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## Mayoral Minutes - 22 June 2021

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### ITEM 4.1

### A Child Safe City

Councillors,

This minute relating to Child Safe Standards is one which leaves me a little uneasy and with mixed emotions.

On one hand, I am proud to bring it to Council tonight. . . . while on the other, it makes me angry that in this day and age it is necessary we are still having to highlight these issues. The simple fact is, Our Children need to be protected, at all times, no matter what the circumstances.

Over the last . . . . pick a number. . . .10, 20, 30 years there have been any number of reports, inquiries and even a Royal Commission into the institutional responses to child sexual abuse. And still there are reports of abuse occurring.

Councillors, we must lead the way and make a very decisive statement when it comes to protecting our Children. Not only are we implementing the Child Safe Standards, but we are following the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations identified by the Royal Commission.

We want the community to know that as a Council we are committed to being a Child Safe organisation and we will advocate for and promote the safety of all children within our community.

Our statement of commitment is very clear.

It acknowledges children as individuals with rights, and that we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and neglect. The focus will be on treating all children with fairness and respect.

I commend the Statement of Commitment to Children and Young People, which I have included below, for your support on behalf of Council, the Children and Young people of this City and the broader community. I further support Council engaging with the community about this important initiative.



## The City of Canterbury Bankstown Statement of Commitment to Children and Young People

We are committed to being a Child Safe Organisation that leads and promotes child safety within our community.

We view children as individuals with rights and we take responsibility for upholding those rights.

Our organisation values and respects children and places child safety and well-being at the centre of everything we do involving or in relation to children.

We have zero tolerance for child abuse or neglect.

To ensure we provide safe spaces for children we are committed to supporting their meaningful engagement and participation in decisions that affect them. We believe children should have a say in what happens to them. We will listen to them believing they have valuable things to say and ensure we act on their concerns and ideas.

We have robust policies and procedures focused on children's safety and well-being and we are committed to training and keeping our people informed of their requirements.

We are committed to following the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations identified by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and to ensuring we meet the 10 Child Safe Standards developed by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian.

As a Child Safe organisation, we will focus on what is best for children; treat all children with respect and fairly; welcome and encourage children's families and communities to participate in the organisation; and ensure children receive services from skilled and caring adults.

**NOTE:** Children in this context are all those aged under 18 years.

### ITEM 4.2                      Technology Trials

Councillors,

We are a Smart City and should be proud that we are one of the leading Councils when it comes to innovation and technology.

Our recent work in the space of Artificial Intelligence in our waste services won us high acclaim both locally and internationally and not to mention the work we did around data mapping in our Bankstown CBD.

Tonight, I would like to highlight a project that Council has been trialling since last October.

And I will add the first Council in Australia. This small device we have is an earpiece that when worn by two parties can interpret language and enable them to have a conversation.

We have hundreds of languages and dialects spoken in our City every day. This will help our officers from lifeguards to engagement officers talk to residents in their language.

This is cutting edge technology that will have enormous benefits to organisations. . . like ours. . . that are customer focused and deal with the public face to face.

A typical example would be our community engagement officer attending to an issue where the resident only speaks Arabic. Without an interpreter present the conversation is going nowhere, but with the aid of this new device both parties can speak in their own language and understand what the other party is saying.

There is still some work to refine this ear piece, but it is the way of the future. A way forward in giving our community the best possible customer experience, no matter their ethnicity.

Councillors, I move tonight that Council continues to trial this revolutionary technology in the hope we can be a trailblazer in this space and pioneer this next level of communication and engagement with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities across Australia.