

## RESPONSE TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL

DATE 21 APRIL 2021

### Public Question Time

---

#### Questions from Lina De Petro:

I would love to see council taking the following actions:

- 1 Improve lighting on Tennyson street around the park
- 2 Install CCTV at the park capturing the housing first property
- 3 Install CCTV out the front of 7eleven on Barkly (a crime hotspot & hang out)
- 4 Only fund social housing projects if they have a full time on-site manager, security, cameras and daily visits from social workers, drug & alcohol counsellors and mental health counsellors.
- 5 Declare a social amenity crisis
- 6 Apply for additional funding from State government for crime prevention through the "Building Safer Communities Grants Program"
- 7 Run a survey to measure perceptions of crime & safety in our community
- 8 Increase local laws officers staff numbers and number of daily patrols
- 9 Change the Local Law 53 (exemption to move on orders for homeless) to only apply to people on a list who are verified homeless and if they have refused housing previously then the exemption shall not apply to them anymore.
- 10 Ban repeat offenders from the city
- 11 Request that the police allocate more units on the street

Why can't Council Support Community Safety and Crime Prevention?

#### Responses

##### **1. *Improve lighting on Tennyson street around the park.***

The light levels from the streetlights around St Kilda Botanical Gardens (along Tennyson, Blessington, Dickens, and Herbert Streets) have been assessed as appropriate, given the prevailing mix of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclist, and others that use the streets at night.

Council has allocated \$2 million to upgrade streetlights, including the lights around St Kilda Botanical Gardens. The upgrade project will replace a suite of old lighting technologies with new Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs). The project should increase light levels in some locations, and attain consistency in light colour (i.e., LEDs with white light will replace the blend of orange and white lights in some parts of Tennyson Street). Detailed design for the lighting upgrade project will start in the coming weeks, with installation commencing in the latter half of 2021/22.

##### **2. *Install CCTV at the park capturing the housing first property.***

Public Place CCTV Systems are funded by State Government's Department of Justice and Community Safety with local governments being responsible for only the installation, maintenance, and evaluation of the systems. Decisions on the location of CCTV systems are based on high statistical evidence of crime and strong support from Victoria Police including a support letter from the Local Inspector. Further information about Public Place CCTV Systems within Port Phillip can be found at

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/council-services/health-and-safety/closed-circuit-television-cctv>

**3. Install CCTV out the front of 7eleven on Barkly (a crime hotspot & hang out)**

As per the answer to the previous question.

**4. Only fund social housing projects if they have a full-time on-site manager, security, cameras and daily visits from social workers, drug & alcohol counsellors, and mental health counsellors.**

Given the incidence of rough sleeping in the CoPP, Council's affordable housing program is now increasingly targeting community housing projects that cater for persons at greatest risk of homelessness who generally have more complex needs. In these cases, 'supported' housing is the preferred model e.g. the Common Ground model that houses persons who previously were rough sleeping and have higher needs, a 'concierge' person is in attendance at a front desk, internal CCTV cameras are installed, and each resident receives 'wrap around' support services. This will occur with the proposed Common Ground facility being planned for 28 Wellington St, St Kilda, to be delivered and managed by St Kilda Community Housing, with support services to be provided by a separate support agency.

**5. Declare a social amenity crisis.**

A petition was presented on 4 December 2019 calling on Council to declare a 'Social Amenity Crisis in St Kilda'. Council welcomed and appreciated the views of the residents who prepared the petition and their commitment to raising awareness of the challenges experienced by them. However, Council decided at the time not to declare a social amenity crisis.

Council continues to be committed to ensuring a high level of amenity across the City and this is reflected in the Council plan, and a range of programs and strategies.

**6. Apply for additional funding from State government for crime prevention through the "Building Safer Communities Grants Program".**

Council has made a submission to the Department of Justice's Building Safer Communities Grant Program for \$117,120 to acquire a mobile CCTV trailer in mid-March 2021.

**7. Run a survey to measure perceptions of crime & safety in our community.**

Council commenced the implementation of a survey tool measuring perceptions of safety and community connectedness in early 2020. Five of the nine neighbourhoods were completed prior to the initiative having to be suspended due to the pandemic. Council is currently considering how best to continue this work.

**8. Increase local laws officers staff numbers and number of daily patrols.**

Council's Local Law's Unit works alongside our Rapid Response Unit to carry out daily patrols of our hotspot areas seven days a week. If there is a particular area you would like patrolled, please contact ASSIST.

**9. Change the Local Law 53 (exemption to move on orders for homeless) to only apply to people on a list who are verified homeless and if they have refused housing previously then the exemption shall not apply to them anymore.**

In relation to amending a Local Law to remove a current exemption or to ban persons from the City, please note any amendment to the Local Law Council will need to comply with Part 5 of the Local Government Act 1989 (LGA 1989). The making of a Local Law must comply with the statutory requirements including the passing of a resolution by Council to advertise and consult with the community in relation to the Local Law. The

current Local Law is due to expire in late 2023 with a comprehensive review due to commence shortly.

**10 Ban repeat offenders from the City.**

As per the answer to the previous question.

**11 Request that Victoria Police allocate more units on the street.**

The Mayor, Bernadene Voss, wrote to Minister for Police and Emergency Services in Victoria, Lisa Neville in June 2020 indicating that many Port Phillip residents were concerned around crime and safety. The letter continued by requesting additional resources within the municipality.

**Why can't Council Support Community Safety and Crime Prevention?**

The City of Port Phillip, through the *Community Safety Plan: - Building a Safe Community Together 2019 - 2023*, sets out Council's commitment to making our community a safe and resilient place to live, work and visit.

The Victorian Government is responsible for law and order, public housing, health, and public transport, and leads on responses to these issues in the City. Government policy settings, economic and social conditions all influence the safety of our community. Many of these factors are beyond the control and responsibility of the City of Port Phillip.

In response, we work with our partners – including community members, government agencies, community service organisations and local traders – to all Play our Part - and identify agreed solutions and share resources to continually improve safety in our community. We recognise the valuable skills, experience, and knowledge our partners contribute to creating a safe and connected community for all within the City of Port Phillip.

*\*Please note: answers to any questions in Public Question Time which were answered at the meeting are included in the minutes of that meeting.*