

Animal Management Plan

2023





The smoking ceremony is an ancient custom among Indigenous Australians and is believed to ward off bad spirits.

Acknowledgement of Country

Logan City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the City of Logan.

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Foreword

Pets play an important role in our homes and our community by providing companionship, opportunities for socialisation and exercise, as well as creating community connections. It is well known that pets help to uphold physical and mental wellbeing whilst offering unconditional love to their owners.

Our city promotes responsible pet ownership, guided by state and local laws along with proactive programs that encourage registration, desexing, microchipping and effective control.

Owning a pet is a long-term commitment and a privilege. However, it is one that comes with great responsibility. The role Council plays in keeping our city safe and liveable is an important one. Our team deliver a range of services to ensure animal owners keep their pets in a responsible way which upholds the safety and liveability of neighbourhoods.

Council seeks to do so through delivering a range of services in the field, around the clock. Council has effective local laws which support responsible animal keeping in the community. In 2020, there was a review of the animal keeping local laws, which focused on cats and dogs, to support the changing needs of our growing city. With a growing population and increasing pet uptake, the City of Logan needs a dedicated strategic roadmap to ensure it remains ahead of any emerging trends or challenges.

Sadly, local government across Queensland sees too many examples of pets, particularly dogs, causing harm or injury to others. In recent times, Council has advocated for tougher state legislation to support better public safety outcomes. That is why the main focus of this plan centres on ensuring safety for all our residents and increased expectations on responsible pet keeping.

I am proud to say that our team are passionate, dedicated and committed to achieving the best outcomes for our community.

I am pleased to present this new Animal Management Plan 2023 for the City of Logan. The Plan is consistent with Council's strategic direction and has a renewed focus on ensuring a safe and healthy environment for our community.

Mayor Darren Power
Logan City Council



Introduction

Pet owners are responsible for the health, wellbeing and care of their pets. With more than 69% of Australian households including a family pet, more people than ever are experiencing the benefits of pet ownership. The benefits are recognised and celebrated across the nation. Recent changes to tenancy rules, access to public transport and other services mean that more people are able to experience and enjoy pet ownership in a range of ways in the community.

Recognising that pet ownership is a serious obligation, legislation and strategies such as this one support pet owners to uphold their obligations towards their fellow community members. Pet ownership undertaken in a responsible way leads to improved community safety, amenity, and animal welfare outcomes.

The City of Logan's Animal Management Plan 2023 (the Plan) has been developed to ensure that domestic pets, predominately cats and dogs, living in our city are managed in a safe and responsible manner. The Plan also promotes the responsible keeping of a range of other domestic animals (poultry, bees, guinea pigs, horses, alpacas, pigs, sheep, etc) to ensure they are kept in a way that results in minimal impact to the broader community and the environment.

It follows a major piece of work undertaken in 2019 to review and modernise Council's animal keeping local laws focusing on cats and dogs, to ensure fair and safe outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of the Plan is to drive positive long-term behaviour change in our community through education, awareness and enforcement to uphold city safety and liveability. We will achieve this by focusing our business and service deliverables on the following major themes:

1. increased public safety
2. a future-ready business
3. increased liveability
4. advocacy, initiatives and partnerships that support responsible pet ownership.

Strategic fit

The Plan links with Logan City Council's Corporate Plan to uphold a safe and liveable city. The Corporate Plan shapes the vision and priorities for our city, with a focus on making a difference in people's lives through the quality of the services Council provides to the community.

The Plan aligns itself to the Corporate Plan by delivering a safe, healthy and accessible community.

Like the Corporate Plan, the Animal Management Plan is centred on 'community', to promote a safe and liveable city for our residents, visitors and pets.



The City of Logan

Logan City Council is one of the largest and fastest growing cities in Australia spanning 957 square kilometres, encompassing 70 suburbs across 12 divisions. We are proud to be home to a diverse multicultural population with residents from 217 different nationalities and ethnicities.

Pet ownership is woven into the fabric of the city. With 900 parks and some of the most accessible bushland reserves in South-East Queensland, over 40 of our parks have been certified as dog off-leash areas.

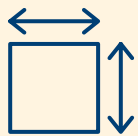
With over 350,000 residents and 62,000 known cats and dogs in our city and growing, it is understandable that Council takes responsible pet ownership and community safety very seriously.

The Plan will guide the City of Logan's animal management services and will be reviewed again in three years' time. It will continue to evolve to align with any changes made to legislation including the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*, *Local Law No. 4 (Animal Management) 2002* and *Subordinate Local Law No. 4.1 (Animal Management) 2002*.

The delivery of this Plan is timely, as it coincides with a targeted review of the Act through a state government taskforce. Following advocacy efforts within the industry, Logan City Council was invited to form a key member of the taskforce, which aims to strengthen legislation as it relates to the management of dogs in the community.



The Plan, developed through consultation with key stakeholders and the community, considers ongoing and emerging animal management trends and drives standards of animal ownership which uphold community safety and liveability.



959

square kilometres



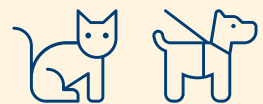
70

suburbs



350,000⁺

residents



62,000

known cats and dogs



12

divisions



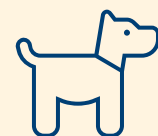
234

different nationalities
and ethnicities



900⁺

parks



40

certified off-leash
dog areas

The future of our city

Our city is growing fast. This means our residential population and the number of pets living in our city is increasing significantly and will continue to do so. The potential implications of urban development and population growth in the landscape of increased pet ownership include:

- › increased risk to public health and safety
- › greater demand for animal management services and infrastructure
- › greater accountability in response to community expectations including zero-tolerance to repeated non-compliance, and animal keeping practices which impact public safety and animal welfare.

Based on historical and current data, the estimated, projected animal ownership figures for 2036 are:

City of Logan	2008	2016	2022	2036
Population	271,000	314,500	350,000	500,000
Households	97,000	110,000	126,000	214,200
Cats and dogs	47,740	53,940	62,000	105,400

In order to meet the increasing demands associated with population growth, we need to ensure we are:

- › periodically reviewing allocation of funding and resources to ensure it matches areas of public need
- › exploring the use of technological tools to support service delivery
- › delivering programs and initiatives which drive education and awareness



Pet ownership trends

Nationally, there has been a substantial boom in pet ownership, with an estimated 30.4 million pets across Australia. Now, around 69% of households now own a pet, up from 61% only two years ago. This has been led by a surge in dog ownership, with over one million dogs being welcomed into Australian households since 2019.

Australians highly value the companionship provided by pets, and the recent pandemic gave opportunity for some to experience the benefits of pets for the first time. This recent period appears to have strengthened the relationship between people and their pets as they spend more time together. The mental and physical health benefits associated with pet ownership continue to be well-known.

As pet ownership continues to grow across Australia, so it also does here in the City of Logan.



What is animal management?

Council performs a range of important statutory functions relating to the management and responsible keeping of animals living in our city. In Queensland, the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* (the Act) provides a legislative basis for the consistent management of cats and dogs in the community, by local government.

Its purpose is to:

- › provide for the identification of cats and dogs
- › provide for the registration of dogs
- › provide for the effective management of regulated (dangerous and menacing) dogs
- › promote the responsible ownership of cats and dogs
- › promote the responsible breeding of dogs.

Council has a statutory responsibility for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Act. In addition to the Act, Council's also has local laws in place. The objectives of *Local Law No. 4 (Animal Management) 2002* (the local law) are:

- › to protect the community against risk of injury and damage
- › to ensure that animals do not create a nuisance or a risk to human health or safety
- › to prevent environmental harm and environmental nuisance resulting from the keeping of animals and to protect the amenity of the local environment
- › to ensure that animals are kept and used in a way that is consistent with the rights, expectations and enjoyment of the local community.

In order to meet our legislative obligations, Council performs a range of services related to the management of domestic animals in our city, responding to almost 10,000 requests for animal management services annually. Council funds its animal management services through annual cat and dog registration fees, annual licence fees and animal keeping approval renewals.

The top 4 most commonly received requests for service by the community are:

- › Roaming animals and animals not under effective control in a public place
- › Noise nuisance from barking dogs
- › Inadequate containment of animals
- › Dog attacks or aggressive dog behaviour

What does responsible pet ownership look like?

Being a responsible pet owner means your cat or dog is registered by the time it is 12 weeks of age.

Keep a collar on your cat or dog with your registration tag and a contact number.

Ensuring your cat or dog is microchipped and keeping your contact details up to date will ensure they can be returned to you should they become lost.

Desexing your pet will prevent unwanted litters, roaming and other health benefits that you can learn about from your vet.

Ensure your pet is appropriately vaccinated and is safe from ticks, worms and fleas.

Take responsibility for your pets' behaviour at home and when you're out and about. This means keeping a check on things like barking, or other anti-social behaviour.

Only take your dog off-leash when in a designated off-leash area. Whether your dog is on or off-leash, your dog is your responsibility and needs to be kept under effective control.

Effective control means your dog is restrained on a leash, being held by a person physically able to control the dog.

Use dog off-leash areas appropriately. Not all dogs are suitable or safe to be off leash.

Check your pets' enclosure or fencing regularly to ensure it is suitable to safely contain your pet.

The Animal Management Centre

In addition to its statutory animal management responsibilities, Council also operates a dedicated Animal Management Centre (the Centre) at 213 Queens Road, Kingston. It is currently undergoing a major \$18 million redevelopment. With its customer-facing service centre, veterinary clinic, modern animal keeping facilities and office space, this state-of-the-art facility is integral to delivering our important community response and regulatory services.

Through the Centre, Council delivers the following services:

- › providing temporary housing and care to impounded animals
- › receiving surrendered animals
- › readying unclaimed animals for rehoming
- › sales, adoption and rehoming service
- › delivery of community programs such as Senior Pets for Senior People
- › school and kindergarten educational programs.

Thousands of animals pass through Council's Animal Management Centre every year. Currently the Centre has approximately 90 kennels to hold impounded dogs and can house up to 60 impounded cats along with poultry, livestock and pocket pets such as guinea pigs.

With the Animal Management Centre redevelopment due for completion in 2024, this will enhance the successful services our facility currently provides.

This Plan does not cover the operation of the Animal Management Centre as it focusses on Council's statutory animal management services delivered in the community. A future strategy will be developed following completion of the new Centre in 2024.



The importance of responsible pet ownership

Pets are becoming increasingly more important to us. Consultation with our community shows that pets are more than just pets, they're members of our families. We recognise that the vast majority of pet owners do the right thing.

Responsible animal keeping is important. Without it, the community faces:

- › Safety risks such as dog attacks or threatening encounters
- › Negative impacts on city amenity and liveability such as uncontained animals escaping into the community
- › Risks to road safety from unrestrained livestock
- › Nuisances such as barking dogs, crowing roosters and animal hygiene concerns
- › Negative impacts on wildlife.

In turn, these irresponsible animal keeping practices impact our community on a broader scale. Specifically, without responsible pet ownership, the following risks apply:

Social

- › Public safety impacts including injury (or worst case, death) to people and animals
- › Reduction in amenity that impacts city reputation
- › Fear created by residents not wanting to use public spaces or Council provided facilities such as dog off leash areas
- › Increased anti-social behaviours by animals and even their owners
- › Injury and public health risks
- › Prevent or hinder the access to properties by service providers
- › Increased frustrations for residents caused by animal nuisances
- › Increased complaints

Environmental

- › Injury or death to wildlife
- › Contamination of soil and water sources due to inadequately contained livestock
- › Animal diseases such as Parvovirus or Feline Influenza
- › Harboursing parasites, vermin, snakes and mosquitoes.

Financial

- › Unpaid pet registration results in loss of revenue
- › Diversion of our resources to attend to reactive complaints rather than conducting proactive activities
- › Impacts on timely service request responses
- › Inability to deliver community initiatives

While most pet owners do keep their animals responsibly, the Plan intends to develop a road map to address pet owners who do not. With a key focus on public safety, the Plan sets out clear expectations when it comes to issues such as animal enclosures, dog off-leash areas, anti-social and nuisance animal behaviours and the overall responsible keeping of pets. The need for greater consequences for those who choose to keep animals in a way which threatens the safety or liveability of the community, must be considered.





Safety around animals

All dogs have the ability to cause fear or significantly harm people and other animals. Dogs which are not kept responsibly can pose a significant and ongoing threat to the safety of the community, particularly the young, elderly and vulnerable. Council plays a critical public safety role around the clock in helping to prevent people and animals being killed or injured by dangerous dogs.

A dog attack can be defined as an incident where a dog rushes at, attacks, bites, harasses or chases any person or animal whether or not any injury is caused.

Council's experience suggests dog attacks largely arise from failures by dog owners. There are a number of precautions dog owners can take to mitigate the possibility of aggressive behaviour occurring, including:

- › Ensuring dogs are appropriately trained and socialised from a young age
- › Supervising children when in the company of dogs at all times
- › Using a leash when walking a dog in public
- › Supervising and controlling off leash activity at all times
- › Providing adequate fencing to ensure the dog cannot escape.

Whilst the overall number of dog attack incidents in Logan have decreased by 12% over the previous three years, given our increasing rate of dog ownership, dog attacks remain a serious issue for the city.

How to report a dog attack

It is critical that Council is provided information regarding a dog that has attacked.

- › Report the incident as soon as possible to council's customer service centre
- › Describe the dog and any registration or owner details. Obtain witness details if possible.
- › Provide sufficient details to allow for a thorough investigation
- › Advise if the animal is still at large so council officers can try to impound it to ensure it doesn't cause further risk to others
- › Seek medical/veterinary attention. Ask the doctor or vet for a statement of attendance to record the visit
- › Take photographs of any injuries
- › Write a statement of events as soon as possible after the incident

Council has the ability to seize an animal that is considered a threat to public safety.

Community sentiment and consultation

The Plan has been developed in consultation with our community. A community engagement platform (Have Your Say) was shared on Council's website encouraging feedback and comment from our residents.

During this review, a significant investment in community engagement was undertaken to be certain that the Plan truly reflected the sentiment shared by the community. Our community said they wanted:



Greater visibility
of Animal Management
Officers in the community



Stronger compliance
and enforcement action
for animal related
breaches or offences to
uphold public safety



The ability to
**report animal
management
issues** through the
use of technology



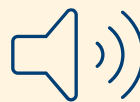
More focus on **cat
management**



Expanded **education
programs** to
support responsible
pet ownership



Access to a greater
range of **benefits for
pet owners** who do
the right thing



**Noise
monitoring
technology**
to detect animal
noise nuisance such
as barking dogs



Better management
of **dog off-leash
areas** to promote
safety and accessibility

We want our residents to feel proud of where they live, be responsible and accountable for their pets, and have the tools to report animal management concerns to council. As part of our engagement, we sought to find out whether our Plan correlated to the feedback we received during the 2019–2020 animal keeping local law review.

Over a quarter of people who provided feedback during our 2022 community consultation also had their say during our 2019 community consultation. Unsurprisingly, the feedback received was very similar, however there now seems to be a greater focus on creating more efficiencies for residents, including quicker response times and better reporting options.

What was also clear from the recent consultation, was a sense that our residents were becoming less tolerant to pet owners who they perceived, continue to do the wrong thing. Topics such as dog attacks, dogs being walked off leash and backyard breeding were also raised.

In addition to our residents, feedback was also sought from a range of internal and external stakeholders including:

- > Logan City Council's Mayor and Councillors
- > Internal Council departments
- > The Combined Vets of Logan City
- > Industry experts and associations
- > Animal welfare organisations, including RSPCA Qld.

Case study 1

Dog barking

A resident reported concerns about a barking dog at a neighbouring property. Despite advice and education being provided to the dog owner, there was no reduction in the barking. Not believing there was a problem, the dog owner did not take the complaint seriously.

Officers attended the home of the customer to install a specialised noise recording device. The device was in place for 5 days during which time, it recorded a number of occasions where the duration of barking far exceeded the allowable timeframe.

The noise recording results were shared with the dog owner. With this indisputable data at hand, they immediately implemented measures to manage the barking. The ability to share the conclusive data resulted in a timely resolution of the complaint.

Case study 2

Dog attack

Whilst playing at a playground in a park, a person was bitten by a dog that was being walked off leash by its owner. After refusing to provide identifying details, the subject dog owner left the scene. Through the use of the City Safe camera network and a vehicle registration search, the subject dog owner was identified. An investigation into the incident resulted in a fine for the dog being off leash. However the most significant outcome was, the dog was regulated as a dangerous dog.

Dangerous dogs are subject to a range of conditions, including higher registration fees, strict keeping requirements and annual inspections by Council officers.

Case study 3

Dog straying and entering private property

A resident reported an unidentified dog regularly entering their backyard late at night. Trail cameras were installed by investigating officers and the dog was seen jumping the fence to enter, but it could not be confirmed where the offending dog was coming from.

Through targeted community engagement, installation of trail cameras and a dog trap, investigators captured the offending dog. The dog was impounded at the Animal Management Centre pending the construction of a compliant enclosure. The subject dog owner was charged release fees, including registration and microchipping fees and was issued a fine for the original offence.



Where are we going?

In order to meet the needs of our growing community, our focus for the Plan is improving responsible pet ownership and personal responsibility. Through this, our goal is to drive positive long-term behaviour change in our community through education, awareness and enforcement to uphold city safety and liveability.

We will achieve this by committing to focussing on the following major themes:

1. Increased public safety

Take swift and effective enforcement measures through a range of actions in response to community expectation, and to uphold a philosophy of zero-tolerance to repeated or severe animal management failures, particularly those which impact community safety.

2. A future-ready business

Explore innovative technologies to enable an improved customer experience and better customer reporting capabilities.

3. Increased liveability

Deliver educational campaigns, initiatives and programs to ensure pet ownership obligations are known and understood. Our goal is to develop programs which drive community behavioural change and incentivise self-compliance with animal keeping legislation, which drive a more liveable city.

4. Advocacy, initiatives and partnerships that support responsible pet ownership

Building strategic partnerships with government, industry and the community to tackle irresponsible pet ownership practices.

How are we going to get there?

Council will undertake the following specific actions to support the vision and objectives of this Plan:

1. Increased public safety

	Action	Timeframe
1.1	Conduct a review of complaint triaging practices to ensure public safety concerns are allocated the greatest resources quickly	Year 1
1.2	Develop a database of identified and repeat offenders	Year 1
1.3	Deliver public awareness message about a dog owners' obligation to ensure safe access to a property and adequate containment of pets.	Year 1
1.4	Together with the Workplace Health and Safety Program, implement a dog safety initiative across the organisation to ensure the safety of Council officers in the field	Year 1
1.5	Implement more effective enforcement outcomes for noncompliance and repeat offenders by way of prosecution at the Magistrates Court	Year 2
1.6	Review the existing Animal Management program structure to enable greater capacity, capability and futureproof the business	Year 2
1.7	Through planned proactive patrols, target streets, parks and reserves areas with higher recorded incidents of anti-social animal or owner behaviour, to ensure compliance with animal keeping requirements in public	Ongoing
1.8	Through targeted proactive patrols, issue immediate on-the-spot fines to pet owners who have received a previous warning and continue to breach animal keeping requirements (for example, where dogs are walked off leash)	Ongoing
1.9	Through representation on the state government Animal Management Taskforce relating to dangerous dogs, actively advocate for legislative reform and implement any changes of the <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i>	Ongoing
1.10	Share Council's list of regulated dog locations across the City with authorised external stakeholders including QPS, utility providers and Australia Post to ensure shared knowledge of high-risk properties for field staff	Annual

2. A future-ready business

	Action	Timeframe
2.1	Deploy noise monitoring technology to support investigation of animal noise complaints and to cease reliance on residents completing barking logs	Year 1
2.2	Deploy leading camera technology at the Animal Management Centre to ensure the safety and security of persons and animals	Year 1
2.3	Complete a review of afterhours and weekend operations to ensure maximum responsiveness and customer experience	Year 1
2.4	Expand covert trail camera network to detect wandering dogs and livestock	Year 1
2.5	Use QR Codes in broader applications such as in written correspondence and on Council infrastructure for immediate access to information and reporting options	Year 1
2.6	Deploy body-worn cameras to drive improved evidence gathering and officer safety	Year 1
2.7	Explore the use of new technology options such as battery-powered bikes to increase capacity to patrol off-leash areas / signature parks	Year 1
2.8	Investigate and implement improved ways for customers to report animal related complaints, particularly those which impact public safety	Year 2
2.9	Explore the installation of covert camera technology in dog off-leash parks to investigate complaints of anti-social or unsafe pet behaviour	Year 2
2.10	Develop shareable educational videos on online platforms e.g., how to stop a dog digging under your fence	Year 2
2.11	Apply skins/wraps on vehicles as a way to showcase responsible pet ownership messaging and a stronger visual presence across the city	Year 2
2.12	Investigate current animal registration processes to streamline payment and renewal options	Year 3

3. Increased liveability

	Action	Timeframe
3.1	Review dog park signage to ensure clear, consistent messaging to highlight pet owner accountability and improved community safety outcomes	Year 1
3.2	Introduce requirements for animal keeping licence applications (such as foster carers or greyhound keeping) to include written support from neighbours	Year 1
3.3	Develop an information package on responsible pet ownership which could be shared with new pet owners in the city and available via a range of new platforms (for example, local veterinary clinics, business and libraries)	Year 2
3.4	Develop compliance strategies to have better oversight of animal rescue and foster carer groups operating in Logan	Year 2

	Action	Timeframe
3.5	Develop a Cat Management Plan to address the number of stray, abandoned and unwanted cats in Logan	Year 2
3.6	Explore opportunities to further support assistance and service animals in our community	Year 3
3.7	Deliver a rolling marketing campaign to drive responsible pet ownership, including in multiple languages to ensure reach to the culturally and linguistically diverse community	Ongoing
3.8	Attend key festivals and public events to drive the message of responsible pet ownership, providing tips and tricks to residents	Ongoing

4. Advocacy, initiatives and partnerships that support responsible pet ownership

	Action	Timeframe
4.1	Explore opportunities for Council to promote the reporting of, and intolerance to, animal welfare concerns across the city	Year 1
4.2	Develop relationships with retirement communities for educational opportunities for new residents regarding animal keeping requirements	Year 1
4.3	Provide real estate agencies and housing providers educational materials on animal keeping requirements (e.g. small lot sizes, allowable numbers and environmental covenant protected areas)	Year 1
4.4	Undertake a review of Council's website to ensure adequate information is available to residents for the promotion of responsible pet ownership education material	Year 1
4.5	Develop an enforcement campaign to tackle unlawful dog breeding activities ("backyard" breeders)	Year 3
4.6	Provide information on the benefits and obligations of pet registration and microchipping in multiple languages	Year 3
4.7	Deliver the Be Pet Smart Program to a minimum of 4,500 students at Logan schools and education facilities each year to promote dog safety and responsible pet ownership in children	Ongoing
4.8	Build strategic internal partnerships with field operational branches within Council to work collectively to support new initiatives and infrastructure	Ongoing
4.9	Distribute SMS alerts to owners of known pets for firework displays, emergency events and pet specific reminders such as annual registration	Ongoing

Implementation

To ensure we are achieving success with our significant list of action items, we will annually report on our deliverables, highlighting our commitment to our community.

Action	Timeframe
Develop a Report Card to annually report on progress against the Animal Management Plans' comprehensive action list, highlighting our commitment to our community.	By the end of the calendar year, each year
Review the Animal Management Plan annually, and if appropriate, amend the action items of the Plan (to include any legislative reform outcomes)	December each year
Undertake a major review of the Animal Management Plan after 3 years	May 2026

Conclusion

The successful delivery of Animal Management services is an issue that impacts the whole community. This Plan paves the way towards cementing behaviour change across our community of pet owners to increase accountability and an understanding of their animal keeping obligations to help shape a safer, liveable city.

Acknowledgements

Logan City Council acknowledge and thank all the organisations and individuals who assisted in the development of this Plan. A number of stakeholders, both internal and external, along with a range of residents (both pet owners and non-pet owners) have graciously provided their thoughts, ideas and feedback to ensure the Plan meets the needs of our growing city.

How to report animal management related matters

Council relies on residents to report animal management matters so we can investigate and take appropriate action. To report an animal management concern at any time, residents should:

- 📞 Call council on 07 3412 3412
- 👉 use Council's online 'Report it' tool or
- ✉ email council@logan.qld.gov.au

Emergency calls received after hours will be redirected to our on-call response team for immediate response.

Any information people report will be treated confidentially in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*.



Logan City Council

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