

Report to the Future Melbourne (People City) Committee

Agenda item 6.9

Homelessness Advisory Committee - Revised Terms of Reference

3 December 2013

Presenter: Dean Griggs, Manager Community Safety and Wellbeing

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement for calling for expressions of interest for the Homelessness Advisory Committee (HAC) and also the endorsement of the revised associated proposed Terms of Reference (refer Attachment 2).
2. The HAC was originally established in November 2011 to provide strategic advice on homelessness policy and to assist in the implementation of the *Pathways Homelessness Strategy 2011–13*. Its term ended in November 2013 and the Terms of Reference have been reviewed in readiness for advertising for new Committee members.

Key issues

3. The original Committee had 12 members with 10 appointed based on their professional experience and two people who had direct experience of homelessness being appointed. Members are appointed for a two year period and may seek re-appointment for a period of two years. Existing members therefore have the option of nominating for a further final two year term.
4. Before the end of its term, the HAC members identified that some key organisations in the homelessness sector were not represented on the Committee. They suggested that broader representation be encouraged. The Terms of Reference for the Committee have been revised to expand Committee membership numbers from 12 to 14. All changes to the Terms of Reference are highlighted in red in Attachment 2.
5. Membership will also be encouraged from organisations and individuals with specialist skills and knowledge in the delivery and provision of homelessness and, or allied services; experience across the primary, secondary and tertiary categories of homelessness; from those who can contribute on behalf of diverse communities affected by homelessness and from those with personal experience of homelessness.
6. Expressions of interest for the HAC will be sought through public advertisement in December 2013.
7. Management will undertake an initial assessment of submissions received and will make a recommendation to Future Melbourne Committee in February 2014 as to the new members of the Committee.
8. The costs associated with providing administration support services to the Committee will be covered within existing budget allocation.

Recommendation from management

9. That the Future Melbourne Committee endorses:
 - 9.1 the Chair of the Future Melbourne (People City) Committee writing to the Homelessness Advisory Committee members to thank them for their participation and informing them of the process should they wish to be considered for the Committee again
 - 9.2 the Terms of Reference and the process for establishing the Homelessness Advisory Committee 2014–16
 - 9.3 the Chair of the Future Melbourne (People City) Committee as Chair of the Homelessness Advisory Committee.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment
2. Terms of Reference

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. There are no legal issues arising from the recommendation.

Finance

2. The costs associated with providing administration support services to the HAC will be covered within existing budget allocation.
3. Members on the Homelessness Advisory Committee are not remunerated.

Conflict of interest

4. No member of Council staff or other person engaged under a contract and involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Stakeholder consultation

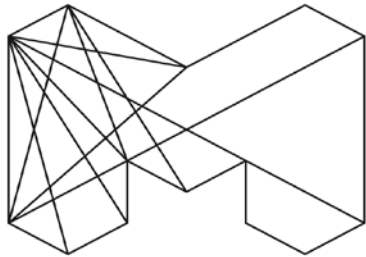
5. Development of Pathways: Homelessness Strategy 2011–13 included extensive consultation through forums, meetings, on line surveys and written submissions with key homeless and health service agencies, State Government departments, community members, people who are currently or recently homeless. Through this consultation the continuation of a homelessness advisory committee was strongly supported.

Relation to Council policy (if applicable)

6. The establishment of the HAC was a key deliverable of the *Pathways: Homelessness Strategy 2011–13*.

Environmental sustainability

7. Environmental sustainability principles will be adhered to wherever possible in establishing the HAC.



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Draft

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Homelessness Advisory Committee

December 2013

1. Overview

Purpose

The members of the City of Melbourne Homelessness Advisory Committee have an understanding that the committee is an advisory forum that provides strategic advice on policy and practice issues to the administration and Council. This advice assists Council in **continuing to implement actions arising from the *Pathways Homelessness Strategy 2011-13*** and responding to homelessness issues. **The Advisory Committee will also contribute to the development and overseeing of a new homelessness strategic framework 2014-17.**

Background

Pathways the City of Melbourne's Homelessness Strategy 2011-13 has been the key policy document for providing strategic direction and a planning framework for Council's vision and response to people who are experiencing homelessness in Melbourne. The vision of the strategy is that *Council is committed to creating sustainable pathways out of homelessness by supporting individuals, developing robust partnerships and building strong and inclusive communities.* **The new strategic framework 2014-17 will build on Council's existing research, ongoing program delivery and partnership activities that have been undertaken as part of the *Pathways Homelessness Strategy 2011-13.***

Council welcomes participation from people who are currently or have recently experienced homelessness, the service sector and community members to provide information, advice and to realise the goal of creating pathways out of homelessness.

The City of Melbourne Homelessness Advisory Committee will bring together people with broad and diverse knowledge and experience of issues relating to homelessness. The Homelessness Advisory Committee will be an important point of contact between Council and people who have personal and or professional experience and knowledge of homelessness.

Role

The Homelessness Advisory Committee will provide Council with strategic advice on homelessness and related issues that can be dealt with at Council level. Council has roles and responsibilities at both a local neighbourhood level and as the capital city of Victoria. The Committee will work with the Council to address issues, develop alternatives and assist with the identification of preferred solutions as part of Council's decision making process.

Objectives

- Provide advice on issues relevant to the **ongoing** implementation of *Pathways Homelessness Strategy 2011-13.*
- **Contribute to the development and ongoing implementation of a new homelessness strategy 2014-17.**
- Provide comment on relevant Council policies and strategies.
- Advocate community views on homelessness issues.
- Provide recommendations on methods and techniques to better inform and engage the community on homelessness issues.
- On an as needs basis, undertake a consultative role on homelessness related issues across City of Melbourne's functions and services.

2. Protocols

As an appointed advisory committee of Council, the Homelessness Advisory Committee will be chaired by the Chair of Council's Future Melbourne Committee (**People City**) or another nominated Councillor.

The roles and responsibilities of the Council

- to Chair the Committee (Chair of Council's Future Melbourne Committee (**People City**) or another nominated Councillor)
- to facilitate a collaborative meeting format

- to support Committee members to fully engage in the issues on the table by providing information and research findings in a timely and accessible manner
- to inform Council on the progress and outcomes of Committee work
- to co-opt additional support and/or sub committees as required
- to provide policy and secretariat support to the Homelessness Advisory Committee
- to coordinate meetings, agenda and minutes
- to supply interpreters, carers, cab vouchers, car parking vouchers and any other requirements (as advised) **in order** to support members to attend and participate in meetings

Where possible, meetings will include management representatives from the City of Melbourne who have significant responsibility for planning, decision making, service delivery and implementation of **policy and programs in relation to homelessness and the development of the new homelessness strategy 2014-17.**

The roles and responsibilities of the Community members

- to be fully prepared for meetings
- to agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format
- to bring personal, professional knowledge and broad community experience to the table
- to consider and raise issues, proposals and idea
- to provide informed advice and guidance

The City of Melbourne Homelessness Advisory Committee

- Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis and members are expected to attend all meetings.
- Funding may be made available to support applications for fees for members who are not representatives of an organisation and are not employed.
- All members will be able to raise any issues and problems and have them dealt with in an honest, respectful and open manner.
- All members will be given equal opportunity to participate in the Advisory Committee discussions and decision making.
- Working groups may be established as required and members may nominate to be a part of these groups.

3. Membership

Committee membership will be sought on the basis of achieving representation in alignment with the three categories of homelessness, primary, secondary and tertiary, the identified fields of knowledge, and **key themes of homelessness**. Council's Diversity Policy will also be applied in the determining the membership.

Advisory Committee Members

The Homelessness Advisory Committee will include **fourteen** representatives with personal and or professional experience, knowledge and expertise in homelessness and related issues. At least two representatives (male and female) will have direct personal experience of homelessness. The City of Melbourne will seek members who are knowledgeable and prepared to engage in exploring issues and opportunities and provide advice to Council.

Membership across the City of Melbourne will be actively encouraged from a broad range of organisations and individuals including those with specialist skills and knowledge in the delivery and provision of homelessness or allied services, experience across the three major categories of homelessness, or those who can contribute on behalf of diverse communities affected by homelessness such as specific age cohorts, gender, ability, sexual preference, religious or cultural diversity.

Members expertise

Members will have expertise in the following fields of homelessness:

- Human rights, social inclusion, empowering people and building on people's strengths and knowledge
- **Direct experience of homelessness, or engagement with people experiencing homelessness**

- Service delivery, housing, social infrastructure and systemic issues across the homelessness, health and welfare sectors
- Leadership, collaboration, and coordination across service sectors
- An understanding of City of Melbourne's capital city role
- Community and neighbourhood relationships
- Diversity – in terms of age, culture, religion, ability, gender, sexual preference, health status
- Physical and mental health
- Urban environment and public space
- Education, skills development, employment training
- Business, industry and commercial

Members of the Committee **must** have experiences in one or several of these fields.

The Homelessness Advisory Committee Representatives will be recommended to Council for endorsement by the nominated Chairperson, Manager Community Safety and Wellbeing and a Council Officer.

Terms of Membership

- Members will be appointed following a formal expression of interest submission
- Members will be appointed for a period of two years
- Members may seek re-appointment for a further two year term
- The maximum term will be for a period of four years
- A member who is absent from two consecutive meetings, without forwarding an apology, will be assumed to have resigned
- Vacancies will be filled as soon as possible

4. Committee structure

Committee membership will comprise:

- A Councillor who will chair the meetings
- Homelessness Advisory Committee representatives (including at least two people with direct personal experience of homelessness)
- Manager Community Safety and Wellbeing branch
- At least one senior officer from a relevant branch of Council

Support functions will be performed by a Council Officer of the Community Safety and Wellbeing branch.

Appointment

The Committee will be appointed for two years.

Meetings of the Committee

It is proposed to meet four times annually and on special issues as needed. Quarterly meetings will be held at the Town Hall in Swanston Street between 5.30 pm – 7.30 pm on **an agreed week night**. Supper will be provided.

Council support for committee members

The Committee will operate on a voluntary basis. Resources, including printed materials will be provided by Council.

Review

The Homelessness Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

Committee Agenda

The agenda will address the themes of the Homelessness Strategy and speakers will be invited to present on key themes and topics of interest.

Media

The Chair of the Homelessness Advisory Committee is the media spokesperson for the Advisory Committee.

Reporting

The City of Melbourne administration will report to the Homelessness Advisory Committee on activities and issues as they arise. The Homelessness Advisory Committee will provide strategic advice to the City of Melbourne through the Chairperson. The Homelessness Advisory Committee will report to Council through the Chair of Future Melbourne Committee on matters of importance or priority.

Contact

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