Draft Safer Communities Policy

Lifestyle Capital of Victoria

1. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council's commitment to safer communities, and to provide Council with the framework for its role and the way in which it defines and approaches safer communities within the municipality in order to strengthen community safety and crime prevention outcomes.

The intent of this policy is that Council is applying a whole-of–council model to safer communities, with evidence-based primary prevention strategies and measures integrated into Council activities across all departments to support collaborative and coordinated approaches that strengthen community safety and crime prevention outcomes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Council's Councillors, CEO, employees, agency staff and volunteers, and any other persons undertaking planning and delivery of services on behalf of Council. This policy outlines roles and responsibilities of Council officers in supporting safer communities, and should be used to inform all stages of planning, design, implementation and evaluation of Council's work.

3. Definitions

Community safety	A situation in which people, individually and collectively, are sufficiently free from a range of real and perceived risks centring on crime and related misbehaviour, and can lead a normal cultural, social and economic life.[1]
CPTED	Acronym for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, used in urban design.
Crime prevention	Strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes.[2]
Fair	Being treated in a way that is free from bias, dishonesty or injustice.
Inclusive	The outcome when a diversity of people feel, and are valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, are able to contribute and feel a sense of belonging.

Intersectionality	Considers the different attributes of a person's identity and how these may overlap to compound discrimination and marginalisation.
Primary prevention	Preventing an issue before it occurs.
Safer communities	A broad term encompassing community safety and crime prevention, used to describe safe, fair and inclusive environments where everyone has the right to go about their daily activities without fear, or risk of harm or injury, enable people to feel valued and treated in a culturally respectful manner, and have meaningful opportunities to fully and freely participate in community life.
Whole-of-community	Recognises that everyone who lives, works and visits the municipality has a role and responsibility in contributing towards safer communities.

4. Authorisation

This policy is managed by the Safer Communities Department, and is approved by Frankston City's Mayor and Council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

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Cr Nathan Conroy   Phil Cantillon

Mayor, Frankston City   CEO, Frankston City Council

in accordance with Frankston City Council resolution at its Ordinary Council meeting of xxxx.

5. Policy

5.1 Statement of commitment

Frankston City Council is committed to working in partnership to create a safe, fair and inclusive municipality where people feel safe, well connected and empowered to participate in community life. Council will do this by working towards the following safer community long-term outcomes:

- Community strength and connection;
- Healthy and safe behaviours;
- Well planned and liveable communities; and
- Collaboration, innovation and empowerment.

This policy defines safer communities as safe, fair and inclusive environments where everyone has the right to go about their daily activities without fear, or risk of harm or injury. Safer communities not only enable people to be safe, but to also feel safe, whether at home, at work or when moving around streets and public places. Safer communities also enable people to feel valued and treated

in a culturally respectful manner, and have meaningful opportunities to fully and freely participate in community life and decisions that impact them.

Council believes that fair and inclusive communities are essential for safer communities. People must feel safe, respected and free from any form of discrimination to be able to fully and freely participate in social, cultural and civic life within a community, irrespective of their age, abilities, aboriginality, genders, sexuality, cultures, socio-economic status, religion or faith.

Council will acknowledge that not all people within the municipality may experience the same levels or perceptions of safety, and that each person's experiences and perceptions of safety will be influenced by their range of experiences, expectations, characteristics of their identity and background. Council is committed to taking fair and inclusive strategies and measures to understand and address the unique needs and experiences of individuals and communities.

In measuring safer communities, Council will not just measure the level of crime within an area, but will also measure the level of risk of harm or injury, levels of wellbeing, resilience, community strength, perceptions of public spaces and access to safe and secure housing. Council will also aspire to measure safer communities through an intersectional lens.

5.2 Policy principles

The principles for this policy are designed to guide and support Council in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of strategies and measures that contribute to safer communities. The principles reflect Council's values and are informed by evidence-based crime prevention frameworks and concepts of social justice, diversity and inclusion.

1. Aboriginal truth-telling and cultural safety	We will recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right understanding and knowledge of local community needs, priorities and aspirations to deliver culturally appropriate solutions. We will strive to create and maintain environments that are safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and where all people are treated in a culturally respectful manner.
2. Gender equity and intersectionality	We will respect and value people without discrimination, regardless of their gender. We will use inclusive language and terms to promote gender equality and inclusion. We will apply an intersectional gender lens to recognise and understand multiple and overlapping forms of discrimination and disadvantage.
3. Diversity and inclusion	We will be inclusive, culturally aware and responsive to the needs of individuals in creating safer communities. We will recognise that an individual's identity includes their gender, age, disability, culture, religion or faith, sexuality and lived experiences.
4. Primary prevention focused	We will work address the underlying cause of crime and harm to stop them before they occur through primary prevention strategies that build community strength and resilience.

5. Partnerships and collaboration	We will partner and collaborate with the community and a diverse range of stakeholders to understand the needs and aspirations of our community. We will work together taking a whole-of-community approach and collectively working towards common goals for the greatest impact.
6. Evidence informed and outcomes focused	We will use evidence to design, implement and improve our work. We will integrate best available research with peoples' lived experience to be responsive to evolving community needs. We will demonstrate measurable outcomes through evaluation and performance measurement.

5.2 Approach to safer communities

Council will be guided by crime prevention theory in its development of evidence-based primary prevention strategies that aim to strengthen those protective factors known to reduce risk of offending and unsafe behaviours. These strategies will also include environmental approaches aimed at modifying the physical environment to build strong connections between people and public spaces and reduce opportunities for crime. This approach will draw upon concepts of community development and environmental design, as follows:

Developmental: In planning, designing and delivering universal services, Council will acknowledge the role of early intervention and developmental strategies to reduce risk factors for offending and enhance protective factors that address the underlying social and economic causes of crime. This may include working in partnership to deliver and/or support initiatives that aim to improve access to education, employment, services to support health and wellbeing, connection to family and culture, recreation and cultural activities and community connections.

Environmental design: Council will acknowledge the impact of modifying the physical (and virtual) environments to reduce the opportunity for crime and risk associated with committing offences. This encompasses placemaking and urban design to strengthen or increase surveillance in public places. This approach draws upon CPTED principles and enhancing the physical environment to increase perceptions of safety, and can include clear sightlines, graffiti resistant materials or protective coatings, increased illumination and activation of spaces through events or activities that increase use.

Community development: Council will acknowledge the importance of engaging the community in developing local interventions for local issues. This approach focuses on community development and capacity building activities to strengthen community connectedness, inclusion and develop social cohesion which is associated with increased positive perceptions of safety. This approach aims to build community capacity to respond to future safety challenges, increase perceptions of safety and improve actual safety.

Council is committed to taking a strengths-based approach in building upon Frankston City's rich community and place-based assets in its aspiration for safer communities, and developing evidence-based primary prevention strategies based on principles of diversity and inclusion.

Council is committed to approaching safer communities through an intersectional gender lens, taking the time to understand the unique needs and experiences of different sub-population groups and identities in working towards safer communities.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Roles and responsibilities in safer communities

This policy acknowledges the strategic role of Council in building safer communities within the municipality through the implementation of its local government responsibilities, with a range of functions being delivered by Council actively contributing to safer community outcomes. These include roles and responsibilities include:

- Delivery of community services, infrastructure and assets, arts and cultural programs and events
- Leadership, partnerships and advocacy to facilitate collaborative action and advocacy for increased resourcing to meet local needs
- Planner of services, land use, public and open spaces, community infrastructure, transport and climate change adaptation
- Community strengthening through community development, community grants, support for community and sporting groups and community engagement
- Place management, maintenance and activation
- Parking and traffic management
- Local laws and compliance with state government regulations
- Emergency planning and management
- Employer

This strategic role builds upon Council's statutory obligations and responsibilities under various state laws relating to public health and safety, including: regulatory enforcement of food safety laws, smoking laws and building codes; pest control; infection disease control; emergency management planning; school crossing supervisors; CCTV; public toilets; street lighting; litter bins; and municipal public health and wellbeing planning.

In recognition that many of these responsibilities and functions of Council are performed in partnership with other levels of government, Victoria Police and other emergency services, community health, emergency relief agencies, community organisations and the community itself; this policy acknowledges that Council will operate within a whole-of-community context, with everyone that lives, works and visits the municipality having a role and responsibility in contributing to safer communities.

In this strategic role, this policy recognises that the achievement of safer community outcomes is a shared responsibility across all of Council. Council is committed to taking coordinated approaches in delivering our policies, programs and services and broadening its understanding of community need to strengthen safer community outcomes and improve perceptions of safety.

6.2 Roles and responsibilities in implementing this policy

Party/Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Executive Management Team	To ensure all Managers are aware of their responsibilities and comply with this policy.
Managers	To ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers and consultants are aware of their responsibilities and comply with this policy.
Coordinators	To support staff with the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of service, work and action plans and community engagement processes for relevant activities and projects.
Manager, Safer Communities	Coordination and oversight of strategic implementation of this policy.
All staff	To ensure all relevant activities and work complies with this policy.

7. Policy non-compliance

Non-compliance with this policy has the potential to adversely affect the reputation of Council and impact on the intended safer community outcomes for the municipality.

8. Related documents

Implementation of this policy is influenced by and or aligned with the following legislation, policies, strategies and plans:

- Arts and Culture Strategic Plan
- Child Safe Policy
- Climate Change Strategy
- Communications Policy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Community Grants Policy
- Community Safety Policy
- Community Local Law 2020
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Customer Experience Strategy
- FMAC Structure Plan
- Frankston Planning Scheme
- Hardship Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Housing Strategy
- Integrated Transport Strategy
- Gambling Policy
- Gender Equity Policy
- Leisure Strategy
- Open Space Policy and Strategy
- Play Strategy
- Public Art Strategy
- Stronger Families Policy

9. Implementation of the Policy

This policy will be implemented on authorisation, and through the development of a Safer Communities Strategy. The Strategy will contain strategic priorities supported by evidence-based primary prevention strategies and initiatives, which will be resourced through Council's strategies, action plans, management plans and service plans as relevant.

10. Document History

Date approved	Change Type	Version	Next Review Date

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[1] Law Insider Dictionary, www.lawinsider.com/dictionary

[2] 2012, *National Crime Prevention Framework*. Special Reports no. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.