11.1 GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT PLAN - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: FIONA BLAIR, GENERAL MANAGER, INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITY

PREPARED BY: HOLLI TAYLOR, GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT OFFICER

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To seek approval from Council to release the Draft Graffiti Management Plan for a phase of public exhibition in April 2019, and then subsequent endorsement by Council in June 2019.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The Graffiti Management Plan provides a clear framework and guidelines for the management of graffiti within the City of Port Phillip. It outlines Council’s approach to dealing with illegal graffiti as well as outlining opportunities to mitigate against future graffiti.

2.2 Council’s new Graffiti Management Plan will cover the period 2019-2024.

2.3 Officers developed a two-phase consultation process for delivery of the new Graffiti Management Plan. The first phase of community consultation took place between 20 November – 21 December 2018. Feedback provided as a result of this consultation has been used in developing the content of the Draft Graffiti Management Plan (Attached).

2.4 In reviewing the Plan Council has engaged with our community to determine their expectations on service levels for graffiti management. The engagement process has aimed to build trust and legitimise outcomes included within the Draft Plan as well as anticipating and building in flexibility to accommodate future demands on Council resources.

2.5 Council approval is now sought to progress the consultation to the next phase. The next phase of consultation will be to publicly exhibit the Draft Plan to our community for review inviting feedback via face to face drop-in sessions and a further online survey. In touching base with our community Council aims to ensure that the Draft Plan adequately reflects the feedback provided thus far as well as accommodating the needs of our community for the future.
3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:


3.2 Notes that the final Graffiti Management Plan will be presented to Council for approval in June 2019.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 The Graffiti Management Plan outlines Council’s policies on graffiti removal and other associated graffiti mitigation services.

4.2 Graffiti is a provocative issue in our city representing to some of our community the presence of underlying anti-social behaviours, with negative connotations as to their perceptions of safety. For others in our community the presence of graffiti (and more widely street art) represents an important form of creative expression in the urban environment.

4.3 In consulting our community to develop the Draft Plan Council has been better placed to determine priorities and outcomes that best benefit our community, accommodating the breadth of opinion on this issue – whilst identifying equitable and best value services.

4.4 Officers have developed the Draft Plan by: (i) asking our community for their priorities and feedback, (ii) reviewing statistical evidence collected over the past three years on graffiti reported and removed in our city, and (iii) further consultation work with key stakeholders/ agencies on collaboration models and best practise. Findings from all avenues have been used in developing the content of the Draft Plan.

4.5 Feedback from our community has identified the following priorities:

4.5.1 To continue to offer a free graffiti removal service to our community, ensuring that such a service is offered as rapidly as possible.

4.5.2 To prioritise the removal of obscene and offensive graffiti; as well as new commitments, which would see Council prioritising the removal of graffiti from public toilets and identified precinct spaces.

4.5.3 To increase the bandwidth of graffiti mitigation options offered including considered street art and greening programs.

4.5.4 To ensure that all available services are widely communicated and accessible to our community.
4.5.5 To work alongside law enforcement agencies and other key stakeholders on collaborative improvements on graffiti management issues.

4.5.6 To ensure equitability and cost efficiency in delivering the service are maintained.

4.6 The feedback provided by our community is supported by the statistical evidence collated by Officers reviewing graffiti removal works completed in our city over the past three years.

4.7 Findings determined through investigating best practise models have lead Officers to focus on a community strengthening approach to the Draft Plan. This will offer fewer blanket youth education programs in schools. Instead focusing on working with young people in areas where graffiti is endemic and offering participation in mitigation programs with anti-graffiti components. This has found to be more cost effective and adept at reaching groups that are more likely to transition to committing graffiti offences. In identifying and reaching out to the right groups messaging can be better packaged and delivered at a lower cost.

4.8 Officers will investigate creative graffiti mitigation programs, including the possibility of assigning legitimate “street art walls” where artists might be able to legitimately paint artwork. Such walls would be monitored for offensive and obscene content only and artwork rotated regularly, allowing for creative freedom of expression in a moderated environment.

4.9 The Draft Plan has also identified details as to how Council would monitor and measure success of outcomes.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 The consultation plan to support the development of the new Graffiti Management Plan has been formed with the support of Council’s Communication and Engagement team.

5.2 The first phase of community consultation invited our community to take part in the Plan development by providing feedback via an online Have Your Say questionnaire.

5.3 Feedback provided as a part of this first phase of consultation has been reviewed to steer the content of the Draft Plan. Feedback findings are attached to this document in both summary and full report format.

5.4 Officers are seeking approval from Council to publicly exhibit the Draft Plan to our community as part of phase two to the consultation process. This will involve components of both face to face drop-in sessions and online feedback.

5.5 Ongoing consultation continues with internal and external stakeholders to support the development of the Plan. Stakeholders include but are not limited to: Victoria Police, Department of Justice, Municipal Association of Victoria, Community Groups and Traders Associations.
6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Council’s current processes indemnify Council against the legal and risk implications associated with removing graffiti from privately held property. Such processes will remain in place as part of the new Plan.

6.2 A legal framework within which Council can operate regarding graffiti removal is contained within Part 4 of the Victorian State Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 (Attached).

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 The outcomes proposed within the attached Draft Plan are anticipated to fall within current operational budget parameters for financial year 2019-2020 – except for allocating the Paint Out service a budget of $150,000. To date these expenses have been absorbed within the Building Maintenance Painting budget, it is now proposed that this is funded separately.

7.2 Officers acknowledge that the current graffiti removal contract is due to be retendered to commence in March 2020. The negotiation of a new contract is likely to affect budget commitments in this area post 2019-2020 as costs will be impacted by market rates. Officers are exploring the possibility of entering into a collaborative contract with other inner-city councils to deliver best value graffiti removal services as part of this tender process.

7.3 Council’s CEO, Mayor and Officers have worked collaboratively with a group of other inner-south metropolitan councils to secure State funding of $165,000 per year over two years for graffiti removal. The funding has been granted to support a pilot program to enter into collaborative arrangements with select utilities suppliers and transport providers with participating councils will removing graffiti incurred to their public assets on their behalf. Council aims to leverage the results of this pilot scheme and advocate for future funding to address the need for improved services in this area.

7.4 Council’s current and anticipated annual spend on graffiti management are as set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of service</th>
<th>2018-2019 expenditure (incl. GST)</th>
<th>2019-2020 expenditure (incl. GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti removal</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
<td>$315,000 (pro-rated until close of existing contract in March 2020; costs post this date will be dependent on tender negotiation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Art program (incl. annual CPI increase)</td>
<td>$66,000</td>
<td>$74,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Officer resources (1.3 EFT equivalent)</td>
<td>$135,000</td>
<td>$135,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 Council’s existing contracts place requirements on contractors to limit impacts from their operations on the environment. Furthermore, sustainability factors will be considered as part of any future contract negotiations.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 Council received 2,302 requests to remove graffiti in 2018. This compared with 1,892 requests in 2017 and 1,323 requests in 2016. Given the increasing demand for community servicing the Draft Plan has been developed to meet high community expectations. Consideration has been given to ensuring it can commit to being trusted and agile with future proof outcomes.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 The Draft Plan has been developed to align with the following strategic directions, as outlined in the Council Plan 2017-27:

10.1.1 Direction 3 – We have smart solutions for a sustainable future: The Draft Plan aligns with the Don’t Waste It! Waste Management Strategy.

10.1.2 Direction 4 – We are growing and keeping our character: The Draft Plan aligns with the Public Space Strategy.

10.1.3 Direction 5: We thrive by harnessing creativity: The Draft Plan aligns with the Art and Soul, Creative and Prosperous City Strategy.

10.2 The outcomes arising from the Draft Plan are also strongly linked with Council’s Community Safety strategies.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

11.1.1 Subject to Council approval the public exhibition phase of the Draft Plan will commence. A Have Your Say questionnaire will support this phase of consultation.

11.1.2 Public drop-in sessions to support this engagement process will commence from 21 March 2019 to be completed by 18 April 2019. Drop-in sessions will be held in: Port Melbourne, South Melbourne and St Kilda.
11.1.3 Following public exhibition the Graffiti Management Plan will be finalised and presented to Council for endorsement in June 2019.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

11.2.1 The Communication and Engagement Plan for the development of Council’s new Graffiti Management Plan includes the following actions:

- Promotion of the establishment of public drop-in meetings;
- Establishment of an online feedback forum and links to Council’s graffiti web page;
- Social media messaging for activities and events.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

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ATTACHMENTS

2. Community Consultation Findings PHASE 1 Graffiti Management Plan Summary
3. Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 Part 4