

Homelessness Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 29 September, 2022

3.30pm - 5.00pm

1. MEETING OPENING

Chair, Councillor Krista Preece, welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY – Cr Krista Preece**3. ATTENDEES:****Committee:**

Stephen Avery
Lynette Cameron
Allison Mayne
Darren McKay
Kate Ross
Nathan Johnston
Samantha Grace
Roderick Brown
Louise Cowan
Stephen Hill
Elizabeth Ward
Nic Green

Community member representative
Community member representative
Community member representative
Community member representative
Community member representative
Tasmania Police
St Vincent de Paul Society
The Salvation Army
Shekinah House
Launceston City Mission
Anglicare Tasmania
CatholicCare Tasmania

Proxies:

Jo Marshall

Dept. of Communities - Housing

City of Launceston:

Councillor Krista Preece
Councillor Andrea Dawkins
Dan Ryan
Caralisa Farrell
Kath Hawkins

Chair - Councillor City of Launceston
Councillor, City of Launceston
General Manager, Community & Place
Team Leader, Community Development
Community Development Officer

Neighbouring Council Representatives:

Councillor Jess Greene West Tamar Council
Councillor Rodney Synfield Meander Valley Council
Councillor Janet Lambert Northern Midlands Council

Guests:

Sara Redman Coach + Facilitator + Author + Speaker + MC
Alison Bell Head to Health - Student Placement

4. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE

Jessey Stone Department of Communities
Stephen Hill Launceston City Mission
Councillor Greg Dawson George Town Council
Councillor Andrea Dawkins City of Launceston

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil.

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolution: That the minutes of the inaugural Homelessness Advisory Committee Meeting held on 01 September 2022 be accepted.

Moved: Kate Ross

Seconded: Councillor Janet Lambert

Once accepted the minutes will become public and be posted on the website. Hardcopy will also be available to view at Town Hall.

7. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Action Items Update

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	UPDATE
Terms of Reference (TOR) to incorporate reference to the expanded to recognise the regional collaboration by Councils.	Dan Ryan	Draft changes completed, circulated via email and presented to the committee. TOR changes approved by the advisory committee and will be presented at an upcoming council meeting for approval.
Committee contact emails to be shared.	Caralisa Farrell	Circulated via email 29/09/2022.
Provide compact statement of own homelessness support services for inclusion in summary card.	Service Providers	Still awaiting information from key providers.

Summary card of current homelessness support services to be updated and made available and accessible, both digitally and in hard copy.	Caralisa Farrell	Shekinah House have a version of this resource. Shekinah House (LC) and City of Launceston (CF) are working on this collaboratively, and awaiting service information updates.
Provide a summary of information from the Homelessness Response Group meeting	Kath Hawkins	Circulated.
Sara to provide summary of inaugural meeting identified goals and actions.	Sara Redman	Circulated.
Circulate invitations for next meeting.	Caralisa Farrell	Circulated.
Prepare for second meeting in one month to continue work on initial goals and action priorities.	Sara Redman	Completed.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTING TO COUNCIL

Homelessness Advisory Committee Inaugural Meeting Report for the meeting held 01 September 2022 was presented to council and accepted on 21 September 2022.

9. UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE

Updated Terms of Reference was accepted by the Committee and will be presented to council for formal approval.

10. ROLE OF THIS COMMITTEE

Role of the Homelessness Advisory Committee was clarified. The role of the committee is to provide expertise, knowledge and lived experience to assist City of Launceston to make decisions which can be transferred into actions. As the action plan is developed some processes and protocols will require sign off within council, particularly where council is required to invest money, and/or resources in order to support delivery.

It is important to recognise that some of the strategies and actions identified by the advisory committee to address homelessness may also fall outside council's remit, budget, or processes. Where this occurs and we are unable to implement a solution directly, this committee will still aim to facilitate and advocate in those areas with the appropriate stakeholders, wherever appropriate and practicable.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

Email to council from Kirsten Ritchie, Strike It Out (13 September 2022) specifically suggested were: three (3) separate fenced spaces be established to provide a place for homeless families, people escaping family and domestic violence, and one area for others. It was proposed that these spaces are each provided with shower, toilets and kitchenette amenities and that security is provided. Kirsten also indicated concern that council and state government have forfeited Duty of Care, and has not provided an asset list to Strike It Out. Dan Ryan recognised the important work undertaken by Strike It Out to support Launceston's homeless community.

The committee discussed the benefits, risks and logistics of the solutions suggested including the current additional challenges for people leaving the justice system. There was not strong support to provide three fenced areas with security for the different demographics suggested. Reason included the inflexibility of such an arrangement does not match the fluid nature of the circumstances of people experiencing homelessness, availability of appropriate resources to safely and effectively manage the needs of people within the secured area.

It was agreed that any solutions devised by the Committee would require consultation with those the solution intends to support, to ensure the solution will meet the identified needs. Smaller integrated models with public showers and toilets are also being explored. The concept of a "Permission-to-Stay" model for homeless people was tabled as an option to support those who are camping on public grounds. This would require the development of appropriate terms and conditions including; the acknowledgement of the requirement for respectful behaviour; respect for the environment; and respect for local businesses and residents.

The chair agreed that Ms Ritchie was welcome to attend the next Committee meeting to speak on these matters.

12. TASMANIAN HOUSING STRATEGY

The Tasmanian Housing Strategy is currently open for consultation. Dan Ryan provided an overview of the session he attended including some of the solutions put forward, and encouraged committee attendees to provide feedback on the Draft Tasmanian Housing Strategy via their website.

13. HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE GROUP SUMMARY

An overview of a report outlining the learnings of the Homelessness Response Group was provided by City of Launceston Community Development Officer, Kath Hawkins. City of Launceston facilitated a Homeless Response Group (HRG) for local service providers delivering homelessness crisis support meeting during 2019, with CoVID-19 focused meetings occurring from March 2020. The group shared key information to improve operations and address gaps, as well as collaborating on solutions. Work included

delivery of targeted support and resources for homeless individuals, identification of a suitable placement for Strike It Out's homelessness storage lockers and implementing and supporting multiple events during Homelessness Week to raise awareness and educate key stakeholders about homelessness. A number of gaps and issues at grass-root level were identified and bridged where resource and human resource allowed. Larger gaps and challenges identified by the HRG were harvested and have been provided to the Homelessness Advisory Committee.

14. ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Discussion was facilitated by Sara Redman.

An article "*Ending Homelessness – A Role for Local Government?*" by David Pearson, Australian Director - Institute for Global Homelessness was circulated to the committee for reading prior to the meeting. The article formed the basis for a discussion about the Functional Zero model as a potential base for an approach to addressing homelessness in Launceston.

Kate Ross spoke recently about Functional Zero with David Pearson, who is also the founder and CEO of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (based in Queensland), regarding an ABCDE Learning Site specific approach to addressing homelessness. Their website offers training advisory resources and online learning.

Discussion included:

- The Housing First model which is part of the Functional Zero approach, and the importance of stable housing as soon as possible before addressing other issues like addictions, mental health and trauma. This approach was confirmed as ideal by advisory members with lived experience.
- An update from Jo Marshall about targeted social housing increases, and an overview of Rapid Rehousing.
- Challenges around ensuring all people who are homeless have current applications in the Housing Connect system. Letters confirming social housing waitlist status and updates have previously been sent hard copy. Recently this has changed to a text message and hard copy being sent, but lived experience representatives indicate that not every homeless person has a phone. Specialist medical appointments are also sent by hardcopy letter to a last known fixed address and if appointments are missed the homeless person will continue to wait for the appointment. If there has been no activity on a housing application for 6 months the person's name will drop off the application list.

Agreement that Functional Zero will be utilised as an initial guide for the Homelessness Advisory Committee's work and will assist in steering the development of City of Launceston's Homelessness Action Plan. The group identified some initial areas of broad strategic approach that will drive the actions including:

- Decrease the number of community members who are chronically /or episodically homeless
- With their consent, know the name and needs of every person sleeping rough in Launceston via a By-Names List
- Identify means of consistently tracking progress towards Functional Zero Homelessness.
- Apply a collective impact approach to identifying and addressing issues.

15. NEW ACTION ITEMS

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Response Group members to read the Draft HRG Summary and provide Kath with any changes. 	HRG attendees	Prior to next meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan will invite Kirsten Ritchie from Strike it Out on behalf of the Chair to speak at the next meeting. 	Dan	Prior to next meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A forum for surrounding councils' community development (or equivalent) staff to connect & focus on homelessness to be created. 	Caralisa	To be scheduled by next meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss a mechanism to provide homelessness outreach workers with a conduit to be able to report to the Homelessness Advisory Committee. 	Dan	At an upcoming meeting.

15. GENERAL BUSINESS

Other points raised:

- **Actioned:** Since the last meeting Shekinah House has gained agreement to secure a post box for homeless individuals to use as their mailing address and can also send a text message if the individual leaves their phone number.
- Homeless Outreach Support Team (HOST) - funding finished 30 Sept 2022. A number of Homeless Advisory Committee representatives have lobbied for funding to continue for this important service.
- The value of outreach workers to feed information from local homeless individuals and groups back to the advisory and to maintain this grassroots connection with the homeless community was recognised. A mechanism for maintaining this connection will be explored at the next meeting.
- Allison Mayne has capacity to collect feedback from homeless people in her network who are currently living rough.
- The importance of lived experience to the advisory was reiterated.

- A forum for councils' community development (or equivalent) staff to focus on homelessness was proposed and received support.
- The capacity of the homelessness community to support their own community was acknowledged.

16. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Date	Time	Location
Thursday, 24 November	3.30pm	MacQuarie House

17. SESSION REVIEW

Remarks were made in closing about the difficulty of hearing all input in the large Reception room. Preference was expressed to continue using the Macquarie House meeting room.

Meeting Closed: 5 pm