

DRAFT LIVE MUSIC ACTION PLAN

2021-2024

Introduction

Pre COVID-19 the City of Port Phillip committed to delivering a four year Live Music Action Plan.

The pandemic has caused unique and wide reaching challenges for our City's live music sector and bringing audiences back safely; supporting local musicians; and assisting our venues with recovery initiatives has become a critical focus of this Plan.

The draft Live Music Action Plan 2021 – 2024 outlines what Council can and will do to future-proof live music in Port Phillip, and ensure it remains a priority amongst competing interests and the pressures of gentrification and a growing community.

As a key initiative of the Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018-22, it is a measure of the importance placed on sustaining local live music.

Historically, live music in the City of Port Phillip is the stuff of legend. Among the punks, the jazz cats, the rock 'n roll purists and the people that just love music, everyone has a memory from around these parts – from an iconic venue, a unique festival, or a moment stumbled upon while going somewhere or doing something else. That's not to mention some of the iconic music written here that has gone on to shape Australia's cultural landscape.

While our cultural heritage is strong, it is not enough to sustain the future of live music in Port Phillip – a future facing pressure from a number of sources – the most recent and certainly largest being the impact of COVID-19.

Within the Creative and Prosperous City Strategy, the Live Music Action Plan is placed as a priority within Outcome Three: 'arts, culture and creative expression are part of everyday life', recognising that arts and culture are part of what makes our City unique. The value and reach of live music also means it has a significant part to play in the other key outcomes from the Strategy, being 'a City of dynamic and distinctive places and precincts' and 'a prosperous City that connects and grows business'. The actions contained within the Plan all align to support and deliver on these outcomes.

The draft Plan is holistic; considering how our collective services can work together to assist in the recovery of the local music scene our diverse community needs, through partnership and collaboration. It is ambitious; aiming to recover what we cherished before the pandemic, to assist and embrace new models and to make it sustainable. It is also honest; recognising our challenges and confronting and addressing them.

The draft Plan recognises the vital role that live music has to play in the everyday life of Port Phillip – its communities, its identity and its past, present and future – and it is a commitment that local live music shall live on for years to come.

What is live music?

For the purposes of the draft Live Music Action Plan, live music is considered to be a music performance being given by a person or people, using their voice and / or musical instruments. This encompasses everything from a solo acoustic busking performance on a street corner through to a formal concert for thousands at the Palais Theatre, and everything in between. It means all types of music, including pub rock, a classical recital, musical theatre, opera or a hip hop gig and anything else you can imagine.

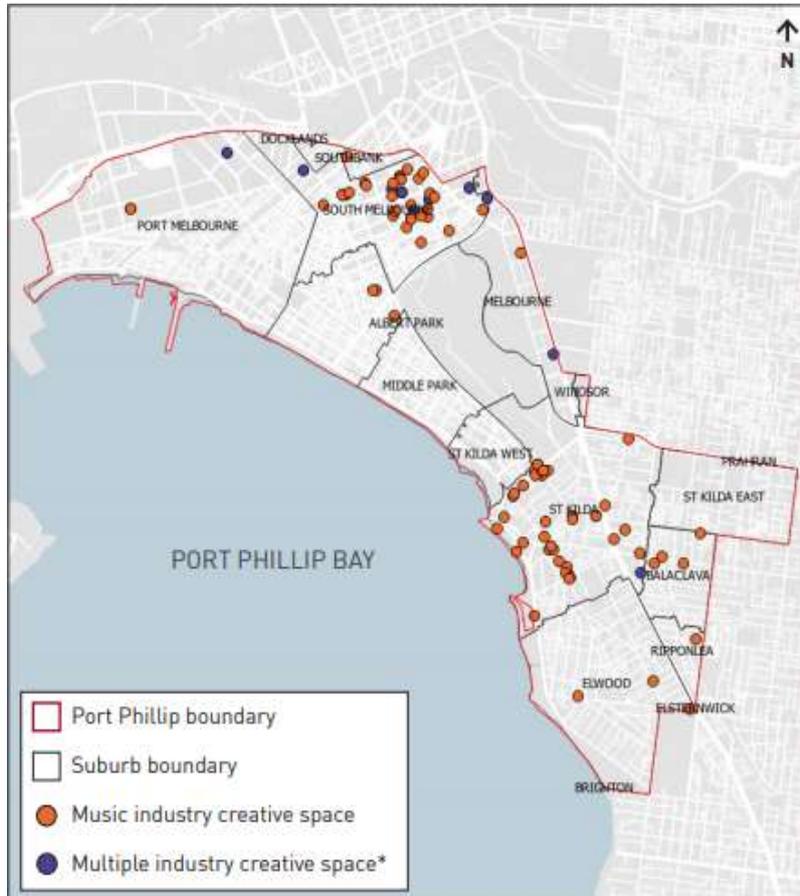
The draft Plan is also inclusive of the wider music and live music industries, made up of an ecosystem that supports the end product of live music performance. As defined in the 2019 City of Port Phillip Creative Industries Mapping Project, this is extended to include the following businesses, and the infrastructure, tools and patrons that support them:

- Music venues
- Nightclubs
- Orchestras
- Post Production Facilities
- Radio Stations
- Recording Studios
- Sound Design Facilities
- Education Bodies
- Music Organisations
- Equipment Hire
- Music Entertainment
- Music Publishing
- Music Schools

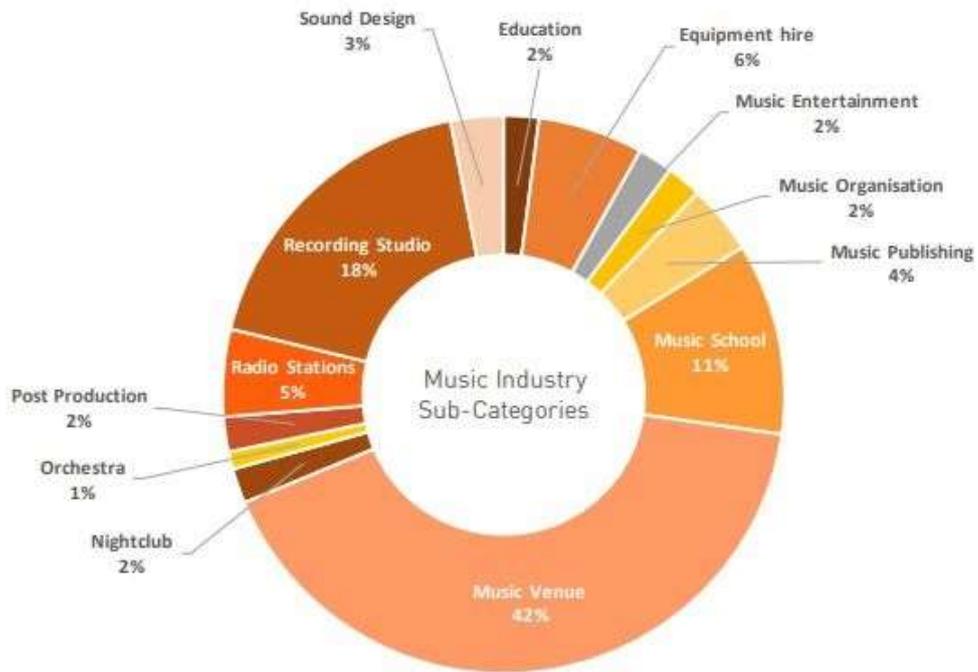
Why do we need a Live Music Action Plan?

According to the 2019 City of Port Phillip Creative Industries Mapping Project, music had been the municipality's second largest creative industry pre-COVID, with 96 local music businesses identified within the key categories listed above.

The map below shows the location of these businesses.



The proportion of each category is represented as follows:



State and Federal Government support

The live music sector has suffered throughout the pandemic. Venues have lost tenants and had to permanently change their business offerings. The impact on musicians, technicians, venue owners and hospitality employees are significant and the massive job losses and lost economic output are pressing concerns.

The Minister for Planning has documented the importance of live music in Clause 13.07-3S of the Planning and Environment Act 1987¹. The Clause recognises the social, economic and cultural benefits of live music and encourages, creates and protects opportunities for the enjoyment of live music.

The new state policy encourages the retention of existing and the development of new live music entertainment venues, allowing the delineation of areas where live music venues are encouraged and noise sensitive residential development must be carefully evaluated. Evaluations will include an assessment of the impact of the residential building proposal on the functioning of live music venues.

Preliminary findings from The Economic Cost of COVID-19 on Australia's Live Entertainment Industry² forecast:

- Full-time equivalent jobs in the sector will fall two thirds (79,000) to just 43,000 – from 122,000 jobs in 2019 – if restrictions on gathering remain in place until the end of December 2020
- Value added by live entertainment is predicted to fall from \$16.6 billion in 2019 to \$5.9 billion in 2020
- A loss of \$23.6 billion of economic output from a \$36.4 billion industry

In June 2020 the Federal Government pledged \$75 million for a competitive grants program to provide capital for new festivals, concerts, tours and events as social distancing restrictions ease.

Grant programs include:

- [Sustaining Creative Workers Initiatives](#)
- [Victorian Music Industry Recovery Program](#)
- [Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme](#)
- [Victorian Live Music Venues Grant](#)

106 live music venues across the state will share in the Victorian Live Music Venues Grants totalling \$9 million in the first portion of the program. 6 City of Port Phillip venues were selected in the first round.

The State and Federal Government have a generous amount of economic support available to get live music venues up an running and musicians back in the studio. Considerations missing from the above initiatives include;

- Creating opportunities for live music performance
- Encouraging and enabling audiences to attend live music events
- Small business advice and support

¹ Victorian Planning Provisions Amendment VC183 Explanatory Report

² Live Entertainment Industry Forum: Australia's live entertainment industry counts the cost of COVID – extended support needed

Why is live music important?

There are 3 areas of recovery we have identified as being critical in informing the focus of this Plan:

Social Recovery

- Ways in which music can bring the community together and allow them to connect/re-connect
- Using music to create a sense of place and pride in place, with live music central to local identity and character
- The mental health benefits of attending/experiencing live music and experiencing joy, relaxation or connection to others
- Creating hubs - with a multitude of venues and musicians concentrated in small areas

Economic Recovery

- Increased trade through live music patrons who visit the municipality for music, and then provide ancillary spending
- Longer visitation due to greater entertainment options leading to increased spending
- Increased awareness and visitation through being represented as a live music destination
- Maintenance of Port Phillip 'brand' as a place where music matters is critical to maintaining investor interest in the municipality moving forward
- Adding a live music element as entertainment options in local trade activity areas

Music Industry Recovery

- Opportunity for Port Phillip to become a base for live music creation
- Support between live music organisations
 - E.g. Recording studios allowing work experience students from music education facilities such as JMC Academy
 - E.g. Musicians promoting the venue they are performing at and bringing a following to the venue
- Support from Council for venues to cut red tape and move through new planning permissions with confidence and knowledge
- Clear information on how to operate as COVID safe; i.e. planning, set ups and legal requirements
- Opportunity to promote new projects to a live audience – creative COVID safe performances or installations
- Opportunity for creative expression, social and emotional benefit through playing live music
- Opportunity for community connection – to audiences, other musicians, and to local venues
- A diversity of local venues to perform in and opportunities to reach audiences

Consultation

In February-March 2020 we asked the community for their thoughts on the initial Draft Life Music Action Plan. At that stage the public were in the middle of the summer events calendar, with events such as St Kilda Festival, Pride March, Listen Out and the Weet-Bix TRYathlon.

Initial feedback supported the following:

Accessibility, inclusivity and opportunity

- More opportunities for different types of music i.e. jazz and classical
- More opportunities for participation for children and seniors
- More opportunities for young people to perform
- More opportunities for artists to play multiple venues in St Kilda – you can see an artist at St Kilda Festival and then the only place you can see them after is outside of the area e.g. Northcote
- Music is a therapeutic process, one which unites community
- Opportunities for community groups to perform
- Should include all the arts, not just music

Support for venues

- Venues rely on live music to draw customers and music businesses
- Venues have provided music long before apartment blocks have been in place
- Old institutions are becoming more and more restricted in their abilities to host live music

Support for musicians

- Important to create opportunities for emerging and unknown artists that don't have the support of an agency
- Musicians are scared to perform new music in St Kilda. The audience has a specific taste from 20 years ago and there is a risk of poor turnout if you play something new

Impact on the community and public spaces

- Events on public land should have minimal impact during bump in and out – waste management
- Need a balance between supporting gigs and not disturbing ratepayers
- Events calendar needs to strike a balance between diversity of range, commercial vs public activity and visitation

“Live music is what gives St Kilda it’s unique charm, making it a landmark to visit for both local people and tourists from around the world. Not only does it give St Kilda it’s culture, it brings in the tourists and visitors that help local businesses thrive” – Male resident

“Music and live performance are crucial to social interactions and cultural engagement, as well as creating cultural heritage. Supporting the production and experience of local live music is really important to a rich social, economic and cultural life.” – Female resident

During COVID lockdown many venues have been shut or only able to operate a limited service. The few venues that continued to operate during lockdown provided some valuable feedback on the updated Draft Live Music Action Plan.

- Venues want to support musicians but don't have the funds available to pay them appropriately.
- Agree the database of local musicians would be beneficial
- Would appreciate small business advice and support from Council
 - Advice on controlling numbers and contact tracing measures
 - Marketing advice
 - Advice on how to adapt to COVID-normal
 - Council social media channels (St Kilda Festival etc.) to promote gigs at local venues

Place based opportunities

Music Victoria is keen to work with Council to identify and create 'live music precincts' in the municipality which are areas where planning permits focus on supporting the live music industry.

Inside identified precincts, any proposed new residential use needs to take account of any existing venue, and the possibility of new venues (this extends the Agent of Change principle to a whole-of-precinct approach)

When anyone makes an application to establish, alter or demolish a live music venue, or to establish a new noise sensitive use near a venue or in an identified precinct, consideration must be given by the applicant and Council (or, in extraordinary circumstances the Minister) to the impact of the proposal on opportunities for live music.

One main focus of the live music precinct plan is managing amplified music noise, and ensuring the success of music-based entertainment without exposing residents or businesses to unreasonable levels of music noise.

An example of a successful live music precinct is QLD's Fortitude Valley where:

- Entertainment venues in the Special Entertainment Precinct are exempt from the amplified music noise requirements of the Queensland Government's liquor licensing laws. Responsibility for regulating amplified music noise from venues in the Special entertainment precinct has been transferred from the State Liquor Licensing Division to Council.
- Amplified music noise levels in the precinct are regulated by Council's Amplified Music Venues Local Law, which requires amplified music venues to have an Amplified Music Venues Permit.
- The music-noise and development laws protect music venues from having to turn down their volumes when residential development is built nearby. Instead, the onus is on new developments to incorporate extensive noise insulation.

Other focus points of the live music precinct idea is increased safety measures (i.e. increased lighting and CCTV, ID scanners, specially trained security etc.) and the roll-on benefits to the late night economy including; taxi drivers, restaurants, employees.

Victorian Planning Scheme

Amendments to the Victorian Planning Scheme take a positive view towards music rather than assessing the impact of sound on amenities.

The objective of the new State Planning Policy for Live Music is to recognise the social, economic and cultural benefits of live music and encourage, create and protect opportunities for the enjoyment of live music.

Strategies to achieve this objective are:

- Identify areas where live music entertainment is encouraged or where there are high concentrations of licensed premises or clusters of live music venues, and implement measures to protect and enhance the social, economic and cultural benefits that such areas offer to the community.
- Implement measures to encourage the retention of existing, and the development of new, live music entertainment venues.
- Implement measures to ensure live music venues can co-exist with nearby residential and other noise sensitive land uses, and which recognise the principle that the primary responsibility for noise attenuation with respect to live music venues rests with the agent of change.

It is vital that Port Phillip collaborates closely with the State Government via Music Victoria to ensure the best outcome for our City.

Current state of play

Council has a number of existing services already inclusive of or focused on delivering live music benefits. Alongside existing advocacy and ongoing regulation, stakeholder liaison and negotiation, a list of existing Council services include:

<p>Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation with Bandmates Victoria. • Support Wild at Heart Community Arts. • Free music performances including flagship events. • Subsidised ticket deals for local residents. • Liaise between residents and events/festivals to communicate music event logistics 	<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flagship music festivals including St Kilda Festival, Yaluk-ut Weelam Ngargee and Port Phillip Mussel & Jazz Festival. • FReeZa events throughout the year. • Live music at key Council locations including libraries and South Melbourne and Esplanade Markets. • Events such as ANZAC Day, We-Akun Dilinja, Mabo Day and NAIDOC Week. • Live music into other Council events where practicable.
<p>Permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events that focus on live music as per Council’s Events Strategy. • Musician parking in loading zones for gigs in Acland and Fitzroy street precincts. • New or underused public spaces where suitable for live music events to revitalise and activate open spaces. 	<p>Facilitate Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through three training programs annually through FReeZa. • For FReeZa volunteers to participate in live music events.

<p>Advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event and festival operators on noise management and permitting process. • Businesses on regulation and statutory requirements for live music. • Local artists on opportunities, including performance and funding opportunities. 	<p>Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music-focused events through Council's various funding streams. • New projects or compositions via Council's Cultural Development Fund. • Waive film permit fees for independent music video shoots. • Palais Theatre community reservations for community music events.
<p>Promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via What's On St Kilda, events from venues that regularly host live music. • All artists programmed as part of flagship music events, via digital and publicity campaigns. • Port Phillip music festivals, such as the St Kilda Festival and Yaluk-ut Weelam Ngargee and any new initiatives, to enhance our standing as a music city and to encourage new live music events and repeat visitation. • Festivals and events via Council communications assets. 	

Our vision is for Port Phillip to be a centre for live music

Delivering on this vision means that Council's priorities, resources and programs support the activities of creative businesses, artists and community members.

To achieve that, we will work towards three priority outcomes through the actions in this plan.

Outcome 1

A City that actively responds to the economic and social impact of COVID on our local music industry.

Goal 1: Live music as a tool for social and economic recovery for local businesses.

Outcome 2

A City where live music flourishes, with a robust and passionate live music ecosystem and a solid foundation for a sustainable future where live music is able to continually grow.

Goal 2: Break down barriers for musicians wanting to perform in Port Phillip and maximise opportunities for musicians, businesses and audiences to connect.

Goal 3: Encourage maximum live music opportunities via the creation of music precincts and develop a range of initiatives to 'broker' harmony between venues and local residents

Goal 4: Stand out as a city of music festivals, welcoming the events and their audiences while ensuring compatibility with our communities

Outcome 3

A City where the musicians and audiences, the venues and the schools, the public spaces and the rehearsal places, and our residents and businesses work together to support and create a diverse, dynamic and accessible live music scene.

Goal 5: Increase accessibility to live music and performance, including those events and gigs on public space and in private venues

Goal 6: Reinforce the view of Council as a supporter of live music, building trust by improving our transparency and clear communications

Goal 7: Ensure access and music-focused services for young people

Goal 8: Equip musicians with the tools to create, perform and prosper

Goal 9: Build a diversity of music events that cater to a range of genres, cultures and audiences

Goal 10: Acknowledge and celebrate our cultural heritage of live music

Key Stakeholders

At its best a thriving live music industry mostly needs government to get out of the way. Fundamentally, Council's role is to work with its partners to lay the best foundations to enable live music to flourish, and minimise barriers as much as possible. From there, it's the community, rather than Council, that then makes the music thrive.

These partners include:

- Musicians
- Venues
- Audiences
- Festival and event producers
- Our businesses
- Our residents
- Music-focused community groups
- Music schools, teachers and training providers
- Property owners, including community spaces
- Music Victoria
- State and federal government, their legislators and their agencies, including: Creative Victoria through Creative State 2020+, the Australia Council, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Delivery Timeline

Actions will be distributed throughout 2021-24, to facilitate exploring opportunities, responding to feedback and being agile when opportunities emerge.

Outcome 1			
A City that actively responds to the economic and social impact of COVID on our local music industry.			
	Who is it for	ACTIONS	Measures of Success
		Years 1 and 2	
Goal 1: Live music as a tool for social and economic recovery for local businesses	Venues Musicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate pop-up live music events throughout the city. • Develop music trails / walks across the city that explore the history of live music locally. • Advocacy to State Government about ways to support live music through planning, policy and legislation. • Establish the First People’s Toolkit program to support musicians and music businesses. • Establish and curate a one-off summer entertainment program for 20/21. • Work with State Government, Music Victoria and consultants to explore the possibility of establishing a live music precinct in Port Phillip. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from businesses and attendees • Local economic data metrics • Continuation of First People’s Toolkit into future years and for a wider audience

Outcome 2

A City where live music flourishes, with a robust and passionate live music ecosystem and a solid foundation for a sustainable future where live music is able to continually grow.

	Who is it for	ACTIONS				Measures of Success
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Goal 2: Break down barriers for musicians wanting to perform in Port Phillip and maximise opportunities for musicians, businesses and audiences to connect	Venues Musicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote potential collaborations for musicians with game developers, film production, events and Council services. • Maintain a registry of local musicians to encourage local programming by venues and events. • Pair our venues with other businesses and initiatives to create promotional opportunities. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement with website • Increase in number of opportunities for musicians • Feedback from businesses – increased trading
Goal 3: Encourage maximum live music opportunities via the creation of music precincts and develop a range of initiatives to ‘broker’ harmony between venues and local residents	Venues Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Music Victoria to identify potential ‘live music precincts’ – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The goals of establishing precincts would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Councils to identify areas with one or more live music venues in them – ‘live music precincts’, where live music will be encouraged and protected ▪ Inside identified precincts, any proposed new residential use needs to take account of any existing venue, and the possibility of new venues (this extends the Agent of Change principle to a whole-of-precinct approach) ▪ When anyone makes an application to establish, alter or demolish a live music venue, or to establish a new noise sensitive use near a venue or in an identified precinct, consideration must be given by the applicant and Council (or, in extraordinary circumstances the Minister) to the impact of the proposal on opportunities for live music. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in noise related complaints • Attraction of high quality music venues to the municipality • Attraction of residents and tourists to Live Music Precincts • Community engagement with website

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of guidelines outlining the Enforcement Process when a music complaint is received so both parties (complainant and venue) are aware of the steps that can/will be taken. • Development of basic language (101-guide) guidelines re. noise management for venues. Developed by / or in collaboration with an acoustic consultant/engineer. This would be intended to inform venues of noise management requirements and potential solutions such layout of sound systems, directional speakers, limiting devices etc. • Establish a Live Music Precinct working group involving Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning and Planning Compliance • Produce and link to resources on Council’s website, regarding the creation of a new live music business, to ensure operators feel confident in meeting obligations from multiple sources - including COVID-19 regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multipurpose use of venues • Increase in participation with pilot programs
<p>Goal 4: Stand out as a city of music festivals, welcoming the events and their audiences while ensuring compatibility with our communities</p>	<p>Musicians Audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate live, local music into Council events where possible. • Via Council’s Events Strategy, prioritise attraction of music festivals and events to our public and Council-owned spaces. • Advocate for key partners or grant recipients to program local musicians, including Seniors Festival and grant recipients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in number of opportunities for musicians • Increase in audience participation • Increased in number of events with a live music component

Outcome 3

A city where the musicians and audiences, the venues and the schools, the public spaces and the rehearsal spaces, and our residents and businesses work together to support and create a diverse, dynamic and accessible live music scene

	Who is it for	ACTIONS				Measures of Success
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Goal 5: Increase accessibility to live music and performance, including those events and gigs on public space and in private venues	Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess COVID safe standards and develop plans to engage with the community safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Council’s Library Action Plan to explore alignment between libraries and live music that remove financial barriers to participation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance, rehearsal or recording space and facilities Facilities that can be loaned, including music instruments, sheet music or recorded music Co-location of community music groups or organisations 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Council events have up to date Disability Action Plans and are accessible to the community Increased participation between seniors and live music events Events are accessible online and are well received Increased diversity of seniors events
	Musicians					
Goal 6: Reinforce the view of Council as a supporter of live music, building trust by improving our transparency and clear communications	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve communications and transparency via release of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievements and outcomes reached through implementation of the draft Plan Number of live music events hosted in the city Create a live music working group as a sub-committee of Council’s Art and Soul Advisory Committee, empowered to consult on challenges as they arise and seek shared solutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain up-to-date resources to ensure transparent process and decision making, such as Council’s complaint handling procedure and ‘Living with Live Music’ guide. Work closely with our partners, such as Music Victoria, the EPA and Creative Victoria to ensure best practice principles and maximise collaboration. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group meets regularly and effectively Information released on live music outcomes and data Evidence of strong working partnerships with peak bodies
Goal 7:	Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all ages access to all major recurrent Council live music events and encourage and promote all ages gigs within the municipality. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council events remain all ages

Ensure access and music-focused services for young people	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with our partners to provide music training and skills development for young people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connect our schools and learning centres with venues and live music events, seeking opportunities for skills development. ○ Explore opportunities to support and encourage music education within schools. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in workshops and training for young people • Relationships with schools developed and ongoing
Goal 8: Equip musicians with the tools to create, perform and prosper	Venues Musicians Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards ensuring all applicable Council funding opportunities encourage live music applications within their scope. • Explore initiatives for artists by working with our partners, such as showcases, rehearsal or recording opportunities, and inclusion within relevant Council live music events. • Work with Council’s Boonating Ngargee Yulenj: First Peoples Arts Advisory Panel to explore ways to facilitate and promote music from Indigenous artists. • Partner with appropriate internal and external groups to deliver existing information and workshops on mental health for musicians and the industry that supports them. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding applications include live music • Projects support musicians to succeed in the industry • Increased opportunities for First People’s artists • Workshops support mental health
Goal 9: Build a diversity of music events that cater to a range of genres, cultures and audiences	Musicians Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Council event KPIs include programming of artists from diverse cultural backgrounds. • Ensure live music event opportunities are promoted broadly throughout the community, including participation, funding and permitting opportunities. • Ensure diversity of programming within all Council live music events and incentivise diversity of live music performance, including opera, musicals and classical performance, such as through promotion and tourism package opportunities or working with our existing partners and peak bodies. • Encourage attraction, retention and engagement of diverse programming and events. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council live music events feature a diverse range of music genres and artists from diverse cultural backgrounds
Goal 10: Acknowledge and celebrate our cultural heritage of live music	Community Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines for adding live music material to the City’s heritage collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement guidelines that ensures heritage live music material is appropriately catalogued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live music is recognised within heritage collections • The City’s live music heritage is recognised and celebrated in Council programmed festivals and public art initiatives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate and support multicultural expressions of music, working with Council’s Multicultural Advisory Committee. • Consider public art initiatives that celebrate the location’s live music heritage. • Celebrate the City’s live music heritage and connection to contemporary practice and practioners in Council programmed festivals where applicable. 		

