

MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 24 May 2022
Location: Council Chambers, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 2:00pm

The following members were present:

Mayor Amanda Findley - Chairperson
Clr Liza Butler
Clr Moo D'Ath (remotely)
Clr Patricia White
Clr Mark Kitchener
The Hon. Gareth Ward MP (remotely)
Mr Peter Dover – Salt Care
Ms Ash Hudson – Salt Care
Ms Patricia David – Unions Shoalhaven
Ms Justine O'Reilly – Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre
Ms Olivia Todhunter – Legal Aid NSW
Ms Cathy Campbell – Southern Cross Housing (remotely)
Ms Alice Russack – Yumaro (remotely)
Ms Lindy Meeves – Nowra Community Mental Health (remotely)
Ms Donna Corbyn – Bay & Basin Community Resources (remotely)
Ms Anna Bacik – Community Industry Group (remotely)
Ms Julie Bugden – Shoalhaven Homeless Hub (remotely)
Mr Blake Richards – My Best Life
Ms Sarah Date – Safe Waters (remotely)
Mr Keith Davis
Ms Liz O'Connell
Mr Stuart Bellingham
Mr Michael Sweeney
Ms Julie Hopkins
Mr Raul Arregui

Others Present:

Carey McIntyre – Director – City Futures
Gordon Clark – Section Manager – Strategic Planning
Matt Rose – Coordinator - Strategic Planning Team
Colin Wood – Manager – Certification & Compliance (remotely) – left meeting at 2:40pm
Michael Paine – Manager - Community Connections
Carly McWalters – Team Leader – Community Capacity Building
Marsha Makary – Community Capacity Builder - Homelessness
Kirsty Vezinias – Community Capacity – Student Placement
Brooke Aldous – Governance Coordinator

The Chairperson opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

PRESENTATIONS

HT22.10 Community Workshop for Homelessness 2022

HPERM Ref:
D22/197028

Marsha Makary - Community Capacity Builder, Homelessness provided a presentation to the Homelessness Taskforce on the recent Community Workshop for Homelessness which was held on 12 May 2022.

The presentation included key learnings and themes that were identified as part of the workshop and the steps to be taken to address these issues

A copy of the presentation is attached to these Minutes.

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Maria Mitchell, Emilie Martin, Ruby Hansen-Tarrant, Digby Hughes and Penni Wildi.

Confirmation of the Minutes

Sarah Date – Safe Waters enquired as to whether “Safeways Housing” referred to at the fourth point under item *HT22.6 – Organisation Membership Recommendation Report* of the previous Minutes, should have been Safe Waters. In addition, the Highway Church Ulladulla is now known as Ground Swell Church.

It was confirmed by Blake Richards, My Best Life Australia, that these two organisations had been referred to incorrectly at the last meeting and the Minutes required correction.

Further, the reference to preliminary discussions being undertaken that was reported in the previous Minutes will be discussed as part of General Business.

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Thursday 10 March 2022 be confirmed.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Thursday 10 March 2022 be confirmed, noting that as per Sarah Date’s (Safe Waters) advice, the following organisation names referred to in the previous minutes, be corrected as shown below:

- Safe Ways Housing be corrected to Safe Waters
- Highway Church Ulladulla be corrected to Ground Swell Church

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil.

REPORTS

HT22.11 Update on Implementation of Council's Affordable Housing Strategy

HPERM Ref:
D22/203364

Gordon Clark – Section Manager – Strategic Planning, provided an update:

- Updated census data will be made available shortly, which will help with updating information.
- The key focus of the initial actions in the Affordable Housing Strategy was the first direct provision of affordable housing on previously owned Council Land, i.e. Coomea Street, Bomaderry. The Development Application for this site is currently before Council for consideration.
- The planning controls for the Moss Vale Road Urban Release Area is currently on public exhibition. This development could potentially provide an additional 2,000 – 2,500 lots for a range of different more affordable housing products over the next 20 to 25 years.
- Council continues to make a range of submissions to State and Federal Government to advocate for both affordable and social housing.
- As part of the advocacy process, Council is working in conjunction with the NSW Land & Housing Corporation (LAHC), with the current focus on reviewing the renewal of the LAHC portfolio within the Shoalhaven, as well as the possibility of signing a collaboration agreement with Council.
- Council staff to liaise with the elected Council to refresh the current Affordable Housing Strategy which was developed in 2018.

In late 2021 Council signed up to a housing monitor which provides key statistics around housing affordability. This monitor is available on the Council website through the Census platform.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive the update report on the implementation of the Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy for information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive the update report on the implementation of the Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy for information.

CARRIED

HT22.12 Action Report Table May 2022

HPERM Ref:
D22/182069

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. HT19.6 Shoalhaven Homelessness & Good Living Interagency - Annual Progress Report - Affordable Housing Strategy
 - b. HT21.1 Introduction & Update on Actions - Shoalhaven Homelessness Workshop Planning Group – Formation
 - c. HT21.4 Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce Thrive Together Fair Planning Group – Formation
 - d. HT22.5 Action Table Update
 - e. HT22.6 Organisation Membership Invitations - My Best Life Australia and Homelessness NSW
 - f. HT22.9 Election of Chairperson - Mayor Amanda Findley
3. Acknowledge the following actions require further action:
- a. HT22.8 Additional Item - Update - Affordable Housing Strategy - Report Request and State Housing Situation
 - i. *Receive an annual report that outlines progress against KPI's that are contained in the Shoalhaven Affordable Housing Strategy*
 - b. HT22.7 Additional Item - Reinstatement of Social Work services - Write to MP for Gilmore, Federal Candidates, Minister & Shadow Minister

RESOLVED (By consent)

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CARRIED

HT22.13 Homelessness Interagency Submissions

HPERM Ref:
D22/206113

Donna Corbyn – Bay & Basin Community Resources raised the following items:

- There is a “Pathway 2 Home” resource book which identifies sites where people can access showers, kitchens, laundry facilities etc for a nominal fee. This booklet includes Council caravan parks and leisure centres across the Shoalhaven.
- The suggestion that a map could be developed to identify free sites with close by amenities where people could stay safely, in particular aimed to assist those people that move around the area (living in cars etc).
- Acknowledge that for some people living in a car is the only available choice they have, while others live in a car by choice and are quite happy with this option to allow them to move around the Shoalhaven area.

Julie Bugden - Shoalhaven Homeless Hub, advised that there is an app “WikiCamp” which identifies free camp sites, water, showers and other amenities.

Cathy Campbell - Southern Cross Housing – advised that Southern Cross Housing in conjunction with Council are working on updating the “Pathway 2 Home” Guide which will feature a live drop-in capability, similar to how real estate agency drop ins currently exist.

Recommendation

The Shoalhaven Homelessness Interagency recommend that the Homelessness Taskforce consider the following propositions as crisis, short-medium term, and long-term strategic priorities:

1. Crisis Term:
 - a. Council to negotiate the meanwhile-use of vacant properties as crisis accommodation for rough sleepers throughout winter period.
2. Short-Medium Term:
 - a. Disincentives for properties that are used as short-term holiday homes/ Incentives for owners that rent their properties on long-term leases (12 months+).
 - b. Requirements for developers to create percentage of any new developments as affordable and/or social housing units.
 - c. Push for State Government to expand social housing stock in Shoalhaven region.
 - d. Evaluate Local Governance rules to maximise support for housing developments.
3. Long Term:
 - a. Lobby for increase of statutory income supports (Centrelink) to Centrelink recipients to maintain basic living expenses amid growing rental costs.

RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That:

1. The Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive this report from the Shoalhaven Homelessness Interagency for information and consideration.
2. Council consider the following propositions as strategic priorities for the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven:
 - a. Crisis Term:
 - i. Council to negotiate the meanwhile-use of vacant properties as crisis accommodation for rough sleepers throughout winter period.

- b. Short-Medium Term:
 - i. Disincentives for properties that are used as short-term holiday homes/ Incentives for owners that rent their properties on long-term leases (12 months+).
 - ii. Requirements for developers to create percentage of any new developments as affordable and/or social housing units.
 - iii. Push for State Government to expand social housing stock in Shoalhaven region.
 - iv. Evaluate Local Governance rules to maximise support for housing developments.
 - c. Long Term:
 - i. Lobby for the increase of statutory income supports (Centrelink) to Centrelink recipients to maintain basic living expenses amid growing rental costs.
3. The Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive a report back to a future meeting advising who is responsible for which item.

GENERAL BUSINESS

HT22.14 Additional Item – Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Sarah Date – Safe Waters, advised that Safe Waters & Groundswell Church, are currently working in conjunction with a donor for the provision of a tiny home to help address the homelessness situation in the Ulladulla area.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That as discussed earlier at the item titled - Confirmation of Minutes; the Taskforce note that the two organisations being, Safe Waters and Groundswell Church are currently working to secure the donation of a tiny home to help address homelessness in the Ulladulla area.

CARRIED

HT22.15 Additional Item - Social Housing

Keith Davis made the following suggestions to the Taskforce:

- Post-election is an opportune time to put together a proposal for a cooperative housing community within the Shoalhaven.
- The Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven form a working group to develop a professional presentation as to the application for a cooperative housing community to be established wherever suitable land may be available.
- Keith has developed a draft framework for the concept of cooperative housing.

RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That Council:

1. Immediately advocate for social housing funding, that is general in nature and not classified, (so that it can be utilised for all classifications of housing) to:
 - a. The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia.
 - b. The Minister for Social Services.
 - c. The Hon Fiona Phillips, Member for Gilmore.
2. Consider as part of future strategic discussions, how community cooperative housing can play a part in solving the affordable housing issues in the Shoalhaven.

3. Write to the Federal Minister for Planning and Homes to request that regional plans across NSW better identify social and affordable housing.
4. As part of advocating for Federal funding, the correspondence also be forwarded to the equivalent State counterparts.

HT22.16 Additional Item – Doing it Tough Guide (previously Pathway 2 Home)

- Marsha Makary - Community Capacity Builder – Homelessness, advised that Council and Southern Cross Housing are partnering to update the Pathway 2 Home Guide which will become the Doing It Tough Guide. It will be an online resource and a booklet and is due to be released in early August 2022 and distributed at the Thrive Together Fair.
- Marsha Makary - Community Capacity Builder – Homelessness will be contacting local service providers and organisations in the homelessness space via email to collate information to update the Guide. This opportunity will also be extended to the Homelessness Taskforce to include and update their organisations details.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That:

1. The Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven receive an update report on progress of the Doing It Tough Guide (previously Pathway 2 Home) at the next meeting.
2. Carey McIntyre - Director City Futures explore the opportunity for access to the NSW Register of Airbnb Resource, noting that potentially there could be privacy issues surrounding Council's access to this information.

CARRIED

HT22.17 Additional Item - Presentations to Next Meeting

RESOLVED (By consent)

That at the next meeting of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven, the following organisations will make presentations:

1. Southern Cross Housing on the Southern Cross Housing Leasehold Program.
2. Safe Waters on the work that they have undertaken.

CARRIED

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 4:03pm.

Mayor Amanda Findley
CHAIRPERSON