

## **Inquiry into the Decriminalisation of Certain Public Offences, and Health and Welfare Responses**

**Submission No:** 12  
**Submitted by:** Mareeba Shire Council  
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**Attachments:** See attachment  
**Submitter Comments:**  
**Submitter Recommendations:**



# Mareeba

## SHIRE COUNCIL

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19 August 2022

Community Support and Services Committee  
Queensland Parliamentary Service  
Parliament House  
Cnr George and Alice Streets  
BRISBANE Q 4000

To Whom It May Concern

***SUBMISSION TO PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO THE DECRIMINALISATION OF CERTAIN PUBLIC OFFENCES AND HEALTH AND WELFARE RESPONSES***

Mareeba Shire is a Local Government Area of more than 23,000 residents dispersed across more than 50,000km<sup>2</sup> and encompassing numerous rural and remote towns. The Shire's resident population is culturally diverse, is older than the Queensland average and parts of which experience significant socio-economic disadvantage.

A strategic priority for Mareeba Shire Council is an active, safe and healthy community and Council's role includes advocating and promoting community safety and other community services. It is Council's goal that people feel safe, included and proud to live in their community and that there is a reduction in crime, anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

There is a marked increase in the level and frequency of antisocial behaviour in our community. This is having a negative impact on our communities causing fear and division and resulting in unnecessary financial burden on those dealing with the impacts of crime. The Mareeba community, particularly the senior residents, express at times they no longer feel safe in their own community. Council is doing all it can to improve community safety and reduce the incidence of crime in our community.

Council's actions include:

- Leading community collaboration across a broad range of community service providers, agencies and other stakeholder groups for improved community safety.
- Working closely with local services and interagency networks to identify service gaps and collaborative community solutions and actions focussed on supporting residents experiencing disadvantage.
- Advocating for increased resources to enhance the capacity of local services and agencies to respond to local community safety issues.
- Taking actions that are within Council's control including public space and amenities redesign that enhances public safety.
- Working closely with Police and local business operators to enhance public surveillance in areas of concern and providing assistance for people to travel to a permanent place of residence.
- Advocating for the implementation of a local liquor accord.

Mareeba Shire Council requests that any changes made to legislation and operational policing responses do not erode the Queensland Police Services' ability to ensure that Mareeba Shire residents feel safe to go about their lives and business.

Community safety is a significant concern for our residents, business operators and community organisations. Policing powers are needed to ensure community safety and public order arising from public intoxication and to uphold community standards of behaviour.

Council also advocates for increased resourcing for services that provide support to people who are experiencing homelessness, alcohol and drug dependence, mental health issues and family violence. The funding of culturally appropriate public intoxication service responses, diversion services or appropriate "places of safety" would also provide social welfare response options that are currently unavailable in the Mareeba Shire.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Community Support and Services Committee Inquiry. I look forward to hearing about the next stages and outcome of the Inquiry. For further information or to discuss this submission please contact Chief Executive Officer, Peter Franks on 1300 308 461 or [info@msc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@msc.qld.gov.au).

**Yours faithfully**



**CR ANGELA TOPPIN  
MAYOR**