

Minutes of Housing and Affordability Strategic Reference Group held at Inner West Council - Petersham Service Centre on 16 October 2017

The meeting commenced at 6:35pm.

Members in Attendance:

Gary Moore (GM) - Chair	Debbie Kearns (DK)
Paul Adabie (PA)	Cl Tom Kiat (TK)
Hazel Blunden (HB)	Julia Murray (JM)
Rachael Haggett (RH)	

Other Attendees:

Erla Ronan (ER)	IWC, Group Manager, Community Services and Culture
John Warburton (JW)	IWC, Deputy General Manager, Community and Engagement
Sue Pym (SP)	IWC, Social Planning Co-ordinator
Jon Atkins (JA)	IWC, Affordable Housing Officer

Chairperson: Gary Moore

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Acknowledgement of Country**
- 3. Apologies:**

SRG Members:	Jacqueline Buswell, Beverley Garlick, Syed Kazmi and Jane Sampson.
Council Officers:	Lynne George, Manager Community Development

4. Minutes of meeting held on 26 June 2017

The minutes were adopted.

5. Disclosures of Interest:

There were no disclosures of interest.

6. Status of Recommendations from June SRG Meeting

<p>Item 6 – Quarantining of surplus affordable housing funds</p>	<p>Members requested an update on SRG’s recommendation that clause ‘2.10 Administration’ in the <i>Affordable Housing Policy</i> be amended to ensure that surplus affordable housing funds be quarantined and spent exclusively on affordable housing projects in the local government area (LGA).</p> <p>Action: That a report on how this recommendation can be implemented be provided to the next SRG meeting in November 2017.</p>
<p>Item 7 – SRG submission to draft Community Strategic Plan</p>	<p>Members at the June meeting provided feedback on the Community Strategic Plan, its Vision, issues and priorities. This feedback was transcribed and lodged by 9 July 2017.</p>
<p>Item 8 – Rental Housing issues</p>	<p>(a) Make Renting Fair – Following SRG’s recommendation for Council to support the NSW Make Renting Fair campaign, an inquiry was made about having Council endorse this campaign.</p> <p>Action: That a report on Council’s response to the Make Renting Fair campaign be provided to the next SRG meeting in November 2017.</p> <p>(b) Copies of the former Marrickville Council’s Affordable Housing Committee’s submission to the Statutory Review of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 was circulated to SRG members.</p> <p>(c) Affordable Housing Unit Specifications – SRG has recommended that the specifications applying to the Marrickville Community Hub be updated and made policy so that the specifications can apply to all future developments in the Council’s LGA. The question was asked if this should form part of the Affordable Housing Policy or stand alone.</p> <p>Action: That advice be sought as to how an updated version of the Affordable Housing Specifications can be made policy and whether or not they should stand alone or form part of the Affordable Housing Policy.</p>
<p>Item 9 – Council’s SEPP 70 application</p>	<p>(c) JA provided an update on negotiations with DPE re Council’s application for inclusion in SEPP 70. DPE has indicated that it will recommend to the Minister of Planning that Council has demonstrated the need for affordable housing in the LGA. It was noted that DPE has rejected Council’s original proposal for an LGA-wide affordable housing contributions scheme. Rather DPE insists that Council’s application be based on</p>

	<p>specific precincts within the LGA. Planners have produced a first draft of the precinct mapping. This draft is currently under review.</p> <p>Action: That future SRG meetings receive updates on Council's revised SEPP 70 application.</p>
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7. Presentation on Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor

JW gave a presentation on the revised Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Strategy and its impacts on the Inner West LGA. The presentation included an outline of densities proposed for Sydenham, Marrickville and Dulwich Hill, a comparison of these with Council's lower density controls and a summary of Council's many objections to the revised Strategy, including excessive densities, destruction of employment lands, zero affordable housing and inadequate provision for public infrastructure such as schools, parks and sports facilities etc. DPE has verbally agreed to Council having an extension of time to the end of October in order to lodge a submission on the revised Strategy.

Refer to the presentation on the revised Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Strategy attached.

8. Prevention of Homelessness

GM referred to a range of initiatives listed in the agenda that Council could utilise to help (a) prevent homelessness and (b) support homeless people that were listed in the agenda.

SP noted that the primary focus of Council's Homelessness Policy was not prevention but rather the outline of strategies that Council can employ to address the complex issues associated with people sleeping rough in public places. A Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places had also been developed to guide staff in responding rough sleepers.

Council's role includes managing public places, fostering partnerships with homelessness and allied services, providing information on homeless services, monitoring the incidence of homelessness and facilitating assistance programs e.g. through Council's Community Grants Program. The policy notes that Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) currently funds 14 homelessness services in the Inner West Council area. In this regard, reference was made, in particular, to the Exodus Foundation located in Ashfield.

Reference was also made to the Multi-Agency Homeless Outreach Team which has been operating monthly in the Ashfield/Summer Hill area. The Team includes representatives from Council, FACS, Housing NSW, Missionbeat, and NSW Health (mental health practitioner) and has been very successful in assisting rough sleepers to find housing. A number of the people assisted to date have been sleeping rough over the long term, some for many years. A modified version of this approach is implemented by the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre and is focusing on the increased numbers of people sleeping rough on King Street, Newtown Square, Camperdown Memorial Park and Stephen's Church cemetery.

The primary importance of supplying social housing was emphasised. In addition, members discussed a range of initiatives aimed at reducing homelessness including:

- Housing First, Common Ground and Homeshare schemes;
- Affordable housing listings service possibly operated as a social enterprise;
- Brokerage services and boarding house residents support schemes that enable people at risk of homelessness to better maintain their housing arrangements

Members discussed both Bridge Housing's new Home Ground real estate agency and the Camperdown Common Ground Project that aims to provide permanent, affordable accommodation and support services to 52 chronically homeless people. JM referred to some tenancy management issues at Common Ground.

With respect to Homeshare schemes, it was noted that Council staff had earlier discussed the prospects of setting up a Homeshare scheme to assist local older women facing homelessness with Newtown Neighbourhood Centre staff. No further discussions relating to this proposal have been held to date. Reference was also made to Barbara Squires' feasibility study on Homeshare Parramatta.

Action: GM offered to make this report available to members.

It was recommended that an audit of homelessness services funded by FACS be undertaken to evaluate these services' effectiveness. ER indicated that this matter could be raised in future discussions between FACS and Council staff.

9. Staff Update

Refer to JA's update on Council's application for inclusion in SEPP 70 in '6. Status of Recommendations from June SRG Meeting' above.

Other Business

Members asked about the future of the Strategic Reference Groups. ER noted that a review process will occur during November and that a report on the results is likely to be considered at the Council meeting on 12 December.

Action: That the November meeting be provided with an update on Council's review of SRGs and the opportunity of members to participate in this review process.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SRG is scheduled for **Monday 20 November** at 6.30pm in Function Room, Petersham Service Centre.

The meeting concluded at 8:15pm.