

MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

Meeting Date: Monday, 17 June 2019
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

The following members were present:

Clr John Levett
Clr Nina Digiglio
Lesley Labka
Wendi Hobbs
Rev Matthew Wilson
Patricia David
Peter Dover
Ashleigh Hudson
Sharlene Naismith
Lynne Dooley – Waminda
Adrianna Burnes-Nguyen – Southern Cross Community Housing
Jane Lewis, Acting Director, Finance Corporate & Community Services

Also present:

Gordon Clark – Manager, Strategic Planning
Colin Wood – Manager, Building & Compliance
Donna Corbyn – Community Development Officer

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Findley, Clr Alldrick, Penni Wildi, Nicky Sloan, Eric Coulter, and Alan Heard.

Election of Chairperson

RESOLVED (By Consent)

That Clr John Levett be appointed as the Acting Chairperson for this Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven meeting.

CARRIED

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Wendi Hobbs / Clr Digiglio)

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Monday 04 March 2019 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil

PRESENTATIONS**HT19.4 SALT Reboot Program****HPERM Ref:**
D19/147648

Peter Dover (Salt Ministries) reported on the proposed Salt RE-BOOT Program. This will offer job skills training and accommodation to homeless and marginalised men, women and youth, to enable them to change their lives and become productive members of their communities. He tabled a description of the project (attached).

RE-BOOT is envisaged as a 12-month live-in program for 20 candidates in the first year, developing into an accommodation service with training and employment support, plus a therapeutic community aspect with psychotherapists and mentors.

A video clip was shown featuring Fr Gregory Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries in the USA. This program is the model on which RE-BOOT will be based. Salt Care is planning to send 13 people to train with Homeboy Industries in the delivery of the program at a cost of \$30,000. Council has been approached for a donation of \$2,000; Peter has also been meeting Federal and State Members to seek support.

There is currently no other program that operates on the same basis in Australia; similar programs exist, but none are intentionally bringing people into a community for 12 months to work with them socially, physical and mentally to get them back into their communities. It is an ambitious and costly program. However, there would be economic benefits in the long term: given the cost over the last 12 months of 4000 beds being used at the Shelter, it could ultimately save the government money by reducing offending.

Peter explained that some 70% of Safe Shelter clients have been offenders; many eventually are returned to prison. Long-term homeless people are at particular risk of offending. RE-BOOT addresses the ex-offender group to stop them reoffending, so it is likely there will be more male than female participants at first.

The building will need to facilitate accommodation as well as training, and Salt has been investigating suitable properties with Council.

Peter noted that a significant amount of community donations has been received by Salt Care in the last three years, but none have been received from government. The budget for the program is not included in the prospectus, but is approximately \$750,000, of which \$200,000 is being sourced from a number of organisations. There has been difficulty obtaining firm commitments from State and Federal Government for assistance with the remaining \$550,000. The Taskforce discussed this issue and the proposal emerged to invite the respective Members of Parliament, among others, to attend an event during Homelessness Week (first week of August) at which Salt could present the RE-BOOT project.

The Homelessness Taskforce members were asked to review the prospectus and give feedback.

RECOMMENDATION (Patricia David / Lesley Labka)

That the Homelessness Taskforce recommend that Council:

1. Note that the Shoalhaven Homelessness Interagency is to facilitate an event to bring together relevant organisations, including business chambers and the Shoalhaven Professional Business Association, to receive information including a presentation on the Salt RE-BOOT Program and tour of existing homeless services.
2. By way of support of the RE-BOOT Program, write to the appropriate members of Parliament, including Local Members, to encourage their attendance at the Homelessness Interagency event.
3. Staff work with SALT to source possible opportunities for a building that may be capable of supporting the RE-BOOT program.

CARRIED

REPORTS

HT19.5 May 2019 - Status Report

**HPERM Ref:
D19/120012**

Donna Corbyn (Community Development Officer) provided updates on the Actions:

Item 1: The Working Group has met twice and decided on the central theme, a Call to Action around volunteering and donations. Council's media staff are happy to support one media release per month over a six-month period, which will at this point run from July to December 2019. It was requested that all Taskforce members complete media release forms to facilitate publicity.

Gordon Clark recommended that Item 2 (Land options) and 4 (Transport for NSW Second Life) be removed from the Action List as there has been no further progress on these matters.

Southern Cross Community Housing will give a presentation at a future meeting of the Taskforce.

Item 3: It was clarified that the Homeless Hub have provided statistics for June 2019: there have been 439 new clients, and the Hub is servicing 2,752 per month. Lesley Labka noted that the Family and Community Services (FACS) database will hold more comprehensive information. It is important to have the most accurate figures available for forwarding monthly statistics to State Members. It may require a Memorandum of Understanding between the Homelessness Taskforce and FACS to access this data.

Item 5: The Communications Working Group has completed its task and this Action may also be removed from the list.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive the May 2019 Status report for information and;
2. Note Item 5 - Shoalhaven Housing Strategy Media Release – is now complete and will be removed from the list.

RESOLVED (Wendi Hobbs / Matthew Wilson)

That the Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive the May 2019 Status report for information.

2. Note Item 5 - Shoalhaven Housing Strategy Media Release – is now complete and will be removed from the Action List.
3. Note that items 2 and 4 will be removed from the Action List.
4. Request homelessness statistics be provided by FACS on a quarterly basis.
5. Members complete and return the Media Release Forms to facilitate media releases.

CARRIED

HT19.6 Shoalhaven Homelessness and Good Living Conditions Interagency

**HPERM Ref:
D19/99771**

The report was received for information.

RESOLVED (Patricia David / Clr Digiglio)

That the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive copies of the Homelessness and Good Living Interagency minutes for February, March and April 2019 for their information;
2. Acknowledge the Homelessness and Good Living Interagency Position Paper;
3. Receive an annual report that outlines progress against KPIs that are contained in the Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy.

CARRIED

HT19.7 Older Women's Risk of Homelessness

**HPERM Ref:
D19/135406**

The report was received for information.

RESOLVED (Lesley Labka / Clr Digiglio)

That the Homelessness Taskforce note the release of the Older Women's Risk of Homelessness: Background Paper and receive the copy provided to members under attachments for information.

CARRIED

HT19.8 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: Housing and Homelessness

**HPERM Ref:
D19/135430**

The report was received for information.

RESOLVED (Clr Digiglio / Matthew Wilson)

That the Homelessness Taskforce note the release of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: A Focus Report on Housing and Homelessness.

CARRIED

HT19.9 Housing and Mental Health Agreement Review

**HPERM Ref:
D19/152424**

Several of the agencies on the Taskforce have already submitted feedback separately on the

Review. Sharlene Naismith (Legal Aid) noted that this is an agreement between FACS and the Department of Health – it is not clear how it binds non-signatories such as Southern Cross Community Housing, who are now the primary managers of housing in this area. What is the plan for the future? Jane Lewis (Acting Director, Finance Corporate & Community Services) advised this question can be raised as part of the submission process.

The deadline for Council to submit its feedback is 24 June. Taskforce members were advised they should forward any comments to staff as soon as possible.

RESOLVED (Sharlene Naismith / Clr Digiglio)

That:

1. The Homelessness Taskforce note the review of the Housing and Mental Health Agreement.
2. The Homelessness Taskforce receive a copy of the Consultation Background Paper and the August 2011 Housing and Mental Health Agreement.
3. The Homelessness Taskforce provide feedback regarding the NSW State Government Housing and Mental Health Agreement at its 17 June 2019 meeting.
4. The feedback be reviewed and collated by Council Community Development staff into a submission from the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce and sent to the coordinating consultant.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

Safe Shelter funding

Peter Dover advised that Safe Shelter currently has three full-time staff who are unpaid, plus 140 volunteers. Funding has been sought to pay the managers, ideally by end of the year as they will not be able to stay beyond that. The amount totals \$250,000 on top of the Shelter's other budgets.

Emmanuel Ministries

Peter Dover reported that he has received phone calls regarding Emmanuel Ministries, who operate accommodation based in Worrigea for homeless people. A number of Safe Shelter clients have taken up the offer of accommodation with Emmanuel but it is known that some have since become homeless again. He advised that Salt does not endorse this organisation.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.25pm.

Clr John Levett
CHAIRPERSON