

## MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, 10 March 2022  
**Location:** Council Chambers, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra  
**Time:** 2:07pm

The following members were present:

Mayor Amanda Findley - Chairperson  
Clr Liza Butler  
Clr Moo D'Ath  
Clr Patricia White  
Clr John Wells  
Clr Evan Christen (remotely)  
Clr Tonia Gray (remotely) – left meeting at 3:45pm  
Julie Hopkins – Community Member  
Peter Dover - Salt Ministries  
Patricia David - Unions Shoalhaven  
Olivia Todhunter – Legal Aid NSW  
Ash Hudson – Salt  
Alice Russack – Yumaro Moruya  
Mitchell Bagou – St Vincent De Paul (remotely)  
Kristy Puckeridge – Southern Youth & Family Services (remotely)  
Emilie Martin – Grand Pacific Health (remotely)  
Libby Topp - Shoalhaven Drug & Alcohol Service (remotely) – left meeting at 3:28pm  
Lindy Meeves – Nowra Community Mental Health Services (remotely)  
Julie Bugden – Shoalhaven Homeless Hub (remotely)  
Ruby Hansen-Tarrant (remotely)  
Kim Spinks – Dept of Communities & Justice (remotely)  
Lucinda Knapp – Aboriginal Legal Service (remotely)  
Donna Corbyn – Bay & Basin Community Resources (remotely) – left meeting at 3:46pm  
Nicole Nicholls – Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (remotely) – joined 2:45pm  
Justine O'Reilly – Shoalhaven Community Legal Centre

Others Present:

Jane Lewis – Director City Lifestyles  
Gordon Clark – Interim Director City Futures  
Colin Wood – Manager – Certification & Compliance  
Michael Paine – Manager – Community Connections  
Marsha Makary – Community Capacity Builder Homelessness  
Brooke Aldous – Senior Governance Officer  
Ms Kirsty Vezinias – Community Capacity – Student Placement  
Raul Arregui (remotely) – left meeting at 3:47pm  
Mick Sweeney  
Digby Hughes – Homelessness NSW  
Blake Richards – CEO My Best Life

## HT22.9 Election of Chairperson

Mayor Amanda Findley was appointed Chairperson for the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven. No other nominations were received.

## Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Matthew Sutcliffe – Salvation Army and Cllr Matthew Norris.

## Confirmation of the Minutes

**RESOLVED** (Patricia David / Cllr White)

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Thursday 14 October 2021 be confirmed.

CARRIED

## Declarations of Interest

Nil

## PRESENTATIONS

### HT22.1 City Lifestyles Presentation - Overview of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven

HPERM Ref:  
D22/85735

Marsha Makaray - Community Capacity Builder Homelessness made a presentation which covered the following items:

- *Overview of the Taskforce*
- *Terms of Reference*
- *Strategic Plan*
- *Relevant Policies and Procedures*

### HT22.2 Presentation - Governance - Brief Induction

HPERM Ref:  
D22/85755

Brooke Aldous – Senior Governance Officer – made a presentation which covered the following items:

- *Code of Conduct*
- *Code of Meeting Practice*
- *Delegations*
- *Declaration of Interests*
- *External Member Reports*
- *Overview of what is Operational / within the Committees/Boards interest / clarification of appropriate recommendations under the Committees/Boards delegation*

## REPORTS

### HT22.3 Notification of Council Resolution - Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven

HPERM Ref:  
D22/85786

#### Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive the Notification of Council Resolution – Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven Re-establishment report for information.

#### RESOLVED (Moo D'Ath / Liza Butler)

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive the Notification of Council Resolution – Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven Re-establishment report for information.

CARRIED

### HT22.4 Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce Committee Community Membership Expression of Interest - Member Recommendation Report

HPERM Ref:  
D22/61748

Marsha Makary – Community Capacity Builder – Homelessness, provided a brief update on the Expression of Interest Panel process and some background on the proposed new members who are being put forward to join the Taskforce.

#### Recommendation

That:

1. Four applicants are invited to represent their organisation on the Taskforce:
  - Ruby Hansen-Tarrant - Age Matters
  - Grace Rey – Socks and Jocks
  - Liz O'Connell – Mission Australia
  - Alice Russack – Yumaro (NDIS)

The above organisations are not currently represented on the committee.

2. Three community membership appointments are offered to applicants with lived experience:
  - Michael Sweeney – Bomaderry
  - Shirley Taylor – Ulladulla
  - Keith Davis – Ulladulla (itinerant)
3. Three community membership appointments are offered to represent community members with an interest in homelessness:
  - Raul Arregui – North Nowra
  - Julianne Hopkins – Nowra
  - Stuart Bellingham – Mollymook

#### RECOMMENDATION (Clr White / Patricia David)

That:

1. Four applicants are invited to represent their organisation on the Taskforce:
  - Ruby Hansen-Tarrant - Age Matters
  - Grace Rey – Socks and Jocks
  - Liz O'Connell – Mission Australia

- Alice Russack – Yumaro (NDIS)

The above organisations are not currently represented on the committee.

2. Three community membership appointments are offered to applicants with lived experience:
  - Michael Sweeney – Bomaderry
  - Shirley Taylor – Ulladulla
  - Keith Davis – Ulladulla (itinerant)
3. Three community membership appointments are offered to represent community members with an interest in homelessness:
  - Raul Arregui – North Nowra
  - Julianne Hopkins – Nowra
  - Stuart Bellingham – Mollymook

CARRIED

#### **HT22.6 Organisation Membership Recommendation Report**

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/71284**

Marsha Makary – Community Capacity Builder – Homelessness, put forward the recommendation for suggested representatives Digby Hughes – Homelessness NSW & Blake Richards – My Best Life Australia to be invited to join the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven representing their organisations.

Discussion centred around the Tempy Nester program which is run by My Best Life Australia. Blake Richards provided the following information in relation to the program and also the work of My Best Life Australia:

- Tempy Nester is a national program that provides temporary accommodation to women and children escaping domestic and family violence and homelessness. This is a significant issue across Australia. The Tempy Nester program currently focuses mostly on the NSW Central Coast.
- My Best Life (MBL) are developing a "safe house" program which will focus on assisting mature aged women who are struggling with homelessness - currently the biggest growth area in homelessness is women over 55.
- My Best Life Australia is targeting teenagers that are couch surfing - over 300 teenagers have been identified as couch surfing just in the Ulladulla region.
- Preliminary discussions have been held with Church of Christ in South Nowra as well as the Highway Church Ulladulla who are doing a conjunctional project with Safeways Housing. My Best Life has had discussions with these organisations about the possibility of expanding tiny homes for emergency or long term accommodation.

#### **Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the following representatives be invited to represent their organisations on the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

- Blake Richards (My Best Life Australia)
- Digby Hughes (Homelessness NSW)

**RESOLVED** (By consent)

That the following representatives be invited to represent their organisations on the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

- Blake Richards (My Best Life Australia)
- Digby Hughes (Homelessness NSW)

CARRIED

**HT22.5 Action Table Update**

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/68918**

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive the Update on Actions report for information.
2. Acknowledge the following actions as being complete and remove from the action table:
  - a. HT21.1 Introduction & Update on Actions - Shoalhaven Homelessness Workshop Planning Group – Formation
  - b. HT21.2 Homelessness Taskforce - Membership - Expression of Interest endorsed - Independent Assessor - Patricia David
  - c. HT21.4 Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce Thrive Together Fair Planning Group – Formation
3. Acknowledge actions one and two from item HT19.6 as being complete and remove from the action table:

*HT19.6 Shoalhaven Homelessness & Good Living Interagency - Annual Progress Report - Affordable Housing Strategy*

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.*

**RESOLVED (Moo D'Ath / Clr White)**

That the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive the Update on Actions report for information.
2. Acknowledge the following actions as being complete and remove from the action table:
  - a. HT21.1 Introduction & Update on Actions - Shoalhaven Homelessness Workshop Planning Group – Formation
  - b. HT21.2 Homelessness Taskforce - Membership - Expression of Interest endorsed - Independent Assessor - Patricia David
  - c. HT21.4 Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce Thrive Together Fair Planning Group – Formation
3. Acknowledge actions one and two from item HT19.6 as being complete and remove from the action table:

*HT19.6 Shoalhaven Homelessness & Good Living Interagency - Annual Progress Report - Affordable Housing Strategy*

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.*

CARRIED

## GENERAL BUSINESS

### HT22.7 Additional Item - Reinstatement of Social Work services

Discussion took place around the lack of social work services available to homeless persons within the Shoalhaven and advocacy work to be done to have these services reinstated.

Julie Bugden (Shoalhaven Homeless Hub) advised that she will make contact with the Centrelink Community Engagement Officer who covers the Shoalhaven and with her permission, provide contact details to Shoalhaven City Councils Governance team for distribution to Agencies in the taskforce.

#### **RESOLVED** (Liza Butler / Moo D'Ath)

That the Mayor consider writing to the Local Federal Member for Gilmore, all candidates in the upcoming Federal Election, the Minister and Shadow Minister requesting the reinstatement of face-to-face social work services within the Shoalhaven region provided by Shoalhaven Centrelink/Services Australia.

CARRIED

### HT22.8 Additional Item - Update - Director City Futures - Affordable Housing Strategy

Gordon Clark – Interim Director City Futures - provided an update on Council's Affordable Housing Strategy. **Action – It was noted that a written summary report will be provided at the next meeting.**

- Main short term action that Council has been working on over the past 4-5 years is the affordable housing opportunity at Coomea Street, Bomaderry. There are now 5 parcels of land that Council owned that have been transferred to Southern Cross Housing who have now lodged a DA to potentially provide up to 39 affordable housing units on the site. There is a Community Housing Agreement that the site is to be used for affordable housing and if it is ever sold any profit from the sale has to go back to affordable housing in the Shoalhaven.
- In terms of short term actions:
  - Council is continually amending planning controls to enable smaller and more affordable product, and
  - working on broader advocacy to State Government particularly around the opportunity of renewing the NSW Land and Housing Portfolio which has the biggest potential to provide and increase in essential affordable housing .
- Medium term actions include a range of things in this space such as providing additional floorspace and parking discounts for affordable housing, and pursuing appropriate medium-density, boarding-houses and secondary dwelling development.
- An internal Affordable Housing Working Group has been established consisting of Council staff from Community Connections, Property and Strategic Planning to implement longer term actions.
- Council recently released its “Advocacy Projects 2022” document which has been provided to the two main Federal Government election candidates, and subsequently met with them. The document has also been provided to local State Members as well as the relevant Ministers and Shadow Ministers of the Federal Government. The need for additional funding for social and affordable housing is identified within the document.
- Council has signed up to a new demographic profiling tool called Housing ID which provides statistics on housing availability and affordability in Shoalhaven and continues to

track into future. It can be accessed at: <https://housing.id.com.au/shoalhaven>

Mayor Findley advised the Taskforce that she applied to be the Local Government NSW Regional Representative on the NSW Housing Taskforce.

Clr White requested information on the Development Application lodged with Council by Southern Cross Housing for 27 units to be built on the corner of South Street and St Vincent Street and acknowledged that she was aware of a number of objections have been received on this matter.

Gordon Clark responded to advise that letters of support are just important as letters of objections. Members of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven are encouraged to submit letters of support for this development.

Please refer to DA22/1078

Clr Wells asked whether there is opportunity for rezoning development land to residential to create sites for affordable housing.

Clr Wells expressed his concern over the decommissioning of state housing stock in the area, particularly around Bomaderry and questioned whether Council has investigated the strategy and cost savings in reinventing or redeveloping that stock.

Gordon Clark advised that Council have been raising this with State Government over the past three years. As the property stock that is owned by the NSW Government is managed locally by Southern Cross Housing, there may be a possible three way project between Council, Southern Cross Housing and the NSW Land & Housing Corporation to renew the housing stock in Bomaderry and other areas to clarify what can be done to increase housing opportunities.

**Action - Clr Wells requested the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven be kept informed of any developments on this matter.**

Clr Findley advised Council have also been discussing with the Land & Housing Corporation the issue of selling housing stock. Council has recommended that they are not sold prior to developing a renewal strategy for Shoalhaven.

Note: Libby Topp left the meeting, the time being 3:28pm

Note: Clr Gray left the meeting, the time being 3:45pm

Note: Donna Corbyn left the meeting, the time being 3:46pm

Note: Raul Arregui left the meeting, the time being 3:47pm

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 3:52pm.

Mayor Amanda Findley  
CHAIRPERSON