

Community Safety Strategy

Version: 1.4

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Responsible Department: Community Safety

1. Purpose

The Community Safety Strategy provides context to Council's commitment to a Safe Community. The document identifies the key safety areas in which Council will work and the way in which the organisation will engage in strengthening capacity and resilience for a Safe Community.

2. Definitions

Council	means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989
Councillors	means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council
Council officer	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
Community Safety	means the freedom from actual crime and the fear of crime, and includes unintentional and intentional injury. This definition is considered as a subset of community health and wellbeing. Community health & wellbeing is integral to a liveable community, and connected to broader social, economic, built and natural environmental factors, as identified and supported in the Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan.

3. Scope

Community Safety influences all aspects of daily life including where a person will live, socialise, learn work and interact within Casey. It provides a foundation for our long-term choices and decision-making processes at the individual, family, community and Government levels. Safety, along with shelter and foods, is considered the basic pre- condition for health and wellbeing. In this way, the importance of community safety means that this Strategy applies to and impacts all of those living, visiting or working in the City of Casey.

What does a Safe Community look like for Casey?

A Safe Community is envisaged to be a place where all residents and visitors can work, travel, live and play in a safe and secure environment, free of risk to health and wellbeing.

Community Safety can be created in a variety of settings including homes, schools, workplaces, businesses, religious settings, entertainment, recreational areas and other social settings in the community. In order to create maximum opportunity for a Safe Community in these various settings, the approach taken in this strategy is built around a set of key safety directions that articulate Council's commitment to existing and emerging local plans, programs and interventions.

What is Council's role for a Safe Community?

The role of Council is:

- Leadership & Facilitation of Partnerships
- Service Delivery
- Education (through strengthening community capacity and resilience to prevent, prepare and responds to safety issues)
- Advocacy (on behalf of the Casey community to all levels of Government and key local agencies for allocation of resources)
- Regulatory control and environment
- Urban Planning/Environmental Design, Emergency Response & Recovery Planning
Council will do this across the built, social, economic and natural environments.

Who is responsible for a Safe Community?

The Community Safety Strategy identifies Council's commitment to a *Safe Community*. A *Safe Community* is a municipal-wide issue for all sections of the community. There is an expectation that each individual person working, visiting or living in the City of Casey will take shared responsibility for their personal safety. Where this is not possible, key agencies across the municipality will endeavour to support their safety through action plans that identify high risk populations and environments. These populations are defined as those which may be vulnerable due to a particular defining characteristic leading to an increased risk of injury or victimisation. Priority populations may include children, young people, older people, people with a disability, low income earners, Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and Indigenous communities.

These groups will be identified and negotiated through community consultation and evidence based problem identification. Overall, the strategy sets the direction for Council to operate and engage collectively with the wider community in achieving a *Safe Community*.

Who are they key agencies in Casey involved in a Safer Casey?

The Local Safety Committee, known as the 'Safer Casey Partnership', is a local, strategic 'whole of Government' approach to facilitating interagency information exchange and collaborative efforts to achieving a *Safe Community*. Agencies involved may include:

- City of Casey
- Victoria Police
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Southern Health – Cardinia-Casey Community Health Service
- VicRoads
- Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD)
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Justice & Regulation
- Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre
- Women's Health Information in the South East (WHISE)
- Monash Health
- Hampton Park Progress Association
- Casey Neighbourhood Watch
- Other community representatives as required.

This partnership forms the cornerstone for an integrated *Safe Community* and is supported by a number of key focus area committees such as the Police & Council Liaison Committee (Crime and Anti-social Behaviour), Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (Emergency Management), Casey Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (Fire Management), Casey Alcohol Accord (Injury Prevention) and the Casey Traffic Management Group (Road Safety). The individual agencies that are members of the local safety committee and other related networks are working to improve the wellbeing of all people in Casey by reducing the impact of intentional and unintentional injury and harm to individuals, families, schools, workplaces, businesses and the wider community.

4. Context

The City of Casey annually demonstrates the following qualities:

- An infrastructure based on partnership and collaborations, governed by a cross sectional group that is responsible for safety promotion in their community.
- Long term sustainable programs covering all genders, ages, environments, and situations.
- Programs that target high risk groups, environments and programs that promote safety for vulnerable groups.
- Programs that document the frequency and causes of injuries.
- Evaluation measures to assess their programs, processes and the effects of change.
- And ongoing participation in national and international Safe Communities networks.

The City of Casey is committed to a *Safe Community* as reflected in the Council Plan and associated strategic statements.

Review of the Previous Strategy: Integrated, Strategic and Consistent

There were three recommendations are made from the previous Community Safety strategy:

- Increased alignment to the wide community safety functions of Council through the amalgamation of the road and community safety strategies.
- A strategic approach for Council in the way it operates, engages with the community, and mitigates safety related concerns.
- Key safety directions identified in the next Strategy that have their own budget allocations, profile and identity, while having individual implementation plans that are consistent in language and monitoring methods.

What does the data tell us about safety in Casey?

Additional to the municipal documentation review, a data review of police statistics, hospital admissions and perceptions of safety surveys identified the following:

- Police statistics indicate assaults, with particular reference to family violence are among the highest in the State; other crime categories of statistical significance included theft from motor vehicle and drug related offences; Young people were over represented in a number of crime categories (a trend similar to that across the State).
- Where identified, hospital admission statistics indicated unintentional injury was mainly caused by road trauma and home related falls.
- Alcohol is one of the most common causes of ambulance call outs, with new trends also indicating pharmaceutical drug abuse.

What our community is telling us about safety in Casey?

Casey Next 2016 was major community consultation project undertaken in to inform the 2017-21 Council Plan and future directions. Safety emerged as a key theme for residents. "A safe place is a place where everyone feels safe spending time in and moving around the streets, in local neighbourhoods, on public transport and in the home. "

What our community say:

- A safe place is a place with less crime, robberies, home invasions, drug free, no gangs, reduced violence, graffiti, and dangerous 'hoon' drivers.
- Safety is particularly important for families. Parents want to undertake daily tasks safely with their children. Young people want to be able to travel on public transport and walk to school without fear.
- Neighborhoods are places that everyone can play in and move around safely day and night.
- Increased facilities for teenagers and support for vulnerable people.
- Poor public transport increases the perception of being unsafe, particularly for young people.
- Perceptions of Local Safety (POLS) surveys conducted on behalf of City of Casey indicate family violence, dangerous driving, alcohol and drug use, and general anti-social behaviour as issues of concern for Casey residents.

This data analysis provides initial direction and opportunity for investigation by the specific network groups when developing individual implementation plans.

Emerging issues and trends

Since the development of the last strategy, the City of Casey has adopted several key policies and strategies which relate and inform community safety. Briefly, these include:

- Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2018. Which aims to increase awareness and promote community wide actions to address the underlying causes and effects of violence against women.
- Child Safe Policy 2017 which aims to position Casey as a leading child safe organisation through the adoption of the 7 Victorian child safe standards.
- Casey Local Law 2018 which identifies the community safety implications of mobile technology in the form of drones.

5. Strategy

Review of the Council Plan and associated strategies identified six key safety directions in which Council has a commitment to a Safe Community:

- Amenity Protection
- Crime & Anti-social behaviour
- Disease Prevention
- Fire & Emergency Management
- Injury Prevention
- Road Safety

Each strategy, policy, plan and local law examined capture a variety of consultations and is considered to be reflective of local community needs. The Community Safety Strategy takes these various consultations and provides an evidence-based set of directions to which Council is working towards a Safe Community. This was further reinforced in internal and agency based consultation. The six key safety directions provide the context to which Council will engage with the community and wider key agencies in achieving a *Safe Community*.

1.1 Strategic Directions

Key Safety Direction 1 - Amenity Protection

Council is committed to the safety, health and wellbeing of the community by protecting neighbourhood amenity through:

- **Education-** Improved awareness of the importance of amenity through targeted education programs and activities in partnership with key stakeholders.
- **Regulatory Control and Enforcement-** Inspect properties in response to customer requests relating to environmental and building control, domestic animal management, and nuisances such as noise, odour, insects, litter and hoarding. Enforce and prosecute where offences are detected on behalf of Council and/or the community.

Key Safety Direction 2- Crime & Anti-social behaviour

Council is committed to working with key stakeholders to identify and respond to key crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour issues through:

- **Education & Service Delivery-** Strengthening community capacity to prevent, prepare and respond to local crime and anti-social behaviour issues through information provision, awareness campaigns and program delivery.
- **Environmental Design & Management-** Design and maintain the physical environment to minimise crime or fear of crime. Deliver high quality public realm spaces and influence private development to improve and enhance safety.
- **Advocacy, Leadership & Facilitation of Partnerships -** Bringing key stakeholders together and advocating with and on behalf of the community to reduce identified crime and anti-social behaviour issues, while advocating for resources towards sustainable pathways for change.

Key Safety Direction 3 - Disease Prevention

Council is committed to minimising the risk of preventable disease through:

- **Education-** Strengthening community capacity to prevent, prepare and respond to local disease and health issues through information provision and awareness campaigns.
- **Regulatory Control and Enforcement-** Register and inspect (proactively and reactively) all relevant premises including food, beauty therapy, hairdressing, tattooing, body piercing, accommodation facilities, vermin and chemical control. Enforce compliance and prosecute where offences are detected.
- **Service Delivery-** Waste management, syringe disposal, vermin and chemical control. Notification of communicable diseases to State authorities. Provide both infant and secondary school immunisation in accordance with the National Immunisation Program at venues across the municipality.

Key Safety Direction 4 – Fire & Emergency Management

Council is committed to minimising the bushfire and other emergency risks within the municipality through:

- **Regulatory Control and local Enforcement-** Inspect properties to minimise the risk of fire. Enforce compliance where offences are detected.
- **Emergency Response & Recovery Planning-** Ensure appropriate Council resources are available for use in emergencies and are supported by operational and financial systems. Planning extends to supporting the community's recovery from emergencies.

Key Safety Direction 5 - Injury Prevention

Council is committed to working with key stakeholders to identify and reduce injury through:

- **Education & Service Delivery** - Strengthening of community capacity to prevent, prepare and respond to local safety and injury issues through information provision and awareness campaigns.
- **Environmental Design & Management**- Design and maintain the physical environment to minimise potential injury. Deliver high quality public realm spaces and influence private development to improve and enhance safety.
- **Advocacy, Leadership & Facilitation of Partnerships**- Bringing key stakeholders together and advocating on behalf of the community to reduce hospital presentations and admissions to hospital, while advocating for resources towards sustainable pathways for change.

Key Safety Direction 6 - Road Safety

Council is committed to providing a safe road environment through:

- **Education**- Improved road user behaviour through targeted education programs and activities in partnership and collaboration with key stakeholders.
- **Environmental Design & Management**- Improved road conditions through design, construction and management of local roads, and liaison/ advocacy to the State Government regarding the wider transport network.
- **Regulatory Control and Enforcement**- Improved traffic flow and road user behaviour through enforcement of legislation and liaison with all other law enforcement agencies.

1.2 Implementation, Monitoring & Review Strategy Framework- Integrated Approach

Under this framework it is acknowledged that Community Safety is impacted according to the social, economic, built and natural environments. Using the 'Environments for Health' framework, adopted by our Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan, will ensure that the Strategy is consistent and complimentary to this Plan. It will also support an integrated approach across relevant Council Departments and with external inter-sectoral partners. Council will influence these six key directions through the development of an implementation framework that considers the social, economic, built and natural environments.

How will we achieve a Safe Community? – Taking the steps to safety

Action plans will be developed by existing and newly formed network groups for each of the key safety areas. By involving existing network groups in the development of action plans ensures that existing resources are used and whole-of-community expertise is fully utilised. Council in conjunction with the key networks will determine what safety looks like under each of the six key directions. The three key principles that will guide the development of each of the Action Plans will be:

- **Problem identification:** community need and background to the issue identified with clear evidence of the need established.
- **Intervention identification:** Causes of the problem explored, priority populations identified, key partners consulted, and effective and sustainable interventions considered.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluation measures to assess the intervention and the effectiveness of change.

Council will provide assistance to the relevant networks groups in the development of the actions plans for each key direction.

Where to from here?

The development of action plans, in consultation between the Council and existing network groups, will provide relevant and up to date responses to community safety concerns. In this way the six key safety directions will have consistent language, methodology in evaluation and monitoring, and still have their individual profile, identity and budget. These action plans will be monitored annually by Council, in consultation with the relevant network groups.

6. Administrative Updates

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

7. Review

The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by 30 November 2022.

8. Related Documents

- City of Casey Council Plan 2017-2021
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018
- Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2018
- Child Safety Policy 2017
- CCTV Operating Policy and Procedures 2016
- Casey Parking Strategy 2017
- Casey Local Law 2017
- Inclusive Casey Framework 2018
- Aboriginal Engagement Framework 2018
- Casey Local Drug Action Plan 2018
- “Casey Next” engagement findings 2016
- Casey Road Safety Action Plan 2015-2018