

## MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, 1 September 2022  
**Location:** Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra  
**Time:** 2:05pm

The following members were present:

Mayor Amanda Findley – Chairperson  
The Hon. Gareth Ward MP – left meeting at 3:40pm  
Clr Moo D'Ath (remotely)  
Clr Evan Christen  
Clr Patricia White  
Clr Tonia Gray (remotely) – left meeting at 4:09pm  
Mr Peter Dover – SALT  
Ms Ash Hudson - SALT  
Ms Patricia David – Unions Shoalhaven (remotely)  
Mr Bernard Gleeson - St Vincent De Paul – left meeting at 3:45pm  
Ms Justine O'Reilly - Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre  
Capt Matthew Sutcliffe – The Salvation Army (remotely)  
Ms Olivia Todhunter - Legal Aid NSW (remotely) – joined at 2:21pm  
Ms Erin Mullaly – Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre (remotely)  
Ms Emilie Martin  
Ms Cathy Campbell – Southern Cross Housing  
Mr Eric Coulter – Southern Cross Housing  
Ms Julie Bugden -Shoalhaven Homeless Hub (remotely) – left meeting at 3:55pm  
Ms Ruby Hansen-Tarrant – Age Matters (remotely) – joined at 2:21pm  
Mr Keith Davis  
Mr Stuart Bellingham  
Mr Michael Sweeney  
Ms Julianne Hopkins  
Mr Digby Hughes – Homelessness Australia  
Mr Blake Richards - My Best Life  
Ms Sarah Date – Safe Waters (remotely) – left meeting at 3:29pm  
Mr Adam Gowen – Safe Waters (remotely)  
Mr Chris Martin – Safe Waters (remotely)  
Ms Jodi Blair – Safe Waters (remotely)  
Mr Kent Lawking – Safe Waters (remotely)

Others Present:

Carey McIntyre – Director – City Futures  
James Ruprai – Director – City Development  
Gordon Clark – Section Manager – Strategic Planning  
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

The Chairperson opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

### Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Ell, Penni Wildi, Maria Mitchell, Libby Topp, Lindy Meeves, Alice Russack, Lucinda Knapp, Raul Arregui and Jane Lewis.

### Confirmation of the Minutes

**RESOLVED** (Gareth Ward MP/Clr White)

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Tuesday 24 May 2022 be confirmed.

CARRIED

### Declarations of Interest

Nil.

## PRESENTATIONS

### HT22.18 Doing It Tough Guide Update

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/305975**

Shoalhaven City Council's Community Capacity Builder, Homelessness - Marsha Makary provided a presentation to the Homelessness Taskforce on the recent development of the Doing It Tough Directory in partnership with Southern Cross Housing.

- It is a guide for those needing extra support, including crisis and homeless support.
- The Directory was released at the Thrive Together Fair, held on 3 August 2022.
- The online version of the Director is available on Path2Home website, which is maintained by Southern Cross Housing.
- Council is looking into available funding options for the future printing of hard copies of the Directory for distribution to service providers.
- A softcopy of the Doing It Tough Directory book will be made available via the Council website.
- Council will distribute the Directory to Council's frontline staff to assist them when they come into contact with people who are experiencing homelessness or doing it tough. The emergency services – Police, Hospital and Ambulance services staff - will also receive copies of the book for the same purpose of supporting staff engagement with people doing it tough.
- The approximate cost for 1000 copies is \$4,295, or for 2000 copies \$6,995 through Ulladulla Printing Service.
- Mr Hughes suggested investigating printing options through Street Smart via the small organisations who are members of the Taskforce.
- Mr Michael Paine - Manager - Community Connections advised that Community Connections are currently undertaking discussions regarding distribution of the Directory

through Allied Health and local GP clinics.

- Ms Campbell advised that Southern Cross Housing is launching a new website next week. The information for service providers who are listed in the Directory will appear on a drop-pin map, similar to a real estate search, and will be available online for people to access.
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### HT22.19 2022 Thrive Together Fair Presentation

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/305994**

Shoalhaven City Council's Community Capacity Builder, Homelessness - Marsha Makary provided a presentation to the Homelessness Taskforce on the recent Thrive Together Fair held on 3 August 2022.

- Marsha acknowledged and gave thanks to the Planning Working Group - Kate Morris (TAFE), Jasmine Huang (Shoalhaven Legal Centre), Samantha Stiff (Headspace), Patricia David (Unions Shoalhaven), Lucinda Knapp (ALS), Ash Hudson & Peter Dover (SALT), Lindy Meeves (ISHLD), Emma Wood (Shoalcoast), Fiona Lam (SNS) Samantha Kettlewell (Beyond Empathy) and Gareth McAuslin (GPH) as well as Council's Communication Team.
- There were three components of the Fair being the Donation Drive (6 June – 15 July), the callout to organisations to join the Fair, and the Fair itself.
- The aim of the Donation Drive was to put together dignity packs containing essential items for distribution at the Fair which had a great response. 250 bags were made including Escabags, family bags, single men and single women bags. All of the bags were given away by 12:00 at the Fair.
- There were approximately 350 attendees at the Fair.
- There was discussion around planning ideas for future Fairs. Some suggestions included:
  - Holding some smaller pop up type fairs throughout the Shoalhaven to reach more areas – eg Ulladulla / Bay & Basin / North venues in addition to the Thrive Together Fair in its current format.
  - This format could use established organisations which would reach their contacts and clientele in the areas and could reduce hire fee expenses.
- Sarah Date – Safewaters advised that there is a Community Expo taking place on 21 October in Ulladulla and that she will forward the information to Ms Marsha Makary for distribution to members of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven.
- Cllr Christen asked whether a breakdown of attendee data was available, for example men/women/mothers/children
- Transport to and from the event was discussed as a way to encourage community attendance from all areas of Shoalhaven. There may be other options in local communities for example Bowling Club buses.

### HT22.20 Safe Waters Presentation

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/315894**

Sarah Date from Safe Waters provided a presentation to the Homelessness Taskforce on how Safe Waters began and their journey towards opening community-funded homelessness shelter(s).

- Safe Waters has just celebrated its 3 year anniversary on 19 August.
- The model was based off SALT's Safe Shelter in Nowra.
- Initially, Safe Waters was seeking properties through the Churches in the Ulladulla area but as this was unsuccessful, they ended up with a two-bedroom private rental property in South Street, Ulladulla.
- This property opened on 1 November 2020, and since that time there have been almost 200 inquiries for assistance, but have only been able to assist 66 people.

- The property has two bunk beds sleeping 4 people in each bedroom but this has presented some difficulties for some applicants.
- A Highway Shelter has been donated to Safe Waters by Groundswell Church, but there have been delays in finishing the renovations on this property due to accessibility and bushfire regulations.
- It is proposed that the Highway Shelter be used for crisis accommodation in the Ulladulla area, of which there is none at the current time.
- Another property which is owned by Council in St Vincent Street is planned to become another shelter in the future.
- It is planned that the Highway Shelter will be made available for women and the St Vincent Street Shelter will be made available for men.
- Colin Wood advised that Council is working with the access consultant for the Highway Shelter property and will meet onsite with the consultant once the performance report has been provided.
- A meeting will be scheduled between Safe Waters, Council staff and Council members once the access consultant report has been completed.

## **HT22.21 Southern Cross Housing Leasehold Program**

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/339521**

Eric Coulter - Southern Cross Housing (SCH) provided a presentation to the Homelessness Taskforce on the Southern Cross Housing Leasehold Program.

- Community Housing Leasehold Program is supplementary funding to assist with the extra provision of social housing in the Shoalhaven area and other Southern Cross Housing locations.
- Of the 2300 Southern Cross Housing properties, approximately 311 are leasehold homes which are leased by SCH and then sublet to SCH tenants in a normal lease agreement.
- 30 long term homeless people who are rough sleepers have been housed through the Together Home program in the Shoalhaven and southern region.
- Most of the properties are rented through real estate agents, but there are some that are rented through private landlords with private management agreements in place.
- SCH offer three rental choice products:
  1. The Rent Choice Start Safely is a 3-year tapered subsidy program targeted to tenants who are fleeing domestic violence. For the first year tenants pay social housing rent (25% of income + 100% of rental assistance). Over the proceeding four blocks of six months the rent eventually goes up to the market rent.
  2. The Rent Choice Youth is to assist young people into rental accommodation, currently there are 3 active tenants on this program in Shoalhaven. Rent Choice Youth is similar to the Rent Choice Start Safely platform but also looks at the potential of tenants to earn income.
  3. The Rent Choice Assist is for accommodation after the bushfires and COVID pandemic and is managed by Southern Cross Housing. This is for a shorter period of 12 months.
- SCH also offer a Private Rental Subsidy for people with a chronic disability that can't secure a property in the private rental market when their tenancy becomes at risk.
- There is also Short Term / Temporary Accommodation for people which has an overall cap of 28 days over a 12 month period.

Note: Sarah Date – Safe Waters left the meeting at 3:29pm.

Note: The Hon. Gareth Ward MP left the meeting at 3:40pm.

Note: Mr Bernard Gleeson - St Vincent De Paul left the meeting at 3:45pm.

## REPORTS

### HT22.22 Updated Action Table Report - September 2022

HPERM Ref:  
D22/340296

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

That the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Acknowledge the following actions as being complete and remove from the action table:
  - a. HT22.12 Affordable Housing Strategy / State Housing Situation - Annual Report requested
2. Acknowledge the following actions will be completed at the Homelessness Taskforce meeting on 1 September and can be removed from the action table upon completion:
  - a. HT22.16 Doing it Tough Guide / Access to NSW Register - Airbnb - Report Request
  - b. HT22.17 Southern Cross Housing - Housing Leasehold Program / Safe Waters - work undertaken
3. Acknowledge the following actions require further action and consideration by the Homelessness Taskforce:
  - a. HT22.13 Homelessness Interagency - Taskforce Strategic Priorities investigations - Crisis Accommodation / Holiday rentals / Affordable - Social housing / Income support - report request
  - b. HT22.15 Social / Affordable Housing Funding - advocate to Federal Government - Cooperative housing - Regional Planning

#### RESOLVED (Peter Dover / Keith Davis)

That the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Acknowledge the following actions as being complete and remove from the action table:
  - a. HT22.12 Affordable Housing Strategy / State Housing Situation - Annual Report requested
2. Acknowledge the following actions will be completed at the Homelessness Taskforce meeting on 1 September and can be removed from the action table upon completion:
  - a. HT22.16 Doing it Tough Guide / Access to NSW Register - Airbnb - Report Request
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  - a. HT22.13 Homelessness Interagency - Taskforce Strategic Priorities investigations - Crisis Accommodation / Holiday rentals / Affordable - Social housing / Income support - report request
  - b. HT22.15 Social / Affordable Housing Funding - advocate to Federal Government - Cooperative housing - Regional Planning

CARRIED

**HT22.23 Shoalhaven Community Strategic Plan for Homelessness Progress Update****HPERM Ref:  
D22/311944****Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Homelessness Taskforce receive the report for information on the current progress and proposed next steps of the Shoalhaven Community Strategic Plan for Homelessness.

**RESOLVED** (Digby Hughes / Justine O'Reilly)

That the Homelessness Taskforce receive the report for information on the current progress and proposed next steps of the Shoalhaven Community Strategic Plan for Homelessness.

CARRIED

**HT22.24 Shoalhaven City Mayor's Relief Fund for Homelessness****HPERM Ref:  
D22/348224****Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive the Mayors Relief Fund for Homelessness in Shoalhaven report for information.
2. Endorse the proposal for the Mayors Relief Fund for Homelessness in the Shoalhaven. This proposal will consist of two components:
  - a. Conduct a community wide appeal for monetary donations to the Mayoral Relief Fund for Homelessness, and
  - b. Administer a funding program to provide quick access funding for the Shoalhaven community to support initiatives that assist people who are, or are at risk of, experiencing homelessness.

**RESOLVED** (Peter Dover / Digby Hughes)

That the Homelessness Taskforce:

1. Receive the Mayors Relief Fund for Homelessness in Shoalhaven report for information.
2. Endorse the proposal for the Mayors Relief Fund for Homelessness in the Shoalhaven. This proposal will consist of two components:
  - a. Conduct a community wide appeal for monetary donations to the Mayoral Relief Fund for Homelessness, and
  - b. Administer a funding program to provide quick access funding for the Shoalhaven community to support initiatives that assist people who are, or are at risk of, experiencing homelessness

CARRIED

**HT22.25 National Cooperative Housing Commission - Proposal to Establish Working Group****HPERM Ref:  
D22/316064**

Mr Digby Hughes - Homelessness Australia advised that Common Equity is the peak body for housing cooperatives in NSW and would be able to provide assistance and advice regarding their cooperative housing models in NSW.

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



That:

1. A working group be formed to develop a website for the purpose of creating a groundswell of public support for a National Cooperative Housing Commission with the charter of assisting financially challenged communities to establish affordable housing estates nationwide. This would be similar to the US model, reference; The National Association of Housing Cooperatives [coophousing.org](http://coophousing.org).
2. The working group then develop a proposal for a pilot cooperative housing estate within the Shoalhaven in readiness for any Government distribution of funds.

**RESOLVED** (Keith Davis / Clr White)

That:

1. The Homelessness Taskforce receive the report for information and thank Mr Davis for submitting the report.
2. Council staff consider the role and opportunities that Collaborative Housing could play in the Councils Affordable Housing Strategy work and in the development of the Homelessness Plan, including the need for a working party and Council's role in it.

CARRIED

Note: Ms Julie Bugden -Shoalhaven Homeless Hub left the meeting at 3:55pm.

#### **HT22.26 Collective Home Project**

**HPERM Ref:  
D22/347531**

Mr Peter Dover – Salt noted the following points regarding the Collective Home Project:

- The housing situation in the Shoalhaven is now at an emergency level, no longer at the crisis level.
- 18,000 homes in the Shoalhaven are considered unoccupied, which are predominantly holiday and Airbnb homes.
- Seeking funds from State and Federal Government to make 500 houses available to those community members who are suffering from disadvantage.
- It will be a 3 – 5 year project.

#### **Recommendation**

That the “Collective Home” Project be endorsed by the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce.

**RESOLVED** (Peter Dover / Amanda Findley)

That the “Collective Home” Project be endorsed by the Shoalhaven Homelessness Taskforce.

CARRIED

Note: Clr Tonia Gray left the meeting at 4:09pm.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **HT22.27 Homeshare Funding Project - Shoalhaven**

The Hon. Gareth Ward MP advised that there is an opportunity to investigate funding options to establish a program based on the “Homeshare” Program, which is working extremely well in the

Eastern Suburbs of Sydney.

The Homeshare Program partners people who are in genuine need of accommodation with people who are living on their own and are lonely or need assistance around the home, where the prospective tenant can provide assistance to the homeowner in return for a room at a reduced rental rate. It was noted that a coordinator to administer the partnership arrangements would be required.

**RECOMMENDATION** (Peter Dover / Keith Davis)

That Mayor Amanda Findley write to the Hon Gareth Ward MP on behalf of Shoalhaven City Council to seek support for the Homeshare funding project for the Shoalhaven.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 4:15pm.

Mayor Amanda Findley  
CHAIRPERSON