

PURPOSE

To provide a framework for the Council's role in crime prevention to enhance community safety for the residents of the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA).

POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Detail Council's role in crime prevention
2. Demonstrate Council's commitment to creating a safe community.

WOLLONGONG 2028 OBJECTIVES

The Policy contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 goal "We have a healthy community in a liveable city". It specifically contributes to the delivery of Objective 5.4 "Community safety and community perception of safety is improved".

POLICY

Responsibility for a safe community does not reside with any one particular agency or body, rather, it is the responsibility of the community. While Council is not solely responsible for crime prevention it is well placed to assist the community to address issues of concern. It is close to the community and can influence many of the factors which determine how people live. Therefore, Council has a central leadership role to play in bringing together, identifying and driving the development of specific strategies to improve and enhance community safety.

It is important to note that Council's role does not involve the provision of law enforcement. Some Council Officers may be involved in regulation compliance, but this is not to be confused with a law enforcement role. Law enforcement remains the responsibility of the NSW Police and other law enforcement agencies.

Council participates in the prevention of crime and the creation of a safe community through the following two key strategic approaches.

Situational Crime Prevention

Situational crime prevention makes crime more difficult to commit and less rewarding. It is used to enhance the physical environment and help improve how safe people feel. Situational crime prevention minimises opportunities for crime to occur and increases the risk to the offender of being caught. Examples of situational crime prevention include trimming trees to create clear sightlines, cleaning off graffiti, providing additional lighting, planting green screening to prevent graffiti, planting trees to enhance the look and feel of a place, organising activities to encourage higher visitation and incorporating structures such as public art to attract people to an area.

Wollongong City Council, with the assistance of the Community Safety Reference Group and other agencies, will give consideration to and potential selection of, hotspot areas where the installation of CCTV in identified positions across the LGA will enhance the safety and security of the community and assist the Police in their role to identify those who break the law.

The term Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is used when implementing principles to reduce opportunities for crime to occur. This can also be referred to as First Generation CPTED principles.

Social Strategies

Social strategies are designed to improve underlying social conditions such as income, access to housing, employment opportunities, education and training, leisure and recreational opportunities and available community services. Improving these underlying social conditions helps to prevent crime from occurring and thus contribute to enhanced community safety. It works through strengthening communities and social infrastructure. It involves all levels of government, families, individuals and community organisations in a partnership approach. It recognises that crime is a complex social problem that is closely related to unemployment, substance abuse and family breakdown. These approaches which look beyond the built environment are also referred to as Second Generation CPTED principles.

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES

1. Wollongong City Council will approach crime prevention and the development of safe communities through the operations of its Community Safety Reference Group. Recognising however that crime prevention and creating a safe community does not rest alone with the Community Safety Reference Group, but is a whole of Council responsibility.
2. The Community Safety Officer will use a community development approach to address issues of crime prevention.
3. The Community Safety Reference Group will work in partnership with the NSW Police, local, state and federal government agencies, non-government agencies and the community to:
 - Develop and implement short and long-term strategies that broadly encompass the key strategic approaches of situational and social crime prevention so people will feel safe in Wollongong LGA.
 - Identify and analyse the extent of crime and community concern about safety in Wollongong LGA.
 - Encourage the development of policies by local government and other appropriate authorities on crime prevention through the provision of information, best practice and analysis, so that agencies can operate in a consistent manner with consistent information. This will ensure there is policy interaction and support between agencies.
 - Identify and analyse issues raised by the community and other groups, using crime statistics provided by Police and information sharing between agencies, to assist those communities and groups with the provision of skills, knowledge and resources to participate in making Wollongong LGA a safer place. Make recommendations and regular representations to local, state and federal governments on ongoing issues of community safety. These recommendations and representations should be based on information, analysis and identification of issues of ongoing concern in the Wollongong LGA and should support both the key strategic approaches of situational and social crime prevention.
4. The Community Safety Reference Group should be consulted by all divisions of Council regarding crime prevention and community safety, particularly in relation to the use of public space.
5. Wollongong City Council and the Community Safety Reference Group will not endorse any security product or service.

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Crime Prevention and Community Safety actions will be coordinated by the Community Cultural and Economic Development division.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Division	Community, Cultural + Economic Development	
Date/s adopted	<i>EMC</i> 20 May 2021	<i>Council</i> 19 July 2021
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