

Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum Minutes – Executive Meeting No. 11 – Wednesday 26 June 2019 City of Darebin, Council Chambers, 274 Gower Street, Preston

Chairperson: Mayor, Cr Roz Blades AM (*Greater Dandenong*)

Attendees: Cr Victoria Borg (*Brimbank*), Wambui Thirimu (*Brimbank*), Mayor, Cr Susan Rennie (*Darebin*), Cr Matthew Kirwan (*Greater Dandenong*), Marek Krol (*Greater Dandenong*) – Minute Taker, Peter Johnstone (*Greater Dandenong*), Mandy Bathgate (*Darebin*), Mayor, Cr Jonathon Marsden (*Hobsons Bay*), Amber Cassidy (*Hobsons Bay*), Ben Pollard (*Hobsons Bay*), Julie Andrews (*Hume*), Fee Harrison (*Monash*)

Guests:

Apologies: Mayor, Cr Lucinda Congreve (*Brimbank*), Cr, Kim Le Cerf (*Darebin*), May Ng (*Hobsons Bay*), Mayor, Cr Carly Moore (*Hume*), David Henry (*Hume*), Kristen Cherry (*Hume*), Mayor, Cr Narelle Sharpe (*Moonee Valley*), Cr, Jim Cusack (*Moonee Valley*), Cr, John Sipek (*Moonee Valley*), Meghan Hopper (*Moonee Valley*), Kate McCaughey (*Moonee Valley*), Mayor, Cr Natalie Abboud (*Moreland*), Cristina Del Frate (*Yarra*)

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/Comments	Follow up Actions / Who
Welcome and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor, Cr Roz Blades welcomed all representatives attending Darebin City Council. Apologies noted. 	
Endorsement of Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous minutes moved by Mayor, Cr Susan Rennie, seconded by Marek Krol. 	
Review of Outstanding Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding items 	

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<p>Back Your Neighbour Phase 2 Campaign Update</p> <p>a) ALGA General Assembly Activities</p> <p>b) MP Lobbying</p> <p>c) Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALGA General Assembly Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ALGA Motion was endorsed, although modified by the ALGA Committee ○ Delegation of Taskforce representatives networked with other councils and promoted Back Your Neighbour Campaign ○ A South Australian council indicated interest in joining Taskforce • Senator Kristina Keneally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cr Roz Blades (CGD) attended meeting with Senator, with support from Sophie Cavanagh (Red Cross), Peter Johnstone (CGD), Cr Matthew Kirwan (CGD) ○ Senator advised Taskforce to contact MP Josh Frydenberg and Prime Minister based on a religious / moral imperative to reinstate SRSS program • Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing – Appeal to Federal Government to provide rural housing for people seeking asylum who are prepared to work in regional areas ○ Regional housing would not be appropriate solution for all people seeking asylum, particularly individuals with complex needs ○ Advocacy – Continue lobbying a range of ministers and senators e.g. MP Ged Kearney, MP Jason Clare ○ Options to expand BYN beyond advocacy space were discussed. Potential to utilise BYN supporter base to raise funds for financially stressed organisations. Options to be explored. ○ Another possibility would be to continue our advocacy efforts, but to also promote organisations in asylum seeker space via BYN communication channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Rural Australians for Refugees and rural councils to explore housing options for people seeking asylum – Marek Krol (CGD)

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<p>Taskforce Administration, Governance and Membership Update</p> <p>a) Endorsement of Revised Campaign Objectives</p> <p>b) New members/supporters/ expressions of interest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsed Objectives ‘We are calling for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Federal Government to stop its funding cuts and fully reinstate the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program ii) State and Territory Governments to follow suit with the Victorian and Queensland Governments in providing interim funding to local services who are supporting individuals and families put at risk by SRSS cuts iii) The Federal Government to provide adequate resources to fairly expedite the ‘legacy caseload’ of people seeking asylum so that their status is fully resolved’ • Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Melbourne City Council has joined the Taskforce as a General Member and contributed \$2,000 to the Campaign. Taskforce comprised of 31 members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update objectives on BYN webpage, Facebook, and campaign overview – Marek Krol (CGD)
<p>Regional/Local Updates</p> <p>a) Northern Alliance</p> <p>b) PSAARD Taskforce – South-East Melbourne Regional Material AID / Humanitarian Response Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Alliance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alliance continuing to report on local responses ○ \$40,000 donated to Diverse, organisation providing free drivers lessons for individuals, including people seeking asylum ○ 3 year partnership grants introduced to ensure financial security among recipient organisations • PSAARD: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PSAARD to write joint letter to Government outlining financial needs of organisations and provide case studies of destitution ○ Focusing on more accurate data collection ○ Victorian Child Protection Service was discussed as a positive involvement for people seeking asylum that are facing destitution due to unfair visa legislation. The Service can provide assistance and work with families facing homelessness to secure appropriate housing ○ Explore emergency accommodation options within faith based organisations ○ Funding extended by another 12 months for CGD officer coordinating Material Aid Consortium 	

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Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monash City Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnering with Monash Settlement Services Network organised screening of <i>Constance on the Edge</i> followed by a panel conversation. ○ Sir John Monash Lecture Panel Discussion. Guests included – Kon Karapanagiotidis, Hoda Afshar, and Arnold Zable. Panel discussed this year's topic of 'creativity in the face of adversity'. Both events reported high levels of community engagement • Brimbank City Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural celebrations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and Sudanese women's group 	
Next Meeting:	Wednesday 24 July 2019, 1:00pm-3:00pm Brimbank City Council Darebin Community and Civic Centre, 3021 Hampshire Road, Sunshine	
Close	2:50pm	

Other proposed meeting dates and venues

- Wednesday, 21 August Moreland