

Housing & Affordability Advisory Committee (HAAC)

Monday, 8 April 2019

Ashfield Civic Centre, 260 Liverpool Rd, Ashfield 2131

Minutes

Meeting started at 6:35pm

1. Present

- Jon Atkins (JA - Convenor), Hazel Blunden (HB – Deputy Chair), Rachael Haggett (RH), Julia Murray (JM) and Michael Zanardo (MZ).

2. Chairperson

- HB was appointed Chairperson for this meeting.

3. Acknowledgment of Country

- HB welcomed members to the meeting and provided an Acknowledgment of Country.

4. Apologies

- David Collins-White (DC-W) and Ashvin Parameswaran (AP).

5. Quorum (minimum 4 members)

- A quorum was achieved.

6. Disclosure of Interest

- There were no disclosures of interest.

7. Previous Minutes (7 February 2019)

- The Minutes of the 7 February 2019 meeting were endorsed by consensus.

8. Actions Arising

- *Council Awards* – The Events Team is co-ordinating a review of the Built Environment Awards. They will contact HAAC members about the possibility of establishing an Affordable Housing Award after the current review has been considered by Council.
- *Terms of Reference* – The Communications Team indicated that the online forum pilot does not need to be included in the Terms of Reference since it is simply a tool for communication only.

9. Update on Online Forum

- JA provided a report on HAAC's online forum which covered:
 - Registration and log-in procedures
 - Current pages including:
 - Introduce Yourself - four members have uploaded their stories so far.
 - Q & A
 - Forum
 - News feed
 - Widgets including:
 - Key dates
 - Document library
 - Important links

- News categories
- Photos
- Quite a lot of information has already been uploaded to these widgets, especially to the document library.
- Members were encouraged to add their stories and to begin using the online forum and other components.
- References, documents and links etc. can be added to the online forum via the Convenor.

10. Report on Annual Inner West Street Count and Boarding House Sector

- This report was put on hold given PA's absence.

11. Council Update

- JA provided an update on the Urban Strategy Team's current projects including:
 - Local Environment Plan (LEP)
 - Housing Strategy
 - Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).
- JA reported that the draft Housing Strategy was close to being finalised but the date for its consideration by Council was still to be determined. The one certain opportunity for members to provide feedback on the Housing Strategy was during the public exhibition period.
- JA reported that work on developing a scope of works for an initial Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme (AHCS) was continuing. It was noted that this AHCS needed to be integrated with the draft Housing Strategy, particularly with respect to recommended locations of future housing opportunities. Also all such schemes needed to comply with the Department of Planning & Environment's [Guideline for Developing an Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme](#) released in February 2019.
- Members indicated their strong support for Council's inclusion in SEPP 70 but expressed concerns about the delay in developing an Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme (AHCS) in keeping with Council's resolution C1018(2) Item 13 'Affordable Housing for Victoria Road Precinct', dated 30 October 2018. HB offered to formulate a motion expressing these concerns and to have members endorse the motion via email. Refer to **Motion 1** attached.
- JA offered to send members key housing strategies and documents such as the draft Housing Strategy and draft Local Strategic Planning Statement as soon as they become publicly available.

Action: That JA supply key housing strategies and documents to members when publicly available.
- It was noted that members individually or as a group could make submissions on these documents during public exhibition periods.
- Members expressed concerns about (a) the status of advisory committees and (b) the limited opportunities for meaningful consultation and informed feedback prior to the draft Housing Strategy and the draft Local Strategic Planning Statement being finalised. HB offered to formulate two motions expressing these concerns and to have members endorse the motions via email. Refer to **Motion 2** and **Motion 3** attached.
- JA reported on recent affordable housing acquisitions at the Flour Mill development site in Summer Hill.
 - Four affordable housing units – 2 x 1 bedroom units and 2 x 2 bedroom units - have recently been acquired by Council. The Certificates of Title for these units were received by Council on 28 March 2019 confirming that Council now owns these units in perpetuity.

- Council’s managing agent, Link Housing, will now proceed to advertise these units in order to find suitable tenants in accordance with the eligibility criteria as set out in the Management Agreement governing Council’s Affordable Rental Housing Program.
 - Council’s affordable housing portfolio now totals 10 units. Additional affordable housing units to be acquired by Council are in the pipeline including the nine affordable housing units at the former Old Hospital Site in Marrickville.
 - Members discussed issues associated with (a) the location of units allocated to Council ownership within property developments and (b) how cash contributions for affordable housing would be quarantined for expenditure exclusively on affordable housing in the future.
 - It was noted that Council currently lacks a Trust or Reserve Account for holding surplus rent generated by Council’s affordable housing portfolio and future cash contributions from developers for affordable housing. HB offered to formulate a motion expressing these concerns and to have members endorse the motion via email. Refer to **Motion 4** attached.
- JA referred to the partnership between Council and Link Housing to develop the Hay Street Car Park in Leichhardt for affordable housing. It was noted that progress with this proposed development is likely to be postponed until the new LEP is finalised.
- Members discussed other opportunities of developing Council land for affordable housing. It was noted that Council had considered a report, C0219(3) Item 22, at its meeting on 26 March 2019 recommending the sale of the Chester Street Car Park in Petersham. Council however resolved that the matter be deferred for consideration with the Land and Property Strategy (LAPS) at a future date. MZ noted that Marrickville Council had previously called for expressions of interest to be submitted for the redevelopment of the site for affordable housing. It was recommended that LAPS incorporates affordable housing initiatives relating to Council land that could be potentially developed for affordable housing in partnership with a community housing provider or other property developer. HB offered to formulate a motion relating to the retention of Council owned land and to have members endorse the motion via email. Refer to **Motion 5** attached.

Action: That JA notify members in a timely fashion about affordable housing matters listed for consideration at future Council meetings.
- JA provided an update on negotiations with Family and Community Services (FACS) to have section 156 and related regulations of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (the Act) amended in order to facilitate legal agreements being established between councils and community housing providers. While FACS agrees with Council’s case for the Act to be amended, it appears that the announcement of the caretaker period prior to the holding of the 23 March 2019 election has further delayed amendments being made. JA noted that Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) continues to represent both Inner West Council and Randwick Council in these negotiations with FACS.

12. Schedule of Future Meetings during 2019

- Members agreed to hold the next HAAC meeting on **Monday 15 July 2019**.
- The date for the next meeting is to be determined at the July meeting.

13. Other Business and Future Items

- HB recommended that PA be asked to circulate a summary of his planned Inner West Street Count and Boarding House Sector Report to members via email.
- MZ advised that the City of Sydney’s [Alternative Housing Ideas Challenge](#) was launched on 26 March 2019. People are invited to submit ideas to boost the diversity of housing across

the city and wider community, with a focus on identifying and developing new models to increase affordable alternative housing supply. A jury will choose up to six plans from participants and each will receive \$20,000 to put their concepts to the test. Details can be accessed [here](#). The Ideas Challenge closes at 5.00pm on Wednesday 8 May 2019.

- Members are invited to attend a presentation on Council’s draft Housing Strategy to Planning & Heritage Advisory Committee’s 15 April meeting at Ashfield Service Centre – presentation time TBD.
- Training for Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Advisory Committee is schedule for 10 April at Ashfield Service Centre starting at 6.30pm.

Action: That motions discussed during the meeting be formulated by HB and circulated to members who attended the meeting for their endorsement.

Action: That JA forward all endorsed motions to appropriate Council officers and that responses received be reported to the 15 July 2019 meeting.

Meeting closed at 7.38pm.

ACTIONS ARISING

Section	Actions	Responsible	Deadline
11	That members be supplied with key housing strategies and documents when publicly available.	JA	Ongoing
11	That members be notified in a timely fashion about affordable housing matters listed for consideration at future Council meetings.	JA	Ongoing
13	That the five motions discussed during the meeting be formulated and circulated to members who attended the meeting for their endorsement.	HB	12 Apr 2019
13	That endorsed motions be forwarded to appropriate Council officers and that responses received be reported to the 15 July 2019 meeting.	JA	15 Jul 2019

MOTIONS ENDORSED

No.	Motion	Endorsed by	Date endorsed
1	Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme: HAAC strongly supports Council's inclusion in State Environmental Planning Policy No. 70 – Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes) (SEPP 70) which is an important mechanism to expand affordable housing in the Inner West. HAAC notes that Council adopted the following resolution on 30 October 2018: "That Council develop a scope of works and appoint a suitable consultant to provide financial feasibility analysis to support the consideration of a generic model approach to affordable housing contribution schemes for precincts that are to be considered for rezoning before the new Council-wide LEP is gazetted, to support Council in its negotiations on VPAs and to support the development of the approach to be taken to SEPP 70 schemes in the new Council-wide LEP." However it appears that this resolution has yet to be acted on. HAAC	HB, RH, JM and MZ	11 Apr 2019

	urges Strategic Planning to act on this resolution to develop an affordable housing contribution scheme without further delay and requests clarification as to when a contribution scheme is likely to be submitted to Department of Planning and Environment.		
2	Status of Advisory Committees including HAAC: It appears that Advisory Committees, including Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (HAAC), can only (a) communicate through the Communications Team regarding key issues or recommendations to Council and (b) address Council meetings as individual members of the public rather than as representatives of Advisory Committees. Clarification is sought regarding the capacity of Advisory Committees to raise matters of importance with Council and whether Advisory Committees members can be given the right to address Council as representatives of their Advisory Committees rather than as individual members of the public.	HB, RH, JM and MZ	11 Apr 2019
3	Meaningful consultation and access to the Draft Housing Strategy and other key housing documents: While HAAC appreciated the general presentation provided by Strategic Planning on the Draft Housing Strategy on 7 February 2019, members are concerned that very little information about the actual content of the draft strategy has been made available. Without access to the Draft Housing Strategy, no substantive feedback can be given to Council by HAAC members prior to its finalisation. Clarification is therefore sought on HAAC's role regarding consultation and input to the Draft Housing Strategy and other draft housing strategies being developed by Council. At the moment it appears that opportunities for providing meaningful feedback and recommendations is limited to public exhibition periods only. HAAC members would like to know if arrangements can be put in place to improve both consultation and access to the Draft Housing Strategy and other housing documents such as the draft Local Strategic Planning Statement. For example, HAAC members would be willing to sign a confidentiality agreement if this would facilitate access to documents and the provision of informed feedback to Council.	HB, RH, JM and MZ	11 Apr 2019
4	Establishing an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to hold surplus rent and cash contributions exclusively for affordable housing: HAAC members note that Council continues to lack an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to hold surplus rent or monetary contributions received from developers in accordance with affordable housing provisions under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Members believe that failure to establish such a fund to pay for ongoing maintenance and affordable housing projects is contrary to the spirit of the Affordable Housing Policy. Members also believe that Council would be legally obligated to quarantine any future monetary contributions from developers for expenditure on additional affordable housing. HAAC seeks clarification on how this important	HB, RH, JM and MZ	11 Apr 2019

	matter can be appropriately addressed by Council.		
5	Retaining Council ownership of land assets: HAAC calls on Council to retain ownership of land assets such as car parks and depots so that future mixed and affordable housing developments can be undertaken if feasible. HAAC members caution against selling well-located sites where medium density housing could be built such as the Chester Street Car Park in Petersham. Accordingly members support the ongoing partnership between Council and Link Housing to re-develop the Hay Street Car Park in Leichhardt for affordable housing. Members also urge Council to include affordable housing initiatives on suitable land in the Land and Property Policy and Strategy in order to boost much needed affordable housing in the Inner West.	HB, RH, JM and MZ	11 Apr 2019

