

Minutes of Housing and Affordability Strategic Reference Group held at Inner West Council, Petersham Service Centre on 20 Nov 2017

The meeting commenced at 6:35pm.

Members in Attendance:

Paul Adabie (PA)	Gary Moore (GM)
Hazel Blunden (HB)	Julia Murray (JM)
Beverley Garlick (BG)	Jane Sampson (JS)
Rachael Haggett (RH)	

Other Attendees:

Gabrielle Rennard (GR)	IWC, Community Wellbeing Manager
Jon Atkins (JA)	IWC, Affordable Housing Officer

Chairperson: Gabrielle Rennard

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

SRG Members	Jacqueline Buswell, Syed Kazmi, Debbie Kearns and Cl Tom Kiat.
Staff	Erla Ronan (Group Manager, Community Services & Culture)

4. Minutes of meeting held on 16 October 2017

The Minutes were adopted.

5. Disclosures of Interest:

There were no disclosures of interest.

6. Status of Recommendations from 16 October 2017 SRG Meeting

Item 6 – Quarantining of surplus affordable housing funds	<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>
Item 8 – Rental Housing Issues	<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>
Item 9 – Council’s SEPP 70 Application	<p>(a) 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 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>

Discussion
Item 6 – Quarantining of surplus affordable housing funds

GR noted that Councillors will be considering a Notice of Motion (NoM), C1117 Item 21, on ‘Affordable Housing in the Inner West’ submitted by CI Tom Kiat at tomorrow night’s Council meeting. The relevant section of the NoM reads that a report to Council “identify where funds generated by Council’s affordable housing projects are directed, and present options as to how such funds can be set aside for spending within Council’s affordable housing portfolio.” Link

https://innerwest.infocouncil.biz/Open/2017/11/C_21112017_MIN_WEB.htm

Action: That JA inform Clr Kiat prior to Council's meeting on 21 November 2017 that the SRG supports Part 7 of his NoM 'Affordable Housing for the Inner West' regarding the quarantining of surplus affordable housing funds.

Item 8 – Rental Housing Issues

Make Renting Fair (Part A)

JA noted that both the Major and Deputy Manager had expressed support for Make Renting Fair. As a result, a report recommending that Council officially support the campaign will be prepared for the Council meeting on 12 December 2017. Members congratulated JM for advocating support for the campaign at SRG meetings.

Affordable Housing Unit Specifications (Part C)

As reported in the Minutes for 16 October 2017, advice was sought regarding the Specifications. This advice recommended that the specifications should sit within the Affordable Housing Policy and that a developed version of these Specifications be prepared and submitted to Council for endorsement.

Action: That a developed version of the Affordable Housing Unit Specifications be prepared and submitted to Council for endorsement in the future.

7. Prevention of Homelessness

GR noted JA had circulated Barbara Squires' feasibility study on Homeshare Parramatta to all members. This study had been made available by GM.

8. Future of the Strategic Reference Groups (SRGs)

GR noted that the group of eight SRGs created during the Administrator's term of office is currently undergoing a review by Council. Members discussed a range of questions about the SRG's operation and effectiveness including:

1. What aspects of the SRG have worked well? What has not worked so well?
2. To what extent did the SRG achieve our purpose?
3. What is our SRG's most significant piece of work? Why?
4. Thinking about options for the future, what are your thoughts on how the SRGs could evolve? Are there other models we could consider?
5. Apart from SRGs, what else should Council focus on to increase satisfaction with community engagement and achieve a strong community voice in decision making?

Members discussed the questions above. Summaries of the discussion were prepared by GR and JA and sent to Prue Foreman (Communication and Engagement Coordinator) on 26 November 2017. Refer to JA's summary attached.

Action: The SRG recommends the formation of a Social Outcomes Committee to advise negotiations related to Voluntary Planning Agreements and adequate contributions to fund community infrastructure and affordable housing.

JA noted that members could also participate in the review of SRGs by filling out an online survey form by Friday 23 November 2017.

Staff Verbal Update

JA provided a verbal update on the following matters:

- Clr Tom Kiat's Notice of Motion: 'Affordable Housing for the Inner West' (for Council meeting on 21 Nov 2017);
- Landcom's new document *Our Strategic Directions* and its lead role to increase affordable housing supply throughout NSW;
- Local Planning Proposals including the Victoria Road Precinct Planning Proposal now gazetted against Council opposition;
- Draft Greater Sydney Region Plan and District Plans. IWC is now part of the Eastern District. Submissions close on 15 December 2017.

Members provided feedback on the matters above. In relation to Clr Kiat's NoM, it was noted that under current legislation, a levy on empty dwellings could not be imposed. HB mentioned that she had conveyed this information to Clr Kiat.

Action: That JA inform Clr Kiat prior to the Council meeting on Tuesday 21 November that the SRG generally supports his NoM except for the proposed Empty Dwellings levy.

9. Other Business

PA gave a presentation based upon a report he circulated on boarding houses in Inner West local government area. Recommendations included (a) Council having a lead officer to develop Council's response to the review of the Boarding House Act 2012 due to be released in early in 2018 (b) developing a board house strategy to help protect existing boarding houses from urban development and promote residents' rights and (c) having a policy on 'new gen' boarding houses. Members thanked PA for his presentation.

GM referred to the Affordable Housing Officer's position and its restriction to two days per week. GM recommended that it be converted to a full-time, permanent position.

Action: That Council be asked to establish a full-time, permanent Affordable Housing Officer's position in order to meet the challenges of affordable housing in the Inner West.

GR thanked all members for their contribution to the Strategic Reference Group since its inception. Information on the future of SRGs will be supplied to members as it becomes available.

10. Next Meeting

To be determined.

The meeting concluded at 8:30pm.