Act 2000*
- *Central Coast Council Animal Control By-Law*

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Internal

- Document Management Process
- Personal Information Protection Policy
- CEO Title Policy
- Delegations Register

REVIEW

The Act requires that any changes to Declared Areas or any other aspect of this policy are reviewed at least every five years, and prescribes the consultation requirements for that review. As well as inviting and considering public submissions, changes to the policy require consultation with an "any appropriate body or organisation" and for this purpose, Council will consult the RSPCA and the Canine Defence League of Tasmania.

ADMINISTRATION

Responsibility	The Chief Executive Officer is ultimately accountable for the implementation of this Policy. The Director Strategic Growth is responsible for implementing and administering and monitoring the Policy through their Department, and for reviewing the Policy.
Strategic Plan link	*Our Place – Our Future: The Strategic Plan 2024-2034* *Theme 1 – Safe, Vibrant & Welcoming Community* 1.1 Improve ease of access to social and health services.
Term Plan Link	*Our Place – Our Future: First Steps – Term Plan 2023-2026* *Pillar 1 – Our Organisation* 1.1 Organisational Culture 1.1.1 Reducing organisational entropy – that is wasted effort
Superseded or rescinded policies	This Policy supersedes: • Dog Management Policy 2020
Publication	Members of the public can view this Policy at the Council's Administration Centre or on Council's website (www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au)
Terminology	*Chief Executive Officer / General Manager* At the Central Coast Council, the title Chief Executive Officer is a term of reference for the General Manager as appointed by Council pursuant to section 61 of the *Local Government Act 1993;* and carries the same meaning for the purposes of the *Local Government Act 1993* and all other legislation administered by or concerning the Council.

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APPENDIX 1 - MAPS

The maps provided in this appendix have been prepared as a guide to assist with understanding the designated dog management areas. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the maps should be used as a reference only. Actual boundaries are determined by Council's formal resolutions and may vary slightly due to on-ground conditions.

Except where otherwise declared as prohibited in this Policy (refer to page 4), dogs must be on-leash in all other areas of the municipality.

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AREA MAP - LEITH & TURNERS BEACH



Dog Free Area (dogs not permitted at any time)

Off-Leash Area (dogs permitted off-leash for exercise and training)

On-Leash Area (dogs permitted on-leash only)

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AREA MAP - ULVERSTONE



Dog Free Area (dogs not permitted at any time)

Off-Leash Area (dogs permitted off-leash for exercise and training)

On-Leash Area (dogs permitted on-leash only)

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AREA MAP - WEST ULVERSTONE



Dog Free Area (dogs not permitted at any time)

Off-Leash Area (dogs permitted off-leash for exercise and training)

On-Leash Area (dogs permitted on-leash only)

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AREA MAP - PENGUIN



Dog Free Area (dogs not permitted at any time)

Off-Leash Area (dogs permitted off-leash for exercise and training)

On-Leash Area (dogs permitted on-leash only)

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AREA MAP - PRESERVATION BAY & SULPHUR CREEK



Dog Free Area (dogs not permitted at any time)
Off-Leash Area (dogs permitted off-leash for exercise and training)
On-Leash Area (dogs permitted on-leash only)

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DOG FREE AREA **DECLARED AS PROHIBITED AREAS UNDER S. 22 OF THE ACT**



Sulphur Creek Beach

From west of Creamery Road. Sand area only.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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Midway Beach - Sulphur Creek

East of Creamery Road.

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Preservation Bay Beach - Preservation Bay

Sand area only.

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Johnsons Beach - Penguin

Sand area only. Please note, dogs are prohibited from playgrounds at all times.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area (other than within the playground)

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Penguin Beach - Penguin

From East of Johnson Beach Road to Lions Park.

DOG EXERCISE AREA DECLARED AS AN OFF-LEASH AREA UNDER S. 20 OF THE ACT



Watcombe Beach - Penguin

From east of Lions Park.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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DOG FREE AREA **DECLARED AS A PROHIBITED AREA UNDER S. 22 OF THE ACT**



Western end of West Ulverstone Beach - West Ulverstone

From Three Sisters Goat Island Nature Reserve to West of Westland Drive.

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West Ulverstone Beach - West Ulverstone

From east of Westland Drive to Queen Street.

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Picnic Point Beach - West Ulverstone

From east of Picnic Point to the Leven River.

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DOG EXERCISE AREA DECLARED AS AN OFF-LEASH AREA UNDER S. 20 OF THE ACT



Western end of Buttons Beach - Ulverstone

From the Leven River to west of Victoria Street.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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Buttons Beach - Ulverstone

From east of Victoria Street, to western bank of Buttons Creek.

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DOG EXERCISE AREA **DECLARED AS AN OFF-LEASH AREA UNDER S. 20 OF THE ACT**



Eastern end of Buttons Beach - Ulverstone

From east of Button Creek to the turning circle. Sand area only.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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Fishponds - Ulverstone

From east of the turning circle.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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DOG EXERCISE AREA DECLARED AS AN OFF-LEASH AREA UNDER S. 20 OF THE ACT



Western end of Turners Beach - Turners Beach

From east of Claytons Rivulet to west of Turners Beach Road.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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DOG ON-LEASH AREA DECLARED AS A RESTRICTED AREA UNDER S. 23 OF THE ACT



Turners Beach - Turners Beach

From east of Turners Beach Road to the Forth River.

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DOG EXERCISE AREA **DECLARED AS AN OFF-LEASH AREA UNDER S. 20 OF THE ACT**



Leith Beach - Leith

From East of the Forth River.
Dogs permitted **on-leash only** on the grassed area.

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