

COUNCIL POLICY



Responsible Management of Alcohol and Other Drugs	Document No:	CPL295.7
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Responsible Officer: General Manager Community Services		
Authorising Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides the community and council with a clear communication of the City of Greater Geelong's strategic response to drugs, the harm minimisation principles which guide the response to drugs, and the key platforms of the role Council plays in managing drug use in our community and minimising the harm caused by misuse.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to both legal and illegal drugs across all areas of Council.

In developing its strategic response to drugs the City of Greater Geelong collaborates with whole of community including, neighbouring Councils, Victoria Police, the Department of Education & Training, the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services (state & federal), drug treatment services, community health and non government community organisations.

3. REFERENCES

- Geelong Health and Well Being Plan (2009 – 2013)
- Barwon Regional Drug Action Plan (2009 – 2013)
- Geelong Drug Action Plan (2009 – 2013)
- The Geelong Liquor Accord and Bellarine Liquor Accord
- Geelong Community Safety Strategy (2010 – 2013)
- G21 Health and Well Being Pillar
- Local Government alcohol and other Drugs Issues Forum (Municipal Association of Victoria)

4. DEFINITIONS

- Legal drugs – include alcohol, tobacco, caffeine and prescription medications
- Illegal drugs – include drugs identified under the Drugs, Poisons & Controlled Substances Act, 1981
- Drugs – in the context of this policy refers to illegal and legal drugs of all kind.

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Drugs – illegal and legal – require Council attention and response, both in terms of the harm they cause to drug users, and the impact that their use has on the wider Geelong community.

An appropriate and workable response to drugs requires a whole of government approach from all levels of government, as well as other organisations. But as the government closest to its people, local government must play a pivotal role.

Some important principles underpin and guide the work of Council in relation to drugs:

4.1. Harm minimisation

Reduce supply – reduce demand – reduce harm.

Harm minimisation accepts the reality that drugs exist, that they are being used, and that they threaten life.

It does not imply support for or even condoning of illegal drug use. Nor does it advocate decriminalisation of, or legalisation of drugs which are currently illegal.

The aim of harm minimisation is to prevent the potential harm, and to reduce the actual harm done to individuals and to the community by drugs.

4.2. Population Health

Strategies adopted must be considered, evidence based and informed in order to provide a whole of community, population health approach.

Drug use is not just a health issue: it is a social issue and a legal issue.

Council's strategies on drug response will be annually reviewed to ensure changing trends and needs are considered and the response to drugs continues to work for the whole community.

4.3. Consultation

To ensure that Council's response to drugs is and remains informed and accurate, Council is committed to ensuring that a range of views are sought and that appropriate consultative processes and mechanisms are in place. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum guides the consultation processes.

4.4. A Range of Responses

A range of responses is required as there is no typical drug user and no single response to their drug use. Real solutions to managing drug use in the community must be numerous, and must recognise social and cultural diversity.

Council will ensure that action on drugs is taken and promoted in the following key areas of influence;

4.4.1. Facilitation, Advocacy and Partnerships

Local Government is in close contact with residents, community organisations, businesses, and other stakeholders at the local level. This influence can be used to develop shared understandings and encourage whole of community responses to social sustainability.

Council will:

- Provide leadership in planning and strategy development in responding to the harm caused by drugs, as guided by the Barwon Regional Drug Action Plan 2009 -2013.
- Stimulate and progress community discussion of issues related to drugs, via Council representation on relevant committees and forums.
- Represent the suggestions and wishes of our community to federal and state governments and agencies, and to other organisations, in the planning and implementation of their responses to drug issues.
- Facilitate and promote collaboration in responding to drug issues, through bodies such as the City of Greater Geelong Drug Action Plan Committee and the Local Government Alcohol and Other Drugs Forum.
- Encourage the development of networks for the debate and discussion of, and response to drug issues.
- Strengthen co-ordination and sharing of information between municipalities on drug strategies such as the Local Government Alcohol and other Drugs Issues Forum
- Work with all levels of government and community agencies to ensure effective, co-ordinated responses to drug issues.

4.4.2. Urban Planning and Land Use

A key role of Council is to manage local places in a coordinated, planned way that reflects the community's shared vision for the future.

Council will:

- Ensure that the needs of our community are addressed.
- Maintain a commitment to addressing urban design issues, which impact on drug issues.
- Work with the local community, government departments and business in developing appropriate plans and strategies to respond to drug and alcohol issues within the municipality.

4.4.3. Community Service delivery, community development and civic engagement.

Council is committed to preserving the safety, health and wellbeing of residents and visitors, and ensuring active civic participation.

Council will:

- Ensure that the drug statement informs existing and future initiatives, which intersect with drug issues such as the Geelong Health and Wellbeing Plan, the Geelong Community Safety Strategy and G21 Health & Wellbeing Pillar.
- Continue to work with the Department of Health and key partnership groups in the development and continuous review of a Barwon Regional Drug Action Plan for Geelong.
- Through Environmental Health strategies, continue to play an active role in the safe disposal of needles and syringes.

- Through Council's Community Services Division continue to provide a range of activities which fosters skills through information, education, community action and supportive environments.

4.4.4. **Licensing and Regulation**

Council can utilise powers to set the local regulatory environment through assessment and approval processes and local laws.

Council will:

- Ensure the Drug statement informs existing and future processes for assessing and processing land use permits, liquor licenses and strategic planning documents.
- Continue to build capacity within council and with other enforcement bodies to further develop and improve regulatory systems.

4.4.5. **Workforce Development**

Council can lead the way in ensuring good occupational health and safety systems.

Council will:

- Build organisational capacity to incorporate harm minimisation principles in workplace systems.

5. **QUALITY RECORDS**

Quality Records shall be retained for at least the period shown below.

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period	Location
Drug Action Plan	Community Services	Permanent	Corporate Records

6. **ATTACHMENTS**

- Geelong Drug Action Plan (2009 – 2013)
- IAP2 participation spectrum