

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY TO HELP SHAPE MID MURRAY'S NEW ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Mid Murray residents will soon have the chance to have their say on how to improve the management of dogs and cats in the district.

The Mid Murray Council is establishing a Community Reference Group to provide valuable input into the upcoming review of its Animal Management Plan.

Council's Development and Environmental Services Director Jake McVicar said the group would provide an important opportunity for the inclusion of community feedback early in the review process.

"Dogs and cats are valued pets and provide many benefits to their owners," Mr McVicar says.

"However, we know that there are varying views and different options when it comes to aspects of dog and cat management and we want to gather our community's input so we can make sure our Animal Management Plan responds to the needs and wishes of our residents.

"Some South Australian councils for example have introduced new controls for cats, such as curfews or registration, or even limits on the number of animals per property. Others have looked at new ways to manage dogs such as providing off-leash areas for exercise and socialisation.

"Our aim is to connect with our community to work out what options, or other community models, are going to suit us best."

The Community Reference Group will bring together a panel of members including Council representatives, an animal welfare or veterinary specialist and up to three local residents. The group will identify and discuss dog and cat management issues and potential strategies, with this input critical to assisting staff in developing a draft Animal Management Plan.

Once a draft Animal Management Plan has been created it will be released for wider public consultation.

Nominations for the Community Reference Group position close at noon this Friday, November 29. For details visit [www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au/community/public-notice](http://www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au/community/public-notice).

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