

CASEY LIBRARIES STRATEGIC SERVICE PLAN 2022-26

DRAFT



Executive Summary

The City of Casey has a long-standing history of supporting community access to local public libraries. This support takes many forms, from the provision of purpose-built facilities, Board representation on Regional Library Corporations to providing over \$6 million annually, for the operation and management of Casey's five library sites. The Victorian Government is the other funding body for Casey libraries, contributing over \$2.1 million in 2021/22.

The population forecast for the City of Casey is expected to grow from 380,531 in 2021 to 549,190 by 2041¹. With this growth comes additional demands for community and social facilities, including libraries. The *Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021-2051* has identified the need for another library in the south of the municipality, as a result of this rapid growth. A new library will cost between \$20 and \$30 million. Council will continue to advocate to the State Government for funding support for the planning and construction of a new library.

The City of Casey *Libraries Strategic Service Plan 2022-26* (The Plan) outlines the library priorities over the next four years. This is the first *Libraries Strategic Service Plan* the City of Casey has developed, given the recent changes to the library service model.

The Plan articulates how libraries can support the City of Casey's Council Plan 2021-2025 and Long-Term Community Vision 2031 to *become a more connected, bold, and resilient community*.

Consultation with the local community will inform the development of a **Casey Libraries Vision**.

Best practice in public libraries identify that the follow priorities are important for a contemporary library. Information gained from Shape Your City has helped to articulate what these priorities look like in Casey. Further community engagement in late 2021 and early 2022 will confirm these priorities:

1. Literacy and lifelong learning
2. Digital inclusion
3. Personal development and wellbeing
4. Economic and workforce development
5. Stronger and more creative communities
6. Informed and connected community
7. Service innovation

Implementation of The Plan will be driven by an annual action plan, designed and delivered in partnership with key stakeholders. Progress against the action plan will be monitored, with reports on the achievements.

¹ .idcommunity

Service Scope

Libraries play an important role in inspiring, connecting and empowering our community through free access to physical and online collections, learning programs, information, technology, community partners and meeting spaces.

The inaugural *Casey Libraries Strategic Service Plan 2022-26* has been developed based on change to the way we deliver the Casey Libraries service. This change has been influenced by significant population growth over the last 25 years, changing community expectations and diversity, Councils strategic priorities, a review of the current service model, and changes to legislation.

The City of Casey is committed to the provision of high quality, contemporary, local library services through our Vision and strategic direction for library service delivery.

Strategic Connection

The Plan will enable alignment of library services that support positive lifelong learning outcomes for our community. It will help Council plan, direct resources and be innovative in achieving library service outcomes.

The Plan is informed by the City of Casey Long-Term *Community Vision 2031* and aligns with the City of Casey *Council Plan 2021-25*. The Community Vision defines the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality, which is to **become a more connected, bold and resilient community**. It also aligns with Council's strategic direction as reflected in the five key Domain Strategies of: Economic Development, Environment, Health & Wellbeing, Infrastructure and Transformation.

Conditions and Context

Council has a long and proud history in the delivery, directly or indirectly, of library services. Casey Cardinia Regional Library (formerly known as Casey Cardinia Library Corporation) was created in 1996 under section 196 of the Local Government Act, between City of Casey and Cardinia Shire Council. In 2021 the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire Council resolved to dissolve Casey Cardinia Regional Library, with both Councils taking on the direct responsibility for their own library service.

Changes in the Victorian Local Government Act 2020 relating to regional libraries came into effect in July 2021 and have been the impetus for this change. This change to the Act 2020 requires all Councils to dissolve their regional library entities by June 2030. Although the City of Casey has until June 2030 to address this matter, it is timely to consider this change within the context of change in the diversity and size of our community.

Library services have and will continue to be operated by highly experienced and valued staff. Council recognises that the public library market is very small and will be testing this market in late 2021 or early 2022 to determine who is best placed to deliver this important service to our community.

Community Needs

In 2020, Casey had an estimated population of 369,200, making it the most populous Local Government Area in Victoria ². Casey is one of the most diverse local government areas in Australia with the top three countries of birth being Australia, India, and Sri Lanka. Half of Casey's residents have at least one parent born overseas or were born overseas themselves from more than 150 countries ³. Thirty-five per cent of Casey residents speak a language other than English at home ⁴. There are more than 100 faiths represented in Casey and the top three are Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

There were 5,314 babies born in the 2019/20 financial year. The largest age cohort in Casey is estimated to be people aged 0-4 years old (31,100 people in 2020). Between 2020 and 2041, the population of 10-14 years old is expected to almost double and the population of 80-84 years old to almost triple. The number of people aged 85+ is also expected to triple ⁵.

Our library service needs to reflect our growing, diverse community with relevant collections, spaces and support.

Data from Council's extensive *Shape Your City* community engagement program in 2021, has been used to help inform The Plan. From this engagement key, high-level themes were identified as being important for our success, and that of our community. Participants were asked what the City of Casey would look like in 20 years' time. It was identified that *"libraries will change to become technology centres - like to think that there will always be books, but things may be minimised - for everyday applications and for reading - kindle books"*.

We have also learned that our community wants community places within walking distance of their homes where they can connect. Libraries have an important role to play in not only connecting with our community, but also in linking our community with other groups, organisations, services, and activities.

We heard that our community want to see more government providers in programs and activities across family and community services, but they also see a greater role for other providers to deliver services and programs. They want to be more involved in the planning for services and activities they use, opening possibilities for volunteering, partnerships and co-designing services with our community.

² Forecast .id, 2019

³ ABS, 2016

⁴ Profile.id, 2016

Service Analysis

Casey Cardinia Libraries provide library services to the Casey community from five purpose-built or retrofitted, Council-owned facilities. The data below is an indication of how local communities access and use their local library and illustrates the diversity within Casey libraries ⁵.

Bunjil Place Library

National award-winning library, opened in October 2017, replacing the old Narre Warren Library. In 2020-21 Bunjil Place Library continued to be City of Casey's largest and most accessed library service with:

- 126,040 physical visits
- 412,982 physical loans
- 165 physical programs/sessions delivered to youth
- 26 physical programs/sessions delivered to adults
- 7,844 individual internet sessions (logins) and 13,836 individual WiFi sessions.

Cranbourne Library

Relocated to its current location, originally a tractor factory, in 1996 and is collated with a number of other community organisations, such as a community radio station. In 2020-21 Cranbourne Library continued to be the second most accessed library service in Casey with:

- 74,066 physical visits
- 305,897 physical loans
- 97 physical programs/sessions delivered to youth
- 29 physical programs/sessions delivered to adults
- 6,701 individual internet sessions (logins) and 14,761 individual Wi-Fi sessions.

Doveton Library

Relocated to its current position in 1983 and is our smallest community Library. Doveton is one of Casey's most disadvantaged areas. In 2020-21 the library had:

- 27,185 physical visits
- 42,311 physical loans
- 65 physical programs/sessions delivered to youth
- 32 physical programs/sessions delivered to adults
- 3,727 individual internet sessions (logins) and 7,750 individual Wi-Fi sessions.

⁵ Data provided by Casey Cardinia Libraries, August 2021.

Endeavour Hills Library

Opened in 1987, replacing the mobile library service. Casey's second oldest library facility and in 2020-21 had:

- 36,917 physical visits
- 137,800 physical loans
- 53 physical programs/sessions delivered to youth
- 7 physical programs/sessions delivered to adults
- 4,434 individual internet sessions (logins) and 9,418 individual Wi-Fi sessions.

Hampton Park

Opened in 2004 Hampton Park Library is located in close proximity to other community services. In 2020-21 good utilisation continued with:

- 39,599 physical visits
- 130,785 physical loans
- 92 physical programs/sessions delivered to youth
- 97 physical programs/sessions delivered to adults
- 5,640 individual internet sessions (logins) and 6,946 individual Wi-Fi sessions.

Goals

The challenge for Casey Libraries is to understand how to continue to grow, innovate, and evolve in a way that supports the delivery of sustainable library services to a diverse and fast-growing community. Some of these changes can be anticipated, but others may be influenced by circumstances or technologies that are currently unknown.

Our future library service needs to be cognisant of broader organisational changes and the stories our community have told us through the *Shape Our City* engagement. Casey Libraries need to be **more connected, bold and resilient**.

1. A More Connected Library Service

Library services need to continue to connect people. This connection will look different not only for individuals but also for each local library branch. Libraries are in a unique position where they reflect the needs of their local community and support people to be connected to their community, culture, technology, and information.

2. A Bold Library Service

Library services need to be innovative and creative. The library brand is well known and respected by our community. A bold library service will embrace innovation and explore opportunities where they can evolve and continue to be relevant to and valued by our community.

3. A Resilient Library Service

The world that we live in is changing rapidly and libraries need to keep abreast of these changes. To be resilient libraries need to be adaptable, sustainable, and responsible in a time of limited resources. A resilient library service should minimise service duplication, form strong community partnerships and be accountable.

Priority Initiatives

The following seven themes will be the priorities for Casey libraries over the next four years, regardless of who is providing the service.

1. Literacy and Lifelong Learning

Librarians are trusted and expert guides to the world of information. They play an important role in helping people to select, filter, find, evaluate and use printed, visual, audio and online material and content, as well as helping people to develop their skills in navigating and accessing the information they need.

Library programs and activities are core services for all public libraries. Programs highlight the collections, resources, knowledge and expertise that reside in the library to enrich the lives of community and deliver real and significant benefits. In addition to providing universal access to core library services, libraries combine and tailor their service offering to meet the particular needs of different groups within the community.

2. Digital Inclusion

Digital literacy and access to current technology are essential to effective participation in society, access to government services and information, and engagement with learning and community activities. Many people lack confidence and skills in using computers, or searching, filtering and making use of digital information. Public libraries play an important role in supporting communities to access digital material and services. For some of our community, their only access to computers, devices, technology and the internet is at their local library. Libraries need up to date hardware, software, applications, equipment and staff capabilities to ensure the best possible experience for the community.

3. Personal Development and Wellbeing

To support personal development and wellbeing library services collaborate with a wide range of community, education and government agencies to improve the reach and accessibility of services, improve the efficiency of service delivery, and minimise service duplication. Partnerships can broaden the range of programs and services available at libraries. This can improve the library's knowledge of local issues and trends, providing valuable insights and opportunities to engage with diverse communities and enhance reach of library services.

4. Economic and Workforce Development

Public libraries are increasingly valued in the community for being a place where people come to learn, study or work. They are a place that has the resources, services and skills needed to support the community to work and learn remotely and achieve their desired productivity outcomes.

5. Stronger and more Creative Communities

Library collections, programs and services are now delivered through a range of service points, such as physical facilities, digital, and online services. They provide places that are welcoming, easily accessible for all users, respecting user privacy. They also strengthen community connection, invite curiosity and support innovation and creativity.

6. Informed and Connected Community

Public libraries demonstrate their commitment to the principles of access and equity by providing safe, welcoming and inclusive spaces. Public libraries are increasingly valued in the community for being:

- a place where all are welcome, access is free, and there are no judgments
- a place where people come to read, relax, learn or study
- a place where people come together to meet, to connect with one another, to create and to celebrate their community
- a place staffed by skilled people who are there to help.

7. Service Innovation

With our community growth and change, comes the need to ensure our library services are *More Connected, Bold and Resilient*. To achieve this, we need innovative approaches for a sustainable, adaptable library service that is able to continue to meet community need.

Performance Measures

Setting measurable and meaningful performance measures and targets is critical for monitoring overall performance of Casey Libraries and linking back to strategic priorities and objectives. Key performance indicators have been designed to encourage performance improvement and enable critical review of actual performance against targets. The use of performance measures provides important feedback and information to assist in the management of library services.

The Plan will be implemented through an Annual Action Plan. Monitoring of our performance will take place annually with updates on the progress of actions and reporting on measures of success.

APLA-ALIA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2020 provide library operations expectations for a public library ⁶. The measures from these Standards and Guidelines will be used to reflect the financial and economic performance and overall efficiency of Casey's library services. The following table highlights the key performance measures in The Standards and Guidelines, with performance targets to be reflected in the Annual Action Plan.

To ensure a full understanding of performance, the customer perspective and innovation also needs to be measured. An annual customer satisfaction survey is to be conducted for each library site to ensure community needs and aspirations are considered. The measurement of performance against innovation will be informed by the Annual Action Plan.

⁶ APLA-ALIA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2020

Performance Measures
Library expenditure per capita (Total expenditure on library operations and materials per member of population)
Number of staff (FTE) per 3,000 population (Total number of staff (FTE) per 3,000 members of the population)
Number of library qualified staff (FTE) per 10,000 population (Total number of library qualified staff (FTE) per 10,000 members of the population)
Library opening hours
Expenditure on library materials per capita (Total expenditure on library materials per member of population)
Number of collection items per capita (Total number of collection items per member of population)
% of physical collection items purchased in the last 5 years (Total number of physical collection items available for loan that have been purchased within the last 5 years as a % of the total number of physical collection items available for loan)
Number of public access internet devices per 2,500 people
Number of accessible printers
Access to Wi-Fi
Membership - % of resident population who are registered library members (Total number of registered library members divided by the total resident population)
Number of library visits per capita (Total number of visits to library service points per member of population)
Number of loans per capita (Total number of loans of physical and digital collection items per member of population)
Number of loans per physical collection item (Total number of loans of physical collection items divided by the number of physical collection items available for loan)
Number of visits to the library website
Number of hours of use of public access devices
Number of Wi-Fi sessions in the library
Number of hours of Wi-Fi use
Attendance at library programs per capita (Total number of participants in library programs per member of population)

References

APLA-ALIA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2020 [APLA-ALIA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries, May 2021 | ALIA Library](#)

Boroondara Library Services Plan 2020-25 [Link to Boroondara Library Services Plan](#)

City of Casey Council Plan 2021-25 [Link to City of Casey Council Plan](#)

City of Port Phillip Library Action Plan 2021 to 2026 [Link to Port Phillip Library Action Plan](#)

Social infrastructure in Melbourne's growth areas, September 2021 [Background paper - Social infrastructure in Melbourne's new growth areas \(infrastructurevictoria.com.au\)](#)

State Library Victoria – Strategic Plan 2020-2024 [Link to State Library Strategic Plan](#)

Wyndham Library Services Strategy 2018 – 2040 [Wyndham Library Service Strategy 2018-2040](#)

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