

Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven

Meeting Date: Monday, 30 July, 2018
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

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Agenda

1. Apologies

2. Confirmation of Minutes

- Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven – 27 November 2017 1
- Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven - 5 April 2018 7

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Presentations

HT18.7 The Housing Spectrum

Presentation by Nikki Sloan, Chief Executive Officer, Community Industry Group.

5. Reports

HT18.8 NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 13

HT18.9 Communication Strategy 18

HT18.10 Everybody's Home Campaign - Support Request 20

HT18.11 Ongoing Actions Update 22

HT18.12 Proposed Memorandum of Understanding - Affordable Housing Opportunities..... 27

6. General Business

HT18.13 Definition of Homelessness

To discuss the definition of 'Homelessness' as used in Council's draft Homelessness Policy, POL17/88.

This matter has been added to the agenda following a request of Councillor John Levett for the definition to be further considered by the Committee.

Membership

Clr Findley - Chairperson

All Councillors

General Manager or Nominee

Tamie Harvie - Community / volunteer – interested in mental health and D&A

Penni Wildi – Community Member / Waminda

Wendy Woodward - Nowra Show Society / community volunteer

Deborah Ferrier – Community volunteer

Lesley Labka - SAHSSI – Shoalhaven Women’s Homeless and DV Service

Wendi Hobbs - Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention and Awareness Network (SSPAN)

Rev Matthew Wilson – Nowra Uniting Church

Patricia David – Unions Shoalhaven

Peter Dover – Salt Ministries

Roslyn Poole - ISLHD – Homelessness Mental Health Program

Ashleigh Hudson - Mobile Response Vehicle coordinator (services for homeless)

Max Zalakos – Nowra Baptist Church

Julie Bugden - Shoalhaven Homelessness Hub

Donna Brotherson – Illawarra Forum

Bernard Gleeson - St Vincent De Paul Nowra

Sharlene Naismith – Legal Aid

Natalie Beckett - HARP Unit – Sexual Health & Blood Borne Infections; and Aboriginal community member

Adam Collison - Southern Cross Community Housing

Quorum - 8

Role of the Taskforce

The role of the Homelessness Taskforce is:-

- Provide Council with strategic advice on homelessness and related issues that can be dealt with at a Local Government level.
- Work with Council to address issues, develop options and assist with the identification of preferred solutions as part of Council’s decision making process
- Advise on the development and application of a Homelessness Strategic Plan
- Provide comment on relevant Council policies and strategies
- Advocate community views on homelessness issues

Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven - The Wish List:

- Plan and Strategy for dealing with homelessness and any ‘incidents’ that arise
- Adopting the Affordable Housing Strategy to Shoalhaven
- Permanent Shelter for the Shoalhaven
- Education of the community (possibly a forum)
- Building connections between homeless persons and wrap around services
- Permanent but temporary accommodation
- Future of Public Housing – mapping the way forward and advocating for tenants
- Business Involvement
- Plan and Policy for Emergency nights (crisis accommodation)

- Creating policy that works on the ground (Homeless protocol for the showground as an example)
- Improving life outcomes for those who have experienced / are experiencing homelessness
- What Next? – who can help after the Safe Shelter closes?
- Continue to lobbying for the State Government to get on board with the demonstration affordable housing site at Bomaderry
- Knowing who the homeless are (anywhere between 100 – 375 homeless on any given night in the Shoalhaven)

MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

Meeting Date: Monday, 27 November 2017
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

The following members were present:

Clr Amanda Findley - Chairperson
Clr Joanna Gash
Clr Patricia White
Clr Nina Cheyne
Clr Annette Alldrick
Clr John Levett
Clr Mark Kitchener
Rev Matthew Wilson – Uniting Church
Mr Peter Dover – SALT Ministries
Ms Patricia David – Unions Shoalhaven
Ms Ashleigh Hudson – Mobile Response Coordinator
Ms Lesley Labka – SAHSSI
Mr Max Zalakos – Nowra Baptist Church
Ms Sharlene Naismith – Legal Aid
Ms Donna Brotherson – Illawarra Forum
Mr Adam Collison – Southern Cross Community Housing
Ms Kelly Green – FACS
Ms Penni Wildi – Community Member/Waminda
Ms Wendi Hobbs - SSPAN
Ms Wendy Woodward – Community/Nowra Show Society

Others present:

Gordon Clarke – Strategic Planning Manager
Alan Blackshaw – Coordinator Community Development
Garon Irwin – Unit Manager Building and Compliance
Jessica Clifford – ABC News
Cathy Musico - Wellways
Lesly Lane
Carmen Fox
Joy Lucke

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Shane Meijer (FACS) and Julie Bugden

HT17.6 Additional item - Verbal Update

Clr Findley advised the Committee that each member provide a verbal update. The following comments were made:

- Kelly Green – FACS
 - In October 2017 the tenders were announced
 - Southern Cross Housing was the successful tenderer
 - The transition time to transfer the properties to Southern Cross Housing will be October to December 2018
- Adam Collison – SCCH
 - Looking into safe shelter options and a proposal to use a property, will update at the next meeting on the progress
- Lesly Labka - SAHSSI
 - There are two temporary accommodation services in town and it has been full for 3 years (womens refuge).
 - The property that SCCH own/manage has some vacancies
 - The people coming into this facility, come in under a temporary arrangement
- Peter Dover - SALT
 - Safe shelter wrapped up in September 2017
 - We need to be looking for a permanent shelter and we are in discussions with a local Church, if successful want to get a demountable (temporary building) amenities block on the land.
 - We are trying to find a place they can go
 - This facility will be volunteer run if it gets approved (possibly next 3 weeks), there could be up to 20 people staying there
 - We have up to 250 volunteers that want to help in some way.
- Patricia David – Unions Shoalhaven
 - Provided a verbal update on Homelessness Statistics which will be distributed with the minutes (**Attachment 1**)
 - A student from Wollongong University conducted research and forwarded her findings. This document will also be available upon request.
- Rev Matthew Wilson – Uniting Church
 - After the safe shelter shut down (in day 8) we haven't had anyone living onsite
 - We are investigating to broaden the possibilities and looking at temporary housing/affordable housing with a redevelopment of their property. This is not a short term fix and the lead time is approximately 2-5 years.
- Clr Findley
 - Council have perused land options with the RMS
 - Also had discussions with the RMS Minister Melinda Pavey. Minister Pavey wasn't enthusiastic with the site which is approximately 5000sqm
 - Council is continuing with investigating affordable housing projects, and will be reported at some time back to Council.
 - Have had meetings with Church leaders regarding land at Sussex Inlet for social or affordable housing
 - Have had discussions with Correction Services and have advised them that it is not ok for them to release people into the community without forward housing arrangements
 - The Ongoing Actions Table will form part of a report to every meeting as part of the Agenda. (**Attached**)
- Alan Blackshaw –
 - Will update the committee as part of the reports in the Agenda.
- Gordon Clarke
 - Council have looked at 2 projects over a long term

- The Draft Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy has been on exhibition and we are currently preparing the submissions report to Council, to adopt the strategy.
- Will also be suggesting that Council moves forward with properties in Coomea Street, Bomaderry.
- Council held a workshop with the Property Council of Australia Branch back in October, with the view to looking at a hypothetical design to get the property to the market or an expression of interest for community housing providers.
- Tiny Homes developments – have been pushed further up the line, this is the first time they have been approached
- Council is looking at using the VIC Roads model and a research paper came out last month and waiting to hear back.
- We have written to Fabcot who own a lot of vacant sites along North Street. No response to date.
- The site at Worrigee street, has a contamination issue. We don't believe its significant enough to not look at the land for Tiny Homes, however the site would need to be concrete with no access to soil.
- Wendi Hobbs
 - The following links may be of interest to services:
 - Mental Health and Homelessness for young people:
[file:///C:/Users/HobbsW/Downloads/youth-mental-health-and-homelessness%20-report-infographic%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/HobbsW/Downloads/youth-mental-health-and-homelessness%20-report-infographic%20(2).pdf)
 - Link2home:
<http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/help-with-housing/specialist-homelessness-services/find-a-service/link2home>
 - Homelessness Australia Stats
<http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/sites/homelessnessaus/files/2017-07/Homelessness%20in%20Australiav2.pdf>

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (By Consent)

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Tuesday 29 August 2017 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil

Reports

HT17.3 Rotary Park, South Nowra

**HPERM Ref:
D17/355108**

Alan Blackshaw addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- This site is not designed to be a camping area,
- Council had to follow the regulations and ask the people to move on.
- We are not aware where people go when they get moved on.

- Council is trying to be as compassionate as possible
- All staying at Rotary Park had been visited by services and had contact with FACS. All were offered housing. At least one person declined because he didn't want to pay rent.
- Staff negotiate with the people and service providers.
- The Showground is a short term option for travellers to stay overnight for a fee.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Taskforce accept the update report re Homeless Campers at Rotary Park South Nowra for information

RESOLVED (By Consent)

That the Taskforce accept the update report re Homeless Campers at Rotary Park South Nowra for information

CARRIED

HT17.4 Homelessness Policy

**HPERM Ref:
D17/355431**

Alan Blackshaw addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- Council have been operating without a written policy.
- This has been drafted for Council to form a Policy position.
- Council has reserched other Councils that had Homeless Policies and most were urban areas. Shoalhaven is a regional area struggleing to address the Homelessness issue.
- This Policy gives Council enough to operate in homelessness and over a period of time work on a strategy to develop a policy for the future.

Note – remove part 6 in policy.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That

1. Council endorses the Draft Homelessness Policy
2. Place the Draft Homelessness Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days
3. If no further submissions are the reveived the policy be adopted and if submissions are received a further report be presented to Council after the public exhibition of the Draft Homelessness Policy

Recommendation (By Consent)

That:

1. Council endorse the Draft Homelessness Policy with the following amendment:
 - a. Remove part 6
2. Place the Draft Homelessness Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days
3. If no further submissions are the reveived the policy be adopted and if submissions are received a further report be presented to Council after the public exhibition of the Draft Homelessness Policy

CARRIED

General Business**HT17.5 Frankston Council - Homelessness in Australia****HPERM Ref:
D17/387514**

Alan Blackshaw tabled a letter at the meeting from Frankston Council, addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- Council received a letter from Frankston Council which was tabled at the meeting
- The letter was seeking Council's support to lobby the Government and advocate for more funding to address Homelessness.

Recommendation (By Consent)

That Council write to the State Government and Federal Governments to lobby for more funding to address Homelessness.

CARRIED

HT17.7 Additional Item - Orange Sky Laundry

Clr Alldrick addressed the Committee and made the following comments:

- Attended a Conference recently, where a presentation was made from Orange Sky Laundry
- It's a business that started in Brisbane, operates in various locations and now services Wollongong
- They have just started vans with showers.
- This is a free service to use and funded by donations and run by volunteers.
- The Website is interesting and recommend that people look at it.

It was noted that this service was trialled in Nowra.

HT17.8 Additional Item - Couch Surfing Limbo - WEstjustice Document

Alan Blackshaw advised that a recent document has been produced by WEstjustice (August 2017) with interesting information contained in it.

The Document can be viewed on the WEstjustice website <http://www.westjustice.org.au/>

HT17.9 Additional Item - Establish Working Group - Homelessness

Peter Dover addressed the meeting and suggested that the Committee form a Working Group to progress the items on the Ongoing Actions Table and will report back to the Committee meetings.

RESOLVED (By Consent)

That:

1. The Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven form a Working Group consisting of the following members:
 - a. Peter Dover
 - b. Southern Cross Community Housing Representative
 - c. Patricia David
 - d. Rev Matthew Wilson
 - e. Kathy Musico
 - f. Max Zalakos
 - g. John Steel
 - h. And others to be co-opted as required
2. The purpose of the Working Group is to discuss and make progress in relation to the items in the Ongoing Actions Table.
3. FACS agreed to report the Homelessness statistics to the meetings of the Homelessness Taskforce each quarter.

CARRIED

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.08pm.

Clr Findley
CHAIRPERSON

MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

Meeting Date: Thursday, 5 April 2018
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

The following members were present:

Clr Amanda Findley (Chairperson)
Clr Patricia White
Clr Nina Cheyne
Clr Annette Alldrick
Clr Mark Kitchener
Clr Bob Proudfoot
Ms Lesley Labka – SAHSSI
Ms Wendi Hobbs – SSPAN
Rev. Matthew Wilson – Uniting Church
Ms Patricia David – Unions Shoalhaven
Mr Peter Dover – Salt Ministries
Ms Ashleigh Hudson – Mobile Response Coordinator
Mr Max Zalakos – Nowra Baptist Church
Ms Wendy Woodward – Community / Nowra Show Society
Ms Donna Brotherson – Illawarra Forum

Others present:

Anthony Body – Indigenous Services Manager Southern NSW, Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations
Graham Bradshaw - Director, Network Standards & Services, Asset Standards Authority, Transport for NSW
Lynne Dooly – Waminda
Linda Marquis – Waminda
Kathy Musico – Wellways
Kate – Community Services
Linda Lee – Aboriginal Women's Service
Jennifer Lee – Emmanuel Ministries Shoalhaven
Lesley Lane – Safe Shelter Shoalhaven
John Steele – Safe Shelter Shoalhaven
John Allison – Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet – Indigenous Affairs
Melissa Andrews – Community Development Officer
Colin Wood – Section Manager, Building & Compliance
Sara McMahon – Manager, Governance Unit
Jessica Volkanovski – Strategic Planning – Team Coordinator, Strategy North

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Joanna Gash, Cllr John Levett, Penni Wildi, Kelly Green and Sharlene Naismith.

Confirmation of the Minutes

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Monday 27 November 2017 be confirmed.

Note: This item was not dealt with. The Minutes of Monday 27 November 2017 will be confirmed at the next meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Nil

GENERAL BUSINESS

Attendees introduced themselves, per the descriptions in the attendance list above.

HT18.1 Presentation - Transport for NSW - Second Life

Anthony Body, Indigenous Services Manager Southern NSW, Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations, and Graham Bradshaw, Director, Network Standards & Services, Asset Standards Authority, Transport for NSW, were welcomed to the meeting to give a presentation on repurposing transport assets as shelters.

Anthony Body has a key role within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to coordinate agencies across government to work better for communities. The 'Second Life' project looks at assets owned by the government, such as trains, buses, and accommodation, seeking better ways to use them, e.g. for social good. Anthony has sent a brief on the project to the Deputy Premier, who has expressed great interest.

He introduced Graham Bradshaw, from Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW). Graham described the background to the Second Life program which includes projects in Armidale, Queanbeyan, 'Buses to Bourke', and now Nowra. He noted that some 600 people in Sydney spend each night on the streets. In addition many people are in shelters, camps, hotels, couch surfing, or sleeping in cars. Graham had recently counted 41 people sleeping on the late-night train to Kiama. These homeless communities will continue to grow.

Meanwhile, as the city is booming, the infrastructure spend is also growing, with significant investment in new assets – rail, buses, buildings, and land. Many of the existing assets consequently are being retired. This presents an opportunity to use repurposed transport assets for communities and social support.

The idea of converting disused train carriages into shelters is being considered in Victoria. VicRoads has also set aside vacant land to build demountable homes. TfNSW is looking primarily at converting bus and rail assets into sleeping accommodation, mobile service units (e.g. health), shower buses, and storage. Buses can be retrofitted with four beds each as 'sleep buses'; the 134 old buses currently available could create 536 beds. Graham projects a further 100 buses will become available over each of the next four years. He has access to 30 buses currently.

He considers it important to find opportunities to work with groups such as this Taskforce and with

the community in Shoalhaven. Buses can be provided immediately for conversion and use. Land, however, is the element that needs to be secured, and obtaining DAs will take time. TfNSW can supply the assets but not cover the costs to convert them, and he recommended we find philanthropic assistance. Conversion can be rapid but the other processes require more time, at a minimum 3-4 months.

The meeting discussed several possible sites, including land at the rear of Flinders Lane, and behind the old gasworks. It was stressed that homeless people are a part of our community, and locations should not be too isolated: would they use the facility at Flinders Lane, and how would they get to it? Possibly a further bus could be deployed to transport people into town to feel part of the community.

The buses have the advantage that they can be driven in and out of sites as required. They can become health based, showers, washing machine etc. services on wheels able to go to smaller communities.

The group was reminded that there are just six weeks until winter starts. What can we do here and now, and have we the time and skills in the community to convert a bus over a weekend? As an interim measure, it was suggested that one or two buses could be used over the winter. The use of buses in the short term would help with security issues around vulnerable cohorts such as women and children. A more permanent solution can be developed towards the end of winter, but in the meantime we should secure enough buses for the winter period.

TfNSW are also working with RMS in Wollongong on auditing their excess land. Graham reiterated that TfNSW are not able to provide ongoing funding, only assets. He needs to fill out the proposal for Shoalhaven. Anthony is to talk to the Mayor and to meet again in the next few weeks.

The meeting thanked Anthony Body and Graham Bradshaw for bringing their presentation and sharing their vision.

Anthony Body and Graham Bradshaw left the meeting at 5.00pm.

The remaining meeting participants discussed the presentation in detail. The following points and questions were raised:

- Buses can also be used for daily transport for those who may be sheltered in sites away from the general community.
- How to address the challenge of managing the safety of different cohorts – couples, families etc. A permanent solution will need a need larger site, with multiple buses to keep the different cohorts safe.
- How to solve the issue of obtaining land and gaining DA approval. Planning can require six to 12 months.
- Could buses be considered for the existing homeless community at Nowra Showground? The suggestion should be taken back to the Showground Committee. One difficulty is that the land is currently also functioning as carpark for the hospital.
- Using buses as temporary emergency accommodation raises a potential problem of distance from central services and transport. This can make people more vulnerable if they are isolated in industrial areas. It was noted that there are existing community transport options to specialist services – the problem of distance can be overcome. Central Coast & Gosford Councils have also been working with this issue and we could contact them to find how they overcame these problems.
- There are some similarities to locating Tiny Homes with regard to zoning. Buses may be classed as moveable dwellings.
- Cllr Proudfoot advocated choosing a site that will avoid controversy, as we do not wish this to become political. Strategic planners can investigate the zoning and siting options.
- Cllr Cheyne suggested looking at Mandalay Avenue community housing; access to one of their blocks might be possible if a tenant is ready to move on. The site is already zoned

residential.

- Ulladulla could be another site. Can also consider the North Street Woolworths site.
- Conversion of the buses should include retaining their wheels so they can be driven to proposed sites to see if they will work. The vehicles remain registered, so in the short term they could be parked in a carpark and moved if a problem arises. The vehicles can continue to be registered and driveable, but would have to be signed over to the community organisation who then becomes the owner, with the resultant insurance and registration responsibilities.
- Colin Wood reported he has been looking at several sites behind the scenes. Three had been selected as suitable for accommodation, but there had been no further progress. One which functions as a nexus with a church, e.g. with meals on wheels, is looking positive. He is close to finding a site for this. This needs to be discussed with Gordon Clark and Council's approval as owner obtained.
- Other models to look at include the farm stay model that uses train carriages converted with facilities, which works well for short-term accommodation, and the KiwiBuild public housing program which aims to build a large number of affordable homes in New Zealand.
- We should look into working with youth employment services re training opportunities.
- It was suggested the project be progressed in two stages: first to operate a temporary solution to get through this winter, then a longer-term sustainable solution to offer to rough sleepers and the chronically homeless. Safe Shelters Shoalhaven need to find a property large enough to run an interim model, or could run a trial with buses that can be moved as needed.
- Clr Proudfoot added that Council can partner not only with philanthropists but with other government partners to convert the buses – for example, Department of Community Services.
- Colin Wood said we should make a commitment to find a place to park the buses, to show the community how we can retrofit a bus, and to find a block of land to site them. We have to be proactive.

HT18.2 Transport for NSW - Second Life - Conversion of Assets

Recommendation (By Consent)

That Council contact the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Transport for NSW to:

1. Express an interest in the Second Life project for the acquisition of transport assets for homeless initiatives.
2. Request an audit of State Government land that may be available within the Shoalhaven.

CARRIED

Clr White left the meeting at 5.15pm.

HT18.3 Shoalhaven Homelessness Hub

It was pointed out that the Homeless Hub statistics do not represent everyone, only those who present at the reporting services. Clr Findley clarified that each service group presents data to each meeting of the Taskforce so that the data sets become part of the minutes. These can then be presented to external stakeholders and contribute to our 'pester power'. It helps in building picture of day-to-day contacts. It also provides evidence on a quarterly basis for State and Federal representatives as a constant reminder. Do we consider it to be a useful tool?

It was suggested that mining the Census data could provide more accurate homelessness data. The census did account for everyone residing in temporary accommodation, refuges etc. is

available from FACS.

Action: Statistics from the Census to be distributed with the minutes.

Kathy Musico said the feedback last year was that people were often unable to get into the shelters. Can we get at least a bus each for males and females to keep people safe at night? There were some 30 to 40 people homeless beyond the 50 available beds.

Clr Alldrick asked whether services are finding that government cuts to programs or services aimed at mental health and domestic violence are affecting numbers of people being seen. Lesley Lakba stressed that we have good services here; she considered that homelessness is due to structural problems such as housing. The structural issues are much broader. For example, difficulties in holding tenancies can be reliant on the number of mental health services available. Arranging health and mental health services that can be safely accessed requires coordinating. Services need to go to the people, not force people to travel to the services.

HT18.4 Homelessness Media Strategy

It was recommended that statistics should ideally be accompanied by cases studies and qualitative data; otherwise they risk having little impact. We need to make it evident to local Members that we are doing as much as possible but cannot provide full services, and we need their help – and that they are also accountable. It will help if we can put a face to the stories and statistics.

Clr Findley proposed collecting people's stories over the winter period. An independent consultant could be contracted to collect stories on our behalf. Telling the stories of the homeless will require a campaign and media strategy.

Clr Proudfoot noted the churches are continually raising the issue of homelessness in the media. We should harness the power of photographs, and keep beating the drum. We must keep sending the message to politicians to get a response; they eventually have to start listening.

RESOLVED (By Consent)

That

1. The Taskforce continue an ongoing dialogue with the State and Federal members and the local media as well as explaining to the local media the activities of the Homelessness task Force and the plight of the homeless.
2. A small working group be formed to advance a media strategy.
3. Membership of this group to comprise:
 - a. Melissa Andrews
 - b. John Steele
 - c. Ashleigh Hudson
 - d. Wendy Woodward
 - e. Peter Dover
 - f. Kathy Musico
 - g. Max Zalakos.

CARRIED

.HT18.5 Nowra Neighbourhood Centre - Proposal to Use for Shelter

Regarding practical options for shelters, Cllr Cheyne raised the three houses in Bomaderry that Council has purchased for the 50m pool. Cllr Findley clarified that these are currently tenanted – but one may be demolished and the site could be made available..

The shelter used last year will be reopened but the issues experienced previously need to be addressed. As a last resort the shelters can be operated in a modified version of last year. However, even to go back to that model will require probably six weeks of direction to get it up and running. Hence a decision will be needed by next week.

Cllr Findley reported the Nowra Neighbourhood Centre is vacant, and is a possibility. She is working on a motion that it be leased to Salt Ministries. However, the building needs to be checked for utility. It does have doors and multiple rooms, but it would be a shelter rather than a permanent home.

RESOLVED (By Consent)

That the Task Force supports the Nowra Neighbourhood Centre being used for homeless services for the next two years subject to suitability

CARRIED

HT18.6 Outstanding Actions Table

Item 6: Permanent Shelter, FABCOT land: we still need a response.

Action: Cllr Findley to follow up with FABCOT in relation to this land.

There were no questions about any items. Questions should be sent by email and Council will direct them to suitable respondents.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 6.06pm.

Cllr Findley
CHAIRPERSON

HT18.8 NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023

HPERM Ref: D18/243870

Group: Finance Corporate & Community Services Group
Section: Recreation Community & Culture

Attachments: 1. Attachment 1 NSW-Homelessness-Strategy-2018-2023 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
2. Attachment 2 - POL17/88 Homelessness Policy [↓](#)

Purpose / Summary

To advise that the NSW State Government has released the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 and to provide a copy of the strategy for members' information.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Homelessness Taskforce note the release of the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 and receive the copy provided to members under separate cover.

Options

1. The Homelessness Taskforce receive this report for information.

Implications: The Homelessness Taskforce is kept updated regarding NSW Government's strategic direction in relation to homelessness.

Background

The NSW State Government has recently released the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023. The strategy sets the direction for the NSW State Government for the next five years, focusing on prevention responses that address the causes of homelessness and early intervention responses that will help to reduce the longer-term impacts of homelessness. A copy of the strategy is provided in **Attachment 1**.

Policy Implications

POL17/88 Homelessness Policy **Attachment 2** stipulates that Council will work with Federal, State, non-government agencies and local community groups in planning and implementing Federal and State-wide plans to address homelessness and a lack of crisis accommodation.

The NSW Homeless Strategy 2018-2023 contains a staged implementation plan for the delivery of a range of programs and activities in relation to homelessness. Members may wish to take note of activities and programs that will be delivered by the NSW State Government over the five-year period and at some point, align key activities that are being undertaken by the Taskforce to the plan.



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For more information contact the Finance Corporate & Community Services Group

Homelessness Policy

Policy Number: POL17/88 • **Adopted:** 3/04/2018 • **Minute Number:** MIN18.237 • **File:** 44336E • **Produced By:** Finance Corporate & Community Services Group • **Review Date:** 1/12/2020

1. PURPOSE

To identify the role of Shoalhaven City Council in addressing homelessness and outline Council's commitment to:

1. Preventing, reducing and managing homelessness
2. Supporting and building capacity within the community to address homelessness, and
3. Encourage collaboration, community partnerships and evidence based practices

2. STATEMENT

There is no universally accepted definition of homelessness in Australia. For the purposes of this policy Shoalhaven City Council will use the statistical definition of homelessness adopted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to estimate the prevalence of homelessness in Australia.

When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement:

1. Is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or
2. Has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable, or
3. Does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.

This definition emphasises the core elements of 'home' such as: a sense of security, stability, privacy, safety, and the ability to control living space. Homelessness is a lack of one or more of the elements that represent 'home'.

3. PROVISIONS

This policy reflects the following principles and commits Council to the following:

3.1 Understanding the role of Local Government

Commonwealth and State government hold the primary role of funding and providing services to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The role of local government in addressing homelessness is not specified in Australian legislation and is largely that of advocacy.

Shoalhaven City Council – Homelessness Policy

Shoalhaven City Council recognises that in order to ensure sustainable and consistent solutions, addressing homelessness must take on a whole of government and whole of community approach. The role of Council in addressing homelessness is to assist and complement the work of other tiers of government and the community sector, as facilitators of solutions to homelessness and crisis accommodation.

3.2 Orders that make or are likely to make residents homeless

In Cases where development control orders are issued, where they are likely to make residents homeless, Council's responsibility is outlined in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 – Schedule 5, Part 4 – 2 (previously Section 121G). See below:

Orders that make or are likely to make residents homeless

- (1) *If a development control order will or is likely to have effect of making a resident homeless, the relevant enforcement authority proposing to give the order must consider whether the resident is able to arrange satisfactory alternative accommodation in the locality.*
- (2) *If the resident is not able to arrange satisfactory accommodation in the locality, the relevant enforcement authority must provide the resident with:*
 - (a) *Information as to the availability of satisfactory alternative accommodation in the locality, and*
 - (b) *Any other assistance that the relevant enforcement authority considers appropriate.*

3.3 The right to housing

Council faces a real and present housing affordability and homelessness challenge. Access to affordable, secure, appropriate and accessible housing is a basic right for all people and plays an integral role in a socially, economically, environmentally and culturally sustainable community.

Council commits to:

- a) Plan for the provision of affordable housing and has developed an Affordable Housing Policy
- b) Identify Council owned and/or Crown land that could potentially be available for low cost housing, social, community housing and/or crisis accommodation and once identified, liaise with relevant authorities to secure a suitable tenure which would allow its future development for affordable housing purposes.

3.4 Advocacy

Council has a responsibility to advocate on behalf of all members of its community.

Homelessness is a complex issue with multiple causes and co-existing issues such as upbringing, mental health, physical health, drug and alcohol misuse, family violence, unemployment, low income, poor education, high cost of living, unaffordability of housing and limited supply of social, community and low cost housing.

Shoalhaven City Council – Homelessness Policy

Council recognises that people who are homeless are some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our community. Council has a moral obligation to address and advocate for their needs.

Council recognises its role in advocating to other levels of government for the provision of government funded services to prevent, reduce and manage homelessness within the community.

Council commits to:

- a) Advocate for the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged people within the community
- b) Advocate for the provision of state and federal government funded services and evidence based policies
- c) Support local community groups action towards preventing, reducing and managing homelessness

3.5 Building the capacity of the Community

Council recognises the importance of supporting and strengthening the skills, competencies and abilities of our community members to enable the development of local ownership and community decision making in community development planning and programs.

Council commits to:

- a) Support the community in raising awareness about the nature, causes, experiences and consequences of homelessness.
- b) Build the capacity of the community in collaborating and delivering local projects to prevent, reduce and manage homelessness.

3.6 Partnership and service coordination

As the issue of homelessness and crisis accommodation is not unique to the Shoalhaven, Council acknowledges the importance of ensuring consistency and continuity between federal, state and regional strategies in addressing homelessness.

Council commits to:

- a) Provide information to residents about their options for alternative accommodation, in cases where development control orders are issued and they threaten to result in homelessness. Council will keep an updated list of alternative accommodation options rendered through partnerships and networks with homelessness services.
- b) Work with federal, state, non-government agencies and local community groups in planning and implementing federal and state wide plans to address homelessness and a lack of crisis accommodation
- c) Seeking to liaise with other local governments in the region, and other public sector bodies to share best practice, gather accurate data collection and discuss concerns around homelessness and its manifestation

3.7 Right to participate

Shoalhaven City Council – Homelessness Policy

Council recognises that all members of the community have the right to participate in community events, activities and consultations. People who are homeless are some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our community and may require extra assistance to enable them to participate.

Council commits to:

a) Ensuring that all Council events, services and consultations are accessible and inclusive of all members of the community, as far as is practicable

4. IMPLEMENTATION

The Finance, Corporate and Community Group will administer this policy

5. REVIEW

To be reviewed within one (1) year of the election of a new Council.

HT18.9 **Communication Strategy**

HPERM Ref: D18/232830

Group: Finance Corporate & Community Services Group
Section: Recreation Community & Culture

Purpose / Summary

This report is seeking members' endorsement of a Communication Strategy. The Communication Strategy will assist local media to promote activities that are being undertaken by the Homelessness Taskforce. The stories and media articles can also be used to continue ongoing dialogue with State and Federal Members of Parliament about the issues contributing to homelessness in the Shoalhaven.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive a presentation on a proposed Communication Strategy at the meeting on 30 July 2018.
2. Endorse the proposed Communication Strategy having received and considered the presentation at the meeting.

HT18.9

Options

1. The Homelessness Taskforce endorse the Communication Strategy.
Implications: The messages promoted by the Taskforce are clear and strategic.
2. The Homelessness Taskforce do not endorse the Communication Strategy and make an alternative recommendation.
Implications: Unknown

Background

At its 7 April 2018 meeting the Homelessness Taskforce resolved to continue an ongoing dialogue with the State and Federal members and the local media as well as explaining to the local media the activities of the Homelessness Taskforce and the plight of the homeless.

A small working party was formed to progress this resolution that includes the following members:

Melissa Andrews
Ashleigh Hudson
Wendy Woodward
Peter Dover
Kathy Musico
Max Zalakos

At its first meeting on 16 May 2018 the working party decided that the group would develop a communication strategy for the Homelessness Taskforce that would:

- Explain the role of the taskforce
- Highlight their achievements
- Explain how they are collaborating
- Mobilise the community to encourage volunteers and donations
- Tell the positive stories of volunteers
- Tell the positive stories of people experiencing homelessness

Jessica Rippon worked with the working party to assist them to develop a communication strategy that would progress these aims. The agreed strategy will be provided to the Taskforce at the meeting for consideration.

The stories and media articles that are produced can be used to continue an ongoing dialogue with State and Federal Members of Parliament and to provide local media with a positive message about the Taskforce's collaborative approach to tackling issues of homelessness in the Shoalhaven.

Community Engagement

The Communication Strategy will give the Taskforce strategic focus in their community engagement activities.

Policy Implications

The strategy has been developed in line with Council's Media Guidelines POL06/143 and Communication Strategy.

Risk Implications

The Communication Strategy will help to guide the Taskforce in their engagement with the media, State and Federal Members of Parliament and help to mitigate reputational risk and liabilities associated with members of the taskforce making comments to the media on behalf of the Taskforce without a predetermined strategy for such.

HT18.10 Everybody's Home Campaign - Support Request

HPERM Ref: D18/205917

Group: Finance Corporate & Community Services Group
Section: HR, Governance & Customer Services

Attachments: 1. Support Request - NSW Councils - Everybody's Home Campaign [↓](#)

Purpose / Summary

To inform Council of a request from Lake Macquarie City Council to support to the 'Everybody's Home' campaign.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Council offer its support to the Everybody's Home campaign, and write to Lake Macquarie City Council to affirm this.

Options

1. Council support the Everybody's Home campaign. (Recommended)

Implications: Council's support will add weight to the campaign and demonstrate its commitment to alleviating homelessness in the Shoalhaven.

2. Council not support the Everybody's Home campaign.

Implications: Council will not be seen to support the campaign's aims.

Background

Council has been approached by Lake Macquarie City Council to join it in supporting the Everybody's Home campaign, launched earlier this year by a coalition of housing, homelessness and welfare organisations. The campaign aims to help the one in nine households at risk of homelessness, due to the cost of housing. The campaign is asking the Government to address five areas:

- Support for first-time buyers
- A national housing strategy
- A better deal for renters
- Chronic rental stress
- A plan to end homelessness by 2030.

Information about the campaign can be found at <http://everybodyshome.com.au>

Support is being sought in the form of financial support and/or promotion of the campaign to networks.

Shoalhaven City Council

Received

18 JUN 2018

File No. 44336E

Referred to: S McMahon



12 June 2018

General Manager
Shoalhaven City Council
PO Box 42
NOWRA NSW 2541

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject: Lake Macquarie City Council requests your support for the Everybody's Home Campaign

At its meeting of 23 April, Lake Macquarie City Council resolved to support the Everybody's Home campaign. In particular, Council resolved to write to all NSW councils asking them to support the campaign, and to advise the administrators of the Everybody's Home campaign of Council's support.

The Everybody's Home campaign aims to help the one in nine households at risk of homelessness, due to the cost of housing.

On behalf of Lake Macquarie City Council, I invite you to join us in supporting this national campaign. If you would like to discuss Council's position, please don't hesitate to contact Alice Howe, Council's Manager Sustainability on 4921 0337. For more information on the Everybody's Home campaign, please go to everybodyshome.com.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Morven Cameron".

Morven Cameron
Chief Executive Officer

ABN 81 065 027 868

126-138 Main Road Speers Point NSW 2284
Box 1906 Hunter Region Mail Centre NSW 2310
ABN: 81 065 027 868

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HT18.10 - Attachment 1

HT18.11 Ongoing Actions Update

HPERM Ref: D18/232268

Group: Finance Corporate & Community Services Group
Section: Recreation Community & Culture

Attachments: 1. Homeless Hub Statistics [↓](#)

Purpose / Summary

To update the Taskforce on progress made against actions raised at previous meetings.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Homelessness Taskforce receive this report for information.

Options

1. The Homelessness Taskforce receive this report for information.
Implications: The Taskforce is kept updated about progress towards the completion of identified actions.
2. The Taskforce make an alternative recommendation.
Implications: Unknown.

No.	Added to Action Table	Issue and Allocated Person	Action Comments	Update / Outcome July 2018
1.	August 2017	Advocacy – Clr Findley Pursue Public Housing re -urbanisation / redevelopment plan for places of low density.	Clr Findley to write to Family and Community Services about redevelopment proposals.	Paper and mapping being prepared for submission to Department of Premier and Cabinet to advocate for this.
2.	August 2017	Advocacy – All members Monthly Brief	All services currently working with homelessness to provide a monthly brief to Council to be collated and sent to the Local Members and the relevant Ministers.	Homelessness interagency reviewed their action plan for 2018/19 and included an action to provide good news stories to be shared with the Homelessness taskforce. This will be included in the Homelessness Taskforce Communication Plan

HT18.11

No.	Added to Action Table	Issue and Allocated Person	Action Comments	Update / Outcome July 2018
3.	August 2017	<p>Tiny Homes – Cathy Campbell/Gordon Clark</p> <p>Marriot Park / Douglas Street RMS Land – general agreement to pursue for a 4-6 unit Tiny House Project</p> <p>Pursue all three, land options identified in the Council report.</p> <p>Idea to develop a community host for a tiny home – this would need to be done in conjunction with a service provider i.e. Southern Cross Housing</p>	<p>When the outcome of RMS is known, Cllr Proudfoot to lead a doorknock of residents in the area.</p>	<p>No formal response received yet. Related matter, an approach from third party Amoveo, will be reported to the July meeting. Could provide an opportunity to move this forward</p>
4.	August 2017	<p>Permanent Shelter – Cllr Findley Fabcot Land</p>	<p>Cllr Findley to write to FABCOT asking for their contribution to the project through either tiny homes or a space for a permanent shelter.</p>	<p>No formal response from either Fabcot or Stockland. However, Council is pursuing a Planning Proposal to rezone 134 Kinghorn Street, Nowra to enable a permanent shelter.</p>
5.	August 2017	<p>Permanent Shelter – All Members</p>	<p>All members to peruse local real estate and identify possible properties for repurposing / building.</p>	<p>Council building lease issued to SALT to run safe Shelter from 134 Kinghorne Street.</p>
6.	August 2017	<p>Permanent Shelter – Catherine Campbell / Gordon Clark</p>	<p>All churches to be contacted about land holdings to see if there is anything available for use as a permanent shelter.</p>	<p>Council building lease issued to SALT to run safe Shelter from 134 Kinghorne Street.</p>

HT18.11

No.	Added to Action Table	Issue and Allocated Person	Action Comments	Update / Outcome July 2018
			(Uniting and North Nowra City Church a possibility)	
7.	August 2017	Continuing Actions – Southern Cross Housing & FACS Update of the Housing Transfer of Department of Housing Project	To provide ongoing updates and progress information	<p>Tenant Engagement activities commenced on 2 July across the Shoalhaven. Joint Home Visits (JHVs) commenced for clients with complex or individual support needs. Visits were conducted jointly by FACS and SCH.</p> <p>3 drop in sessions for tenants were held during July.</p> <p>Transfer to Southern Cross Housing is on track for 22 October.</p>
8.	August 2017	Continuing Actions – Health Representatives	All Health representatives on the HTS Taskforce to coordinate and plan for addressing the health needs of the homeless. (Perhaps this could also be done in conjunction with SALT as a first responder).	Awaiting update
9.	August 2017	Continuing Actions – Patricia David/Julie Bugden Statistics	Patricia and Julie to form a monthly report to the Mayor in respect to statistics to digest to Politicians.	The Homeless hub saw a total of 430 new clients between July 2018 and June 2018. In the same period the Hub provided service to a total 2358 people. For full figures see attachment 1.
10.	April 2018	Transport for NSW - Second Life Project	Resolved that Council contact the Department and Transport NSW to: 1. Express an	Point 1 - No real progress as the focus has been on achieving the permanent shelter at 134 Kinghorn

HT18.11

No.	Added to Action Table	Issue and Allocated Person	Action Comments	Update / Outcome July 2018
11.	April 2018	Establish Working Party and develop media strategy. Melissa Andrews	<p>interest in the Second Life Project for the acquisition of transport assets for homeless initiatives.</p> <p>2. Request an audit of State Govt land that may be available within the Shoalhaven.</p> <p>1.The Taskforce continue an ongoing dialogue with the State and Federal members and the local media as well as explaining to the local media the activities of the Homelessness Taskforce and the plight of the homeless.</p> <p>2. A small working group be formed to advance a media strategy.</p> <p>3. Membership of this group to comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Melissa Andrews b. John Steele c. Ashleigh Hudson d. Wendy Woodward e. Peter Dover f. Kathy Musico g. Max Zalakos. 	<p>Street, Nowra.</p> <p>Point 2 – letter sent requesting an audit of State Government land within Shoalhaven that might be suitable for this purpose. Noted that Council is willing to assist with or participate in the requested audit.</p> <p>Working party established. Communication Strategy developed in consultation with Jessica Rippon (Executive Strategy). To be included as a separate report.</p>

HT18.11

Shoalhaven Homeless Hub.

31st May, 2018	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Total Sofar.
New Clients													
Women and Children	1	6	1	2	4	0	4	1	3	0	2	0	
Men and Children	2	14	2	2	7	0	10	3	7	0	4	0	
Couple with Children	6	4	4	0	0	4	4	6	4	4	0	0	
Couple	6	2	3	0	0	3	2	5	6	6	0	0	
Youth Under 25	10	6	4	2	4	0	4	14	4	4	0	6	
Male	3	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	
Female	3	1	3	1	0	1	1	0	1	3	0		
Single Women	6	5	2	6	5	6	4	5	7	1	9	6	
Single Men	13	10	18	10	9	9	11	15	8	12	7	11	
Total Numbers of New Clients *** (Adults and Children)	53	49	38	26	29	23	40	49	41	31	25	26	430
Per Month													
Total people utilising service monthly. (Adults Only - not including children)	167	250	235	208	192	125	167	204	187	177	218	228	2358
Aboriginal Clients Accessing Service (Adults & Children)	10	13	8	8	13	8	21	15	8	9	1	7	
Adults Housed through the Hub	2	7	11	2	3	7	3	4	0	3	3	2	
Children Housed	0	0	5	1	2	3	0	0	0	4	4	3	
Homeless Issues (New Clients to Hub)													
Living in Car	10	6	5	4	0	1	6	4	1	2	4	5	
Couch Surfing	22	9	17	5	6	5	12	2	12	6	6	7	
Tenancy at Risk	3	7	1	4	8	2	8	20	12	1	6	1	
Temporary Accommodation Housing	7	17	10	10	8	7	9	9	8	15	6	7	
Living on the Streets	6	6	4	1	3	1	4	9	4	5	3	3	
Caravan Park on temporary Basis	3	4	1	2	4	5	1	5	4	2	0	1	
Released From Jail/rehabilitation/hospital						2						2	
Safe Shelters	2												
***	53	49	38	26	29	23	40	49	41	31	25	26	
Definitions.													
Living in Car	Clients living in their cars												
Couch Surfing	Clients living at other peoples homes or backyards eg. Family / friends / relatives until they find their own accommodation.												
Tenancy at Risk	Clients not being able to afford their rent / mortgage payments and have to move out / arrears in rent or various real estate terminations.												
Temporary Accom	Clients being assisted by Housing NSW - temporary accommodation staying in motels/hotels etc.												
Living on the street	Clients living in tents / caves / abandon buildings / open air												
Caravan Park	Clients living in local caravan parks as a roof over their heads until permanent affordable housing is available												
Safe Shelters	Clients stayed at Safe Shelters referred to Hub for referral process. (Most clients that where living on streets were referred to S/Shelters from the Hub.)												

HT18.12 Proposed Memorandum of Understanding - Affordable Housing Opportunities

HPERM Ref: D18/210107

Group: Planning Environment & Development Group
Section: Strategic Planning

Purpose / Summary

Present an approach received by Council to work with the private sector to investigate and deliver on the ground affordable housing opportunities for consideration.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Council:

1. Proceed to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Amoveo and Southern Cross Community Housing to pursue a partnership to investigate and deliver affordable housing and emergency accommodation opportunities in Shoalhaven
2. Receive update reports, through the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven, as needed or required.

Options

1. Proceed with the Memorandum of Understanding as recommended.

Implications: The Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy includes actions to work with others to achieve affordable housing and temporary emergency accommodation options. This approach provides an opportunity to pursue this in partnership with a private business and Southern Cross Community Housing. It may not amount to anything but is worthy of further investigation and work.

2. Not proceed with the Memorandum of Understanding and advise the other parties accordingly.

Implications: An opportunity to realise affordable housing and temporary emergency accommodation options could be missed.

Background

Following the release of the Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy earlier this year, Council was contacted by representatives of an external party called Amoveo to discuss opportunities to deliver on the ground affordable housing options.

Amoveo have subsequently requested that Council and Southern Cross Community Housing consider signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with them as a precursor to working together to see what opportunities there are that they can assist with and help realise.

Amoveo are a business that are involved in the construction/supply of prefabricated homeless shelters. They have provided examples of the type of product they deliver. They have suggested that they are keen to be part of the overall homelessness solution in Shoalhaven and have noted in their correspondence that they have a partnership with China Rail Corporation, who have a \$500million social fund for these types of projects in Australia.

HT18.12

Essentially the MoU that they have now proposed would see Council and Southern Cross Community Housing work with them to see what opportunities exist to deliver this type of solution in Shoalhaven, potentially involving the use of Government owned land via lease.

If the MoU is pursued it is envisaged that the three parties will commit to be involved as follows:

- Council – help identify suitable land and provide planning support and possibly services to any sites.
- Southern Cross Community Housing – provide ongoing management of any housing or emergency accommodation and seek funding to assist with support services and similar.
- Amoveo – lobby Government for infill blocks identified as suitable for affordable housing or emergency accommodation for use on a leasehold basis. Liaise with the other parties to install homeless accommodation, granny flats and new age boarding houses.

The MoU is not a commitment of funding or other resources but establishes a collaborative approach between the parties to work on potential solutions to homelessness and affordable housing in Shoalhaven.

Through the Taskforce, Council needs to consider whether to commit to the suggested MoU and proceed to work with the other parties. Update reports will be brought back to this Taskforce or Council as needed.

Community Engagement

No direct community engagement is required at present regarding the suggested MoU. However, should the suggested partnership approach deliver potential sites and housing opportunities, the community will need to be separately consulted on these as they potentially arise.

Policy Implications

Council has an adopted Affordable Housing Strategy.

The proposed MoU and partnership approach is consistent with several of the actions identified in the Strategy that seek to utilise Government land that is awaiting future use for temporary affordable housing opportunities.

Any specific policy implications related to any sites that are subsequently identified will need to be separately considered by Council.

Financial Implications

There are currently no direct financial implications at this stage for Council. As noted above the proposed MoU is not a commitment of funding or other resources but a collaborative approach between the parties to work on potential solutions to homelessness and affordable housing in Shoalhaven. Any future direct funding requirements/requests will be separately reported to Council for consideration.

Risk Implications

There are none at this stage, however before the MoU is signed Council will ensure that its contents are reviewed by its Legal Services Manager.