



City of **HOBART**

## **BARKING DOG COMPLAINTS**

Council have a process to follow with such complaints and this is outlined below.

### **Stage 1**

Upon receipt of a written complaint regarding a barking dog, a letter is sent to the dog owner notifying them a complaint has been received. This letter also provides them with information as to when the barking is occurring, measures that can be put in place to remedy the situation, the legal responsibilities of the dog owner as they relate to the Dog Control Act 2000 and the penalties involved for non-compliance.

The dog owner is then given a reasonable period of time to take steps to reduce the barking (eg. 2 weeks).

Therefore, it is important for the person making the complaint to provide Council with specific information in regards to the days, times and length of the time the barking is occurring.

### **Stage 2**

If after this period of time you feel there has been no improvement, please inform Council in writing with further details of the barking so an Animal Management Officer can arrange to visit the property and speak with the dog owner to discuss the issue.

The officer in the course of his/her duties may discuss various methods to overcome the problem, such as ideas on keeping the dog occupied when there is no-one at home, blocking the view of what is causing the barking, suggesting dog behavioural training, the use of anti barking collars and/or advice on making contact with a veterinarian or an animal behaviour trainer for assistance.

It is important to keep Council informed on whether or not there is any improvement, as if a period of time passes without the complainant remaining in contact with Council it will be assumed the matter has been resolved and the complaint file may be closed.

### **Stage 3**

If there has still been no improvement following the above stages a formal complaint, pursuant to Section 47 of the Dog Control Act 2000, is required to be lodged by the complainant. Please contact the Animal Management Unit who will provide you with a formal complaint form.

This form needs to be lodged with the formal complaint fee of **\$75** as outlined in Section 47(b) of the Dog Control Act 2000. Once the formal complaint form and fee have been received the Council will formally investigate the situation.

It can be difficult at times to determine how long the process may take to prove whether a barking nuisance exists. If Council can prove that a nuisance does exist, then the complaint fee is refunded to the complainant and penalties will apply to the dog owner.

Your privacy will remain at all times unless Council are unable to determine whether nuisance barking exists and you wish to pursue the matter further, which will result in you being requested to attend a Court hearing to provide evidence.