

Cat calls start debate

SUGGESTION OF A 24-HOUR ANIMAL CURFEW GAINS SUPPORT

Julia Rabar

READERS overwhelmingly support the proposed introduction of a cat curfew to protect wildlife in Monash, with some calling cats “killers”.

South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter manager Michele Phillips called for a 24-hour cat curfew in the *Waverley Leader* last week.

But Monash Mayor Paul Klisaris said the council’s Domestic Animal Management plan would not be reviewed until 2017.

Ms Phillips’ plea came as Manningham residents voted in favour of a cat cur-

few in an community group’s online poll.

Ms Phillips said she had received about 100 mostly supportive phone calls after the article ran and she was determined to get the council to review its position.

“I’m going to keep on their backs, I don’t want to wait until 2017 because too many animals will be killed in the meantime,” Ms Phillips said.

She started a petition on change.org calling for a 24-hour cat curfew in Monash and Glen Eira.

The petition had 480 supporters by yesterday.

More than 45 Monash resi-

dents weighed in to the debate online and via email last week, expressing overwhelming support in favour of a curfew.

“It is obvious that desexing is not enough as I have seen many examples first hand of the terrible damage pet cats can do to vulnerable native wildlife,” said Janet of Mt Waverley.

Brett, also of Mt Waverley, said his nine-year-old daughter “constantly lives with the fear” of cats killing her free-range chickens.

An Oakleigh East family said cats not only hunted native wildlife but were also an “unacceptable nuisance”,

scratching cars and urinating on their property.

Danny from Burwood said he supported a curfew because no other animal was allowed to “roam and kill”.

Several readers, including Cynthia of Mulgrave, said dog owners would be fined if they let their pets roam the neighbourhood and the same rules should apply to cat owners.

On the other side of the debate, Carol said she opposed the idea of keeping her cat indoors because she could not afford to keep the house cool and her pets could “die of heat”.

Three other readers sug-



Waverley Leader, April 14, 2015.

gested foxes and dogs shared responsibility for killing wildlife, while a fourth accused “cat haters out to rob the old and lonely and kids out of a best pet friend”.

CONVERSATIONS, PAGE 21