

## MEDIA RELEASE

September 12<sup>th</sup> 2019

### Community Concerns Addressed - Barwon Coast Propose New Dog Controls

City of Greater Geelong Council will soon release a revised dog control map for community feedback for beaches at Ocean Grove, Barwon Heads and 13<sup>th</sup> Beach. Barwon Coast will be supporting this consultation process.

Barwon Coast have proposed a review of the current dog regulations to the City after significant community feedback that the current regulations, in place since 1996, are not effective and are not providing a safe and equitable beach experience for all.

As Gary McPike, CEO of Barwon Coast explained “We’ve had an increased incidence of uncontrolled dogs off-leash that are compromising the health of wildlife or the safety of other beach users and an associated increase in community complaints.”

“As a first step in determining what the community required for equitable beach access, we contracted Federation University in 2018 to conduct a study into a number of coastal management issues, including dogs on beaches. Over 1700 community members contributed to this report” said Mr McPike.

“The findings from this independent report, plus management learnings over the past 10 years informed the new proposed regulations”.

“This review is about putting in place common sense rules that balance public safety and environmental impacts with the need to continue allowing locals or visitors to enjoy the beach with their dogs.”

“We believe the proposed changes will result in many benefits including, for the first time, answering a significant community call for a dog-free area on Ocean Grove beach. Rules and signage will be simplified across the coast and where horses currently access 13<sup>th</sup> Beach, this area will be designated a horse zone with dogs allowed on lead to create a safe beach experience”.

“No final decisions have been made about where dogs can be walked and what areas are potentially set aside as exclusion zones. We’ll be supporting the City’s consultation and engaging with our community through this, to ensure we get this right”.

“We’re not looking to stop the local community walking their dogs on the beach. I know this is a wonderful pastime and a great part of living by the coast. The proposed regulations still allow for the majority of the Barwon Coast beach areas for dog activities”.

-ENDS-





**Images:**

[https://barwoncoast-my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/kate\\_barwoncoast\\_com\\_au/EWyf456JxLZEkO0NuDBr38gBBph\\_d3anB1B8XmLSJqYa7w?e=7yGWap](https://barwoncoast-my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/kate_barwoncoast_com_au/EWyf456JxLZEkO0NuDBr38gBBph_d3anB1B8XmLSJqYa7w?e=7yGWap)

[https://barwoncoast-my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/kate\\_barwoncoast\\_com\\_au/ET7Jh3ThqttFnm2kEBxNXUQB1PVUsDiBVuxzqUyKPvzICw?e=LqVGc7](https://barwoncoast-my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/kate_barwoncoast_com_au/ET7Jh3ThqttFnm2kEBxNXUQB1PVUsDiBVuxzqUyKPvzICw?e=LqVGc7)

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**Notes for Editors:**

Barwon Coast Committee of Management Inc. (Barwon Coast) is appointed by the Victorian State Government to manage 15km of coastal Crown land through the Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads townships, along the Bass Strait coast of the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria, Australia. Our vision is that the natural environment of our coastline will flourish whilst meeting the needs of our engaged communities. A major local employer in Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove, we have more than 50 skilled employees from a diverse range of backgrounds working across the coastal reserve.

[www.barwoncoast.com.au](http://www.barwoncoast.com.au)

