

## MINUTES OF THE HOMELESSNESS TASKFORCE SHOALHAVEN

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, 9 February 2023  
**Location:** Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra  
**Time:** 2:00 pm

The following members were present:

Clr John Kotlash  
Clr Evan Christen (Remotely)  
Mr Peter Dover - SALT Ministries  
Ms Ashley Hudson – SALT Ministries  
Ms Patricia David - Unions Shoalhaven – Joined 2:09pm  
Capt Matthew Sutcliffe - The Salvation Army (Remotely) – Left 2:55pm  
Ms Olivia Todhunter - Legal Aid NSW (Remotely) – Joined 2:04pm  
Ms Erin Mulally - Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre (Remotely)  
Ms Cathy Campbell - Southern Cross Housing (Remotely) – Joined 2:32pm  
Ms Ruby Hansen-Tarrant - Age Matters (Remotely)  
Ms Lucinda Knapp - Aboriginal Legal Service (Remotely) – Joined 2:27pm  
Ms Elizabeth O’Connell - Mission Australia (Remotely)  
Ms Kristy Puckeridge - Southern Youth and Family Services (Remotely) – Joined 2:29pm  
Mr Blake Richards - My Best Life  
Ms Julianne Hopkins  
Mr Raul Arregui (Remotely)  
Mr Michael Paine - Manager Community Connections

Others Present:

Mr Gareth Ward – Member for Kiama (Remotely)  
Ms Jodi Blair – Safe Waters (Remotely)  
Ms Cristine Benson – Services Australia (Remotely)  
Mr Tony Briggs - Care South  
Mr Gordon Clark - Section Manager - Strategic Planning  
Ms Marsha Makary - Community Capacity Builder – Homelessness

Michael Paine – Manager Community Connections – noting the mayor was an apology and therefore absent, assumed the Chair and asked the members present if there were any nominations for the role of Chairperson.

The members present nominated Michael Paine to continue to Chair the meeting. No further nominations were received and Michael Paine was declared to be the acting Chairperson for the remainder of this meeting.

### Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Amanda Findley, Clr Tonia Gray, Hon Fiona Phillips MP, Ms Kristy Puckeridge, Ms Samantha Stiff, Ms Lindy Meeves, Mr Keith Davis, Ms Anna Bacik and Ms Rohanna Holland.

## Confirmation of the Minutes

### RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Minutes of the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven held on Tuesday 29 November 2022 be confirmed.

CARRIED

## Declarations of Interest

Nil

## REPORTS

### HT23.1 Mayoral Relief Fund For Homelessness Update

HPERM Ref:  
D22/529251

Michael Paine - Manager Community Connections – advised the Taskforce that Council would like to invite members to assist in the ‘Year of Thriving Together’ Campaign, by being involved in short videos, to be shared via social media and amongst various organisations.

Mr Peter Dover volunteered to take part in the production of the videos, along with other volunteers within SALT ministries who have lived experience.

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

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven:

1. Receive this report as an update on the Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal for people ‘Doing It Tough’.
2. Support the allocation of funds as more fully detailed in the report – being:
  - a) The first \$15,000 of the funds raised will be allocated towards the creation of 500 crisis ‘care packs’.
  - b) Any funds over \$15,000 (and up to \$40,000) will be distributed evenly to provide crisis/relief support to community members in need.
  - c) After the first \$40,000 of funds raised are allocated, further funds will be available to service providers throughout Shoalhaven via an EOI process for relief/crisis initiatives.
3. Support the nomination of Digby Hughes, Homelessness NSW representative, to be the independent member to sit on the assessment panel for Expressions of Interest for distribution of funds.
4. Acknowledge that the Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal has already commenced and thank Digby Hughes, Peter Dover, and Lesley Labka for participating in the media launch.
5. Endorse that the options provided in this report will be presented to the Mayoral Relief Fund Committee. The Mayoral Relief Committee will have the final endorsement of the proposal for distribution of funds.
6. Request an update report on the outcomes of the Mayoral Relief Fund Appeal following its completion

### RESOLVED (By consent)

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CARRIED

Post Meeting Note: Following this meeting, Council has been advised that Mr Digby Hughes is no longer in his role with Homelessness NSW. As such, Mr Raul Arregui has been nominated to sit on the assessment panel to review Expressions of Interests for the distribution of funds.

## **HT23.2 Action Table Report Update 9 February 2023**

**HPERM Ref: D23/7158**

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

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven acknowledge the following actions as being complete and remove from the action table:

1. HT22.15 Additional Item - Social / Affordable Housing Funding - advocate to Federal Government - Cooperative housing - Regional Planning
2. HT22.16 Additional Item - Doing it Tough Guide / Access to NSW Register - Airbnb - Report Request

### **RESOLVED (By consent)**

That the Homelessness Taskforce Shoalhaven acknowledge the following actions as being complete and remove from the action table:

1. HT22.15 Additional Item - Social / Affordable Housing Funding - advocate to Federal Government - Cooperative housing - Regional Planning
2. HT22.16 Additional Item - Doing it Tough Guide / Access to NSW Register - Airbnb - Report Request

CARRIED

## GENERAL BUSINESS

### HT23.3 Strategic Plan Update - Working Groups

HPERM Ref:  
D23/24353

Update on the work of the four (4) Working Groups of the Homelessness Strategic Plan – Advocacy and Lobbying.

#### Details:

Members of the four (4) Working Groups were asked to provide any updates on the work undertaken since the Homelessness Strategic Planning Day, held on 11 October 2022.

Work Group 4 – Housing and Accommodation - provided the following update:

- Respective tasks and responsibilities to support the plan's actions have been set.
- An update regarding the Mayors request for property owners to consider making their properties available for long term affordable rentals (MIN22.577) has been sought.  
Council staff advised that a report will be going to Council later this month with relevant data regarding the Mayors request.
- Specialist homelessness services in the Shoalhaven will be meeting later in the month to discuss support services for the tenants of SALT's properties.
- Information was shared via the NSW Communities and Justice in relation to funding opportunities to deliver and operate new women's refuges.
- Investigations are continuing into the opportunities and challenges of tiny homes as a housing solution, noting that the working example in Gosford, which has housed 28 people over the last three years, as well as investigations into potential sites for meanwhile use.

Ms Patricia David requested to receive information from Southern Cross Housing regarding the current number of vacant properties and the turnaround period.

In response, Ms Cathy Campbell advised that it is a short turnaround period to get new occupants into a vacant property, however will provide an update to the next meeting including further detail and the number of vacant properties.

Working Group 3 – Advocacy and Lobbying – provided the following update:

- The two advocacy letters which the Group has been working on were approved by the Shoalhaven Homelessness Interagency and sent out in January 2023. One letter to the Regional Transport Minister regarding the opal card shut off south of Bomaderry train station, and the other to a number of different Ministers regarding statistics for the homelessness situation and housing stress in their communities.

Working Group 1 – Early Intervention & Collaborative Support - provided an update to the Taskforce and also discussed the Unsung Hero's Innovation and Volunteering Grant received by Council to support a project for raising awareness of volunteering and how to volunteer in the Shoalhaven.

### HT23.4 Additional Item - Caravan Parks - Social Housing

Mr Blake Richards sought clarification regarding the policy of permanent residency in Caravan Parks, and vacant lots being used as social housing.

Council staff advised Mr Richards of Local Government Regulations and the commercial agreement which Caravan Parks operate under. Staff further advised that they would locate and distribute a previous report which was resolved as follows to be received by Council: *'That Council report back on how Holiday Haven could contribute to providing some housing relief in the parks*

*and how that could be achieved given the Crown Land Status of the Parks' (MIN21.302).*

**The following additional matters were raised in General Business:**

- Marsha Makary - Community Capacity Builder Homelessness – advised the Taskforce that Council has received through the NSW Community Development Fund a grant for \$52,000 to be put towards the actions of Council's Strategic Plan for Homelessness.
- Mr Gareth Ward MP advised the Taskforce that he has obtained a grant for almost \$50,000 for SALT Ministries, to be used to help with upgrading the Bomaderry Community Centre.
- Ms Cathy Campbell advised the Taskforce that Southern Cross Housing are set to undertake the Rough Sleeper count on 23 February 2023, from 4:00am to 6:00am. Ms Campbell further advised that the data collected will be made available online and sent to the Taskforce.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 3:07pm.

Mr Michael Paine  
CHAIRPERSON