



City of Rockingham

AGENDA

Corporate and Community Development Committee Meeting

To be held on Tuesday 19 May 2020 at 4:00pm
City of Rockingham – Electronic Meeting

Note: In accordance with Council resolution and regulation 5 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, this meeting will be closed to the public.

Questions relating to the business of the Committee are invited for submission via customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au before 2pm of the meeting day.



Notice of Meeting



Dear Committee members

The next Corporate and Community Development Committee Meeting of the City of Rockingham will be held by electronic means on Tuesday 19 May 2020 commencing at 4:00pm.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Parker'.

MICHAEL PARKER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

14 May 2020

DISCLAIMER

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER BEFORE PROCEEDING:

Statements or decisions made at this meeting should not be relied or acted on by an applicant or any other person until they have received written notification from the City. Notice of all approvals, including planning and building approvals, will be given to applicants in writing. The City of Rockingham expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damages suffered by a person who relies or acts on statements or decisions made at a Council or Committee meeting before receiving written notification from the City.

City of Rockingham
Corporate and Community Development
Committee Meeting Agenda
4:00pm Tuesday 19 May 2020



1. Declaration of Opening

Acknowledgement of Country

This meeting acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet today, the Nyoongar people, and pays respect to their elders both past and present.

2. Record of Attendance/Apologies/Approved Leave of Absence

2.1 Members

Cr Joy Stewart
Cr Sally Davies
Cr Craig Buchanan
Cr Rae Cottam
Cr Leigh Liley

Deputies

Cr Hayley Edwards
Cr Hayley Edwards
Cr Mark Jones
Cr Lorna Buchan
Cr Deb Hamblin (Deputy Mayor)

2.2 Executive

Mr Michael Parker
Mr John Pearson
Mr Michael Holland
Mr Peter Doherty
Mr Peter Varris
Mr Michael Yakas
Mr Allan Moles
Mr Nuno Dionisio
Mr Khushwant Kumar
Ms Nollaig Baker

Ms Brenda Atkins
Mr Nick Brown
Mr Gary Rogers
Ms Mary-Jane Rigby
Ms Jillian Obiri-Boateng
Ms Julia Dick
Ms Alison Oliver
Mr Scott Jarvis
Mr Peter Le
Mr Aiden Boyham
Ms Sue Langley
Mrs Diane Zanre

Chief Executive Officer
Director Corporate Services
Director Community Development
Director Legal Services and General Counsel
Manager Governance and Councillor Support
Manager Customer and Corporate Support
Manager Financial Services
Manager Waste Services
Financial Controller
A/Manager Strategy and Corporate Communications
A/Manager Human Resources Development
Manager Community and Leisure Facilities
Manager Community Infrastructure Planning
Manager Community Safety and Support Services
Collaborative Manager, Community Capacity Bldg
Collaborative Manager, Community Capacity Bldg
Manager Library and Information Services
Manager Economic Development and Tourism
Senior Legal and Councillor Liaison Officer
City Media Officer
A/Governance Coordinator
PA to Director Community Development

	<p>2.3 Members of the Gallery:</p> <p>2.4 Apologies:</p> <p>2.5 Approved Leave of Absence:</p>	
3.	Responses to Previous Public Questions Taken on Notice	
4.	Public Question Time	
	<p>In accordance with Council resolution and regulation 5 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, this meeting will be closed to the public.</p> <p>Questions relating to the business of the Committee are invited for submission via customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au before 2pm of the meeting day.</p>	
5.	Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting	
	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>That Committee CONFIRMS the Minutes of the Corporate and Community Development Committee Meeting held on 21 April 2020, as a true and accurate record.</p>	
6.	Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes	
7.	Announcement by the Presiding Person without Discussion	
	The Chairperson to announce to all present that decisions made at Committees of Council are recommendations only and may be adopted in full, amended or deferred when presented for consideration at the next Council meeting.	
8.	Declarations of Members and Officers Interests	
9.	Petitions/Deputations/Presentations/Submissions	
10.	Matters for which the Meeting may be Closed	
11.	Bulletin Items	
	<p>Corporate and General Management Services Information Bulletin – May 2020</p> <p>Community Development Information Bulletin – May 2020</p>	
12.	Agenda Items	
	<p>Corporate Services</p> <p>CS-009/20 City Business Plan 2020/2021 to 2029/2030 (<i>Absolute Majority</i>)</p> <p>CS-010/20 May 2020 Budget Review (<i>Absolute Majority</i>)</p> <p>CS-011/20 Rating Methodology – 2020/2021 Financial Year</p> <p>Community Development</p> <p>CD-010/20 National Redress Scheme Position (<i>Absolute Majority</i>)</p> <p>CD-011/20 Homelessness in Rockingham</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6</p> <p>9</p> <p>12</p> <p>16</p> <p>16</p> <p>22</p>

13.	Reports of Councillors
14.	Addendum Agenda
15.	Motions of which Previous Notice has been given
16.	Notices of Motion for Consideration at the Following Meeting
17.	Urgent Business Approved by the Person Presiding or by Decision of the Committee
18.	Matters Behind Closed Doors
19.	Date and Time of Next Meeting
	The next Corporate and Community Development Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday 16 June 2020 in the Council Boardroom, Council Administration Building, Civic Boulevard, Rockingham. The meeting will commence at 4:00pm.
20.	Closure

12. Agenda Items

Corporate Services

Corporate Services Financial Services	
Reference No & Subject:	CS-009/20 City Business Plan 2020/2021 to 2029/2030 (<i>Absolute Majority</i>)
File No:	CPM/7
Proponent/s:	
Author:	Mr John Pearson, Director Corporate Services
Other Contributors:	
Date of Committee Meeting:	19 May 2020
Previously before Council:	10 December 2019 (CS-015/19 – City Business Plan 2020/2021 to 2029/2030)
Disclosure of Interest:	
Nature of Council's Role in this Matter:	Executive
Site:	
Lot Area:	
Attachments:	Business Plan 2020/2021 to 2029/2030 (December 2019)
Maps/Diagrams:	



Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to adopt the December 2019 edition of the City Business Plan 2020/2021 to 2029/2030 by absolute majority for the purposes of meeting statutory requirements.

Background

The City of Rockingham's Business Plan provides a 10-year financial overview of the City's operations. Pursuant to the Council Policy – Strategic Development Framework, the City's Business Plan must be reviewed and adopted by Council in November and May each financial year. The last version of the City Business Plan was adopted at the December 2019 Council meeting. This occurred by simple majority.

At the March 2020 Ordinary Council meeting, Council resolved (**CS-008/20 – 2020/2021 Annual Budget**):

*That Council **DIRECTS** the CEO to prepare the 2020/2021 Annual Budget for adoption by Council which includes the following requirements:*

- 1. No increases in rates;*
- 2. No increases in fees and charges; and*

3. Financial allocations to deliver projects and services as best able to be achieved in consideration of the priorities as adopted in the December 2019 City Business Plan.

In the report resulting in this resolution it was explained a budget would be prepared outside of traditional business planning principles and frameworks used by the City and that it was highly unusual to not follow strategy for forward planning.

Given the current critical incident management occurring in the City related to COVID-19, a May 2020 edition of the City Business Plan has not been prepared and officers have used the December 2019 City Business Plan to guide priorities for the annual budget preparation.

Details

The May 2020 version of the City Business Plan is designed to meet the City's statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1995.

The City Business Plan provides allocations of financial resources to ensure that the key strategic objectives of the City are achieved. It also ensures that resources exist to safeguard standard operating functions, and ensure funding allocations are provided so capital construction programs may occur.

It also provides an overview of the main community infrastructure projects. This is particularly relevant in local governments with rapidly growing populations such as the City of Rockingham.

The December 2019 edition of the City Business Plan achieves this also subject to Team Plan completion which traditionally occurs later in the financial year.

Implications to Consider

a. Consultation with the Community

Nil

b. Consultation with Government Agencies

Nil

c. Strategic

Community Plan

This item addresses the Community's Vision for the future and specifically the following Aspiration and Strategic Objective contained in the Strategic Community Plan 2019-2029:

Aspiration 4: *Deliver Quality Leadership and Business Expertise*

Strategic Objective: *Strategic and sustainable financial planning – Undertake long term resource planning and allocation, with prioritised spending on core services, infrastructure development and asset management.*

d. Policy

Council Policy - Strategic Framework provides the framework for the adoption of the Business Plan and specifically requires it to be prepared twice a year. This has not occurred. On this basis, in order to achieve statutory compliance the December 2019 City Business Plan must be adopted by absolute majority. Minutes demonstrate it was adopted by simple majority only.

e. Financial

Nil

f. Legal and Statutory

This version of the City Business Plan complies with Regulation 19DA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.

Regulation 19DA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 requires a local government to prepare a corporate business plan covering a period of at least four financial years each financial year. The plan must contain priorities in line with the Strategic Community Plan, internal operations planning, resource management and other integrated matters relating to long term financial planning. Regulation 19DA(6) also requires Council to make a determination on the Business Plan via absolute majority.

g. Risk

All Council decisions are subject to risk assessment according to the City's Risk Framework.

Implications and comment will only be provided for the following assessed risks.

Customer Service / Project management / Environment: High and Extreme Risks

Finance / Personal Health and Safety: Medium, High and Extreme Risks

Nil

Comments

The City is currently in critical incident management mode and operating outside of adopted strategic planning frameworks. In the current environment, the ability to do meaningful strategic planning is limited as the local environment is rapidly changing, often daily. It was for this reason approval was granted by Council to prepare an annual budget based on the priorities as adopted in the December 2019 Business Plan, as best able to be achieved.

A consequence of this is that the City will not be compliant to Local Government (Administration) Regulation 19DA(6) which requires a local government to adopt a Business Plan by absolute majority. This traditionally would have occurred, however given the current situation will not be achieved.

For clarity purposes, a Business Plan is only required to be prepared and adopted by a local government once per year. The City's Strategic Framework requires twice per year, which exceeds minimum statutory requirements. To this end, adoption of the December 2019 City Business Plan by absolute majority achieves statutory compliance.

If the plan is not adopted by absolute majority, it will not be compliant with the Local Government Act 1995, possibly resulting in either a qualified external audit opinion for the City and/or significant findings against the City. This would trigger reporting to the Minister for Local Government actions to be taken by the City to address the significant finding.

It is understood that the December 2019 Business Plan provides guidance on projects primarily. The resolution on annual budget requirement at the March 2020 Ordinary Council meeting, item **CS-008/20 – 2020/2021 Annual Budget**, remains the priorities of City officer's and will be implemented accordingly.

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Officer Recommendation

That Council, for the purposes of statutory compliance, **ADOPTS** the December 2019 City of Rockingham Business Plan 2020/2021 to 2029/2030.

Corporate Services Financial Services



Reference No & Subject:	CS-010/20	May 2020 Budget Review	(Absolute Majority)
File No:	FLM/17-05		
Proponent/s:			
Author:	Mr Khushwant Kumar, Financial Controller		
Other Contributors:	Mr Allan Moles, Manager Financial Services		
Date of Committee Meeting:	19 May 2020		
Previously before Council:			
Disclosure of Interest:			
Nature of Council's Role in this Matter:	Executive		
Site:			
Lot Area:			
Attachments:	May 2020 Budget Review		
Maps/Diagrams:			

Purpose of Report

To adopt the May 2020 Budget Review.

Background

The City undertakes budget reviews to monitor its financial performance against the annual budget and to review projections to the end of the financial year. Three budget reviews are presented in the 2019/2020 financial year: September 2019, February 2020 and May 2020. Any variations to the annual budget arising from the review process are presented for Council's consideration and authorisation.

Details

The May 2020 Budget Review includes details of transactions during the July 2019 – April 2020 period and adjustments required to the annual budget. The document includes the following information:

- Summary of Budget Position
- Summary of Major Amendments
- Summary of Projects Carried Forward
- Summary Statement of Operating and Non-Operating Revenue and Expenditure by Department

Implications to Consider

a. Consultation with the Community

Nil

b. Consultation with Government Agencies

Nil

c. Strategic

Community Plan

This item addresses the Community's Vision for the future and specifically the following Aspiration and Strategic Objective contained in the Strategic Community Plan 2019-2029:

Aspiration 4: *Deliver Quality Leadership and Business Expertise*

Strategic Objective: *Effective governance – Apply systems of governance which empower the Council to make considered and informed decisions within a transparent, accountable, ethical and compliant environment*

d. Policy

Nil

e. Financial

The overall effect of the various budget amendments and carry forwards is an anticipated surplus after restricted funds of \$23.3 million; of which, \$23.5 million is committed to existing projects, leaving a technical deficit of \$262K. The actual surplus/deficit is dependent on the amount of incomplete works at the end of the financial year and will be finalised during the preparation and audit of the Annual Financial Statements.

f. Legal and Statutory

Section 6.8(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1995 requires a local government not to incur expenditure from municipal funds until it has been approved in advance by absolute majority by Council.

g. Risk

All Council decisions are subject to risk assessment according to the City's Risk Framework.

Implications and comment will only be provided for the following assessed risks.

Customer Service / Project management / Environment: High and Extreme Risks

Finance / Personal Health and Safety: Medium, High and Extreme Risks

Nil

Comments

The amount of \$23.5 million has been carried forward for projects not expected to be completed by the end of June 2020. These projects are summarised in the May 2020 Budget Review attachment under Summary of Carry Forwards. The following are the major carry forwards:

\$7.7 Million Baldivis District Sport Complex Stage 1

\$3.7 Million Koorana Reserve Upgrade

\$2.2 Million Mackinnon Street Youth Facility

\$1.7 Million Landfill Master Plan Infrastructure

\$1.1 Million Nairn Drive Duplication Project

\$1.0 Million Baldivis Indoor Recreation Centre

In addition the proposed loan for \$13 million for the Baldivis District Sporting Facility will be carried over until the new financial year.

Due to COVID-19 and other factors there are a number of amendments proposed to reflect the anticipated position at the end of June 2020. The main budget amendments are summarised in the May 2020 Budget Review attachment under the Summary of Major Amendments. The following are the major budget amendments:

Operating Revenue

\$4.44 Million Non-Cash Developer Contributions (Roads) – Increase in revenue to offset non-operating expenditure (refer below) to recognise roads and drainage infrastructure handed over by developers.

\$3.29 Million Non-Cash Developer Contributions (Parks) – Increase in revenue to offset non-operating expenditure (refer below) to recognise parks and reserves handed over by developers

\$2.36 Million General Purpose Operating & Local Road Grant – Increase as the City is anticipating receiving a 50% advance payment of the 2020/2021 grant

\$2.01 Million Developer Contribution Scheme – Decrease in contributions from new developments

\$1.55 Million Landfill Entry Fees – Decrease due to less than anticipated waste tonnages

\$1.26 Million Interest on Investments – Decrease in interest as a result of falling interest rates and reduction in general revenue

\$1.05 Million Aqua Jetty – Decrease in revenue as a result of COVID-19 closure

Operating Expenditure

\$820K Aqua Jetty - Decrease in operating cost including salaries due to COVID-19 closure

\$750K State Government Landfill Levy – Decrease due to less than anticipated waste tonnages

Non-Operating Expenditure

\$4.44 Million Developer Contributed Assets (Roads) – Increase in non-cash expenditure to recognise roads and drainage infrastructure handed over by developers

\$3.29 Million Developer Contributed Assets (Parks) – Increase in non-cash expenditure to recognise parks and reserves handed over by developers

\$2.01 Million Transfer to Reserves – Decrease due to reduction in revenue from the Developer Contribution Scheme

\$1.01 Million Transfer to Reserves – Decrease due to reduction in interest on reserve funds invested

Although the anticipated position, after allowing for the carried forward projects, is a deficit of about \$262K the City will continue to monitor the actual revenue and expenditure between now and the end of June to minimise the potential deficit.

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Officer Recommendation

That Council **ADOPTS** the May 2020 Budget Review.

Corporate Services Financial Services				
				
Reference No & Subject:	CS-011/20	Rating	Methodology	– 2020/2021 Financial Year
File No:	RTV/11			
Proponent/s:				
Author:	Mr Allan Moles, Manager Financial Services			
Other Contributors:				
Date of Committee Meeting:	19 May 2020			
Previously before Council:				
Disclosure of Interest:				
Nature of Council's Role in this Matter:	Executive			
Site:				
Lot Area:				
Attachments:	Rates Modelling Summary			
Maps/Diagrams:				

Purpose of Report

This report is written to approve proposed rates in the dollar for the 2020/2021 financial year to allow for public advertising to commence.

Background

As a response to the current critical incident management occurring in the City related to COVID-19, at the March 2020 Ordinary Council meeting, Council resolved (**CS-008/20 – 2020/2021 Annual Budget**):

*That Council **DIRECTS** the CEO to prepare the 2020/2021 Annual Budget for adoption by Council which includes the following requirements:*

- 1. No increases in rates;*
- 2. No increases in fees and charges; and*
- 3. Financial allocations to deliver projects and services as best able to be achieved in consideration of the priorities as adopted in the December 2019 City Business Plan.*

Rates are calculated based on the valuations provided by Landgate with Unimproved Valuations (UV) revalued each year and Gross Rental Valuations (GRV) revalued every three years. Under this revaluation cycle both UV and GRV valuations have been revalued for the 2020/2021 financial year.

The proposed rating methodology is intended to yield the same rates as would have applied in 2019/2020 which is \$91.59 million.

This does not include interim rates which are levied on new or improved properties during the 2020/2021 financial year. It is anticipated that the revenue from interim rates will be less than in previous years due to the decrease in development and building activity.

Details

The proposed rating methodology is to apply differential rates for the 2020/2021 financial year in accordance with Section 6.36 of the Local Government Act 1995 as follows:

GRV Properties

Properties rated on a GRV basis make up approximately 99.5% of the total rates levied and have been classified into the following rate categories:

GRV - Residential

A differential general rate of 8.497 cents in the dollar applies to Residential land.

“Residential land” means any land used or designed, or adapted for use for the purpose of a dwelling and includes vacant land within the Residential, Development, Rural, Special Rural, Special Residential, Commercial, District Town Centre, Primary Centre Waterfront Village, Primary Centre Urban Village, Primary Centre City Centre, Primary Centre City Living, Primary Centre Campus and Primary Centre Urban Living zones under the City of Rockingham Town Planning Scheme No. 2.

Dwelling has the meaning given to it in the City of Rockingham Town Planning Scheme No. 2.

The rate applied to GRV-Residential is the differential general rate used as the basis on which the other GRV rate categories are calculated. The GRV-Residential rate is an increase of 17.0% over the 2019/2020 rate in the dollar however is offset by the overall reduction in the GRV as a result of the revaluation.

GRV - Non Residential

A differential general rate of 9.307 cents in the dollar applies to Non Residential land.

“Non-Residential land” means all land other than Residential land.

The City has implemented a 9.5% differential rate on Non Residential properties to assist in the cost of infrastructure specifically designed to support the non-residential sector.

GRV - Minimum Rate

It is proposed that the minimum rate on all GRV properties remain at \$1,200 for the 2020/2021 year.

UV Properties

A general rate of 0.1035 cents in the dollar applies to all UV land. UV land generates approximately 0.5% of rate yield. The UV rate is an increase of 1% over the 2019/2020 rate in the dollar however is offset by the overall reduction in the UV as a result of the revaluation.

It is proposed that the minimum rate for all UV properties remain at \$625 for the 2020/2021 financial year.

Implications to Consider

a. Consultation with the Community

Nil

b. Consultation with Government Agencies

Nil

c. Strategic

Community Plan

This item addresses the Community's Vision for the future and specifically the following Aspiration and Strategic Objective contained in the Strategic Community Plan 2019-2029:

Aspiration 4: *Deliver Quality Leadership and Business Expertise*

Strategic Objective: *Effective governance – Apply systems of governance which empower the Council to make considered and informed decisions within a transparent, accountable, ethical and compliant environment*

d. Policy

Nil

e. Financial

The approval of the proposed rates for 2020/2021 is anticipated to yield approximately \$91.59 million.

f. Legal and Statutory

Adoption of rates occurs as part of the budget adoption which is proposed to occur in June 2020. This report proposes to approve the rate levels at this time for the purpose of public advertising.

It is a requirement under Section 6.36 of the Local Government Act 1995 that where a Council elects to use differential rates, then it shall advertise its intention to do so, and call for submissions for a period of at least 21 days before any further action occurs.

Further, the local government is required to consider any submissions received before imposing the proposed rate or minimum payment with or without modification. This will occur during the budget adoption process.

In accordance with Section 6.35 of the Local Government Act 1995, a local government may impose a minimum payment greater than the general rate which would otherwise be payable. A local government is to ensure the minimum payment is not imposed on more than 50% of properties in a category.

g. Risk

All Council decisions are subject to risk assessment according to the City's Risk Framework.

Implications and comment will only be provided for the following assessed risks.

Customer Service / Project management / Environment: High and Extreme Risks

Finance / Personal Health and Safety: Medium, High and Extreme Risks

Nil

Comments

The GRV revaluation has resulted in an average 14.9% decrease in the valuations for GRV – Residential properties and an average 7.6% decrease in the valuations for GRV – Non Residential properties. Although these are the average decreases some valuations have decreased by over 40% while others have increased by more than 50%.

The challenge in applying the new valuations while trying to maintain the previous rates for individual properties is practically impossible with the significant variations in the changes to the valuations.

Under the proposed rating methodology approximately 71% of all properties will receive the same or lower rates in 2020/2021.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Officer Recommendation

That Council **APPROVES** for the purpose of public comment the following rates in the dollar and minimum rates for the 2020/2021 financial year:

Gross Rental Valuation (GRV) Properties

GRV - Residential

A differential general rate of **8.497 cents** in the dollar applies to Residential land.

“Residential land” means any land used, or designed, or adapted for use, for the purpose of a dwelling and includes vacant land within the Residential, Development, Rural, Special Rural, Special Residential, Commercial, District Town Centre, Primary Centre Waterfront Village, Primary Centre Urban Village, Primary Centre City Centre, Primary Centre City Living, Primary Centre Campus and Primary Centre Urban Living zones under the City of Rockingham Town Planning Scheme No. 2.

GRV - Non Residential

A differential general rate of **9.307 cents** in the dollar applies to Non Residential land.

Non Residential land means all land other than Residential land.

GRV - Minimum Rate

The minimum rate on all GRV properties is **\$1200**.

Unimproved Valuation (UV) Properties

A general rate of **0.1035 cents** in the dollar applies to UV land.

UV - Minimum Rate

The minimum rate for all UV properties is **\$625**.

Community Development

Community Development Community Development Directorate



Reference No & Subject:	CD-010/20	National Redress Scheme	Position
		(Absolute Majority)	
File No:	GRV/10-20		
Proponent/s:			
Author:	Mr Michael Holland, Director Community Development		
Other Contributors:	Mr Dean Stoitis, Senior Project Officer Ms Mary Jane Rigby, Manager Community Safety and Support Services		
Date of Committee Meeting:	19 May 2020		
Previously before Council:			
Disclosure of Interest:			
Nature of Council's Role in this Matter:	Executive		
Site:			
Lot Area:			
Attachments:			
Maps/Diagrams:			

Purpose of Report

For Council to endorse a position on the City's participation in the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Abuse.

Background

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) was established in 2013 to investigate failures of public and private institutions to protect children from sexual abuse. The Royal Commission released three reports throughout the inquiry:

- Working with Children Checks (August 2015);
- Redress and Civil Litigation (September 2015); and
- Criminal Justice (August 2017).

The Royal Commission's Final Report (15 December 2017) incorporated findings and recommendations of the three previous reports.

The implications of the Royal Commission's recommendations are twofold: the first is accountability for historical breaches in the duty of care that occurred before 1 July 2018 within any institution; the second is future-facing, ensuring better child safe approaches are implemented holistically moving forward.

National Redress Scheme

The Royal Commission's Redress and Civil Litigation (September 2015) Report recommended the establishment of a single National Redress Scheme (the Scheme) to recognise the harm suffered by survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

The Scheme acknowledges that children were sexually abused, recognises the suffering endured, holds institutions accountable and helps those who have been abused access counselling, psychological services, an apology and a redress payment.

The Scheme, commenced on 1 July 2018, will run for 10 years. All State and Territory Governments and many major non-government organisations and church groups have joined the Scheme.

The Western Australian Government (the State) started participating in the Scheme from 1 January 2019.

Under the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018 (Cth), local governments may be considered a State Government institution.

A decision was made at the time of joining the Scheme to exclude WA local governments from the State Government's participation declaration. This was to allow consultation to occur with the sector about the Scheme, and for fuller consideration of how the WA local government sector could best participate.

During 2019, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) consulted with local government to understand their concerns with participation in the National Redress Scheme.

The DLGSC on behalf of the State Government is requesting the local governments' participation in the National Redress Scheme prior to 31 May 2020.

The City is not aware of any potential claims, but as many events have been run through City owned facilities by the City and third parties, it would be prudent for the City to participate in the scheme.

Details

From early 2019, DLGSC consulted with local government and it became apparent that the most common concerns with participation in the Scheme were:

- potential cost of Redress payments;
- availability of historical information;
- capacity of local governments to provide a Direct Personal Response (apology) if requested by Redress recipients;
- process and obligations relating to maintaining confidentiality if Redress applications are received, particularly in small local governments;
- lack of insurance coverage of Redress payments by LGIS, meaning local governments would need to self-fund participation and Redress payments.

LGIS published and distributed an update (April 2019) regarding the considerations and (potential) liability position of the WA local government sector in relation to the National Redress Scheme.

The WALGA State Council meeting on 3 July 2019 recommended that:

1. WA local government participation in the State's National Redress Scheme declaration with full financial coverage by the State Government, be endorsed in principle, noting that further engagement with the sector will occur in the second half of 2019.
2. WALGA continue to promote awareness of the National Redress Scheme and note that local governments may wish to join the Scheme in the future to demonstrate a commitment to the victims of institutional child sexual abuse.

Following consultation, the State Government resolved via the Community Safety and Family Support Cabinet Sub Committee (December 2019):

- Noted the consultations undertaken to date with the WA local government sector about the National Redress Scheme;

- Noted the options for WA local government participation in the Scheme;
- Agreed to local governments participating in the Scheme as State Government institutions, with the State Government covering payments to the survivor; and
- Agrees to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) leading further negotiations with the WA local government sector regarding local government funding costs, other than payments to the survivor including counselling, legal and administrative costs.

The following will be covered for local governments participating in the Scheme as a State Government institution and part of the State's declaration:

- Redress monetary payment provided to the survivor;
- Costs in relation to counselling, legal and administration (including the coordination of requests for information and record keeping in accordance with the State Records Act 2000); and
- Trained staff to coordinate and facilitate a Direct Personal Response (DPR – Apology) to the survivor if requested (on a fee for service basis with costs to be covered by the individual local government).

Individual local governments participating in the Scheme as a State Government institution, with the State will be responsible for:

- Providing the State with the necessary (facilities and services) information to participate in the Scheme;
- Resources and costs associated with gathering their own (internal) information and providing that information (Request for Information) to the State (if they receive a Redress application); and
- Costs associated with the delivery of a DPR (apology), if requested (based on a standard service fee, plus travel and accommodation depending on the survivor's circumstance). The State's decision includes that all requested DPR's will be coordinated and facilitated by the Redress Coordination Unit – Department of Justice, on every occasion.

Participation in the scheme will mitigate a significant financial risk to the local government in terms of waiving rights to future claims. Accepting an offer of redress has the effect of releasing the responsible participating organisation and their officials (other than the abuser/s) from civil liability for instances of sexual abuse and related non-sexual abuse of the person that is within the scope of the Scheme. This means that the person who receives redress through the Scheme, agrees to not bring or continue any civil claims against the responsible participating organisation in relation to any abuse within the scope of the Scheme.

The WALGA State Council meeting of 4 March 2020 resolved:

1. Acknowledged the State Government's decision to include the participation of Local Governments in the National Redress Scheme as part of the State's declaration;
2. Endorsed the negotiation of a Memorandum of Understanding and Template Service Agreement with the State Government, and
3. Endorsed by Flying Minute/Vote Outside of Committee Meeting the Memorandum of Understanding prior to execution, in order to uphold requirements to respond within legislative timeframes.

On 17 April 2020, the State and WALGA signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reflect the principles of WA local governments participating in the Scheme as State Government institutions and being part of the State's declaration. This consisted of the role of the State Redress Coordination Unit, division of costs for local government and local government legislative compliance. The State's Redress Coordination Unit will assist local government in the coordination of Commonwealth Requests for Information and facilitate Direct Personal Responses, when requested by the person. The service agreement template provides participating local government service standards and obligation, if a direct personal response is requested by the survivor.

It is essential that the City formally indicates via a decision of Council, the intention to be considered a State Government institution (for the purposes on the National Redress Scheme) and be included in the WA Government's amended participation declaration.

Should Council formally decide not to participate with the State or in the Scheme altogether, considerations for the City include:

- Divergence from the Commonwealth, State, WALGA and the broader local government sector's position on the Scheme (noting the Commonwealth's preparedness to name-and-shame non-participating organisations).
- Potential reputational damage at a State, sector and community level.
- Complete removal of the State's coverage of costs and administrative support, with the City having full responsibility and liability for any potential claim.
- Acknowledgement that the only remaining method of redress for a victim and survivor would be through civil litigation, with no upper limit, posing a significant financial risk to the City of Rockingham.

Implications to Consider

a. Consultation with the Community

Not Applicable

b. Consultation with Government Agencies

Between March and May 2019, DLGSC completed consultations that reached 115 out of 137 WA local governments via:

- webinars to local governments, predominately in regional and remote areas;
- presentations at 12 WALGA Zone and Local Government Professional WA meetings;
- responses to email and telephone enquiries from individual local governments.

The City has been engaged on this matter via:

- Manager of Community and Support Services input via representation on the WA Community Development Network from late in 2018 onwards.
- Two presentations at the South West Zone WALGA meeting (that included three City Councillors and the CEO) over the last 12 months
- Community Development Division Manager/s attendance at the 23 January and 28 May 2019 webinar updates
- Administrative and operational level feedback to WALGA on the implications of the inquiry reports that was submitted in September 2019

c. Strategic

Community Plan

This item addresses the Community's Vision for the future and specifically the following Aspiration and Strategic Objective(s) contained in the Strategic Community Plan 2019-2029:

Aspiration 2: *Grow and Nurture Community Connectedness and Wellbeing*

Strategic Objective: *Community Safety and Support: Provide support to residents and visitors so they feel safe and secure at home and outdoors*

Aspiration 4: *Deliver Quality Leadership and Business Expertise*

Strategic Objective: *Key Stakeholder partnerships – Foster relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders to achieve enhanced community outcomes.*

d. Policy

Nil

e. Financial

The financial impact on the City, is the costs associated with a Direct Personal Response, if this is requested by the survivor. This will be based on the standard service fee of \$3,000 plus travel and accommodation costs depending on the survivor's circumstances.

f. Legal and Statutory

s5.42(1) A local government may delegate to the CEO the exercise of any of its powers or the discharge of any of its duties under this Act (Absolute Majority).

In agreeing to join the Scheme the City is required to adhere to legislative requirements set out in the *National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018* (Cth).

The DLGSC and WALGA are developing the service agreement template which is anticipated to be completed in mid 2020. after which time the City will review this document to ensure no significant legal risks for the City.

Authorisation of an appropriately appointed person to execute a service agreement with the State, if a Redress application is received, will be in accordance with s.9.49A(4) of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

g. Risk

All Council decisions are subject to risk assessment according to the City's Risk Framework.

Implications and comment will only be provided for the following assessed risks.

Customer Service / Project management / Environment : High and Extreme Risks

Finance / Personal Health and Safety : Medium, High and Extreme Risks

Risk	Category	Score	Implications / Comment
The City does not participate in the National Redress Scheme	Financial	Medium	The City would be open to potential civil litigation cases with high legal and applicant financial implications
If a request is submitted, committing the City to a service agreement that has not been legally reviewed	Project Management	High	Potential high staff resourcing and increased legal exposure for the City.

Comments

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was established to investigate failures of public and private institutions to protect children from sexual abuse. A key recommendation from this Royal Commission was the establishment of a National Redress Scheme as an avenue for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse to receive:

- A direct personal response (apology) from the responsible institution, if requested;
- Funds to access counselling and psychological care; and
- A monetary payment of up to \$150,000.

The Commonwealth Government and all Australian states and territories are parties to the National Redress Scheme. The WA Government has conducted extensive consultation with WA Local Governments, WALGA and Local Government Professionals WA. The State Government is strongly encouraging and is providing strong support for WA Local Governments to participate in this scheme, as a state government institution. WA Local Governments have until 31 May 2020 to decide on their participation in the scheme.

The City of Rockingham has and continues to deliver services that address the needs of children and young people for example childcare services, 'at risk' youth intervention, swim school, etc.

It is recommended that Council support the City's participation in the National Redress Scheme based on:

1. Participation being aligned with the Community Safety and Support and Key Stakeholder Partnership Strategic Objectives within the City's Strategic Community Plan 2019-2029.
2. Positive organisational reputational impact from the community and stakeholders by participating

3. Lower potential financial impact, if an application is received – The state government will provide coverage of survivor payments, counselling, legal and administrative costs and support to Council in the administration of a request if an application is received. This is in comparison to legal and potential pay out cost implications on Council, if an application was received and a civil litigation process was initiated

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. **NOTES** the consultation undertaken and information provided by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries in regarding the National Redress Scheme and the participation of WA local governments.
2. **APPROVES** the participation of the City of Rockingham in the National Redress Scheme as a State Government institution and included as part of the State Government's declaration.
3. **DELEGATES** authority to the Chief Executive Officer to execute a service agreement with the State, if a Redress application is received.

Community Development Community Safety and Support Services



Reference No & Subject:	CD-011/20 Homelessness in Rockingham
File No:	CSV/1029-15
Proponent/s:	
Author:	Mr Michael Holland, Director Community Development
Other Contributors:	Ms Mary-Jane Rigby, Manager Community Safety and Support Services
Date of Committee Meeting:	19 May 2020
Previously before Council:	CD-017/19 - July 2019
Disclosure of Interest:	
Nature of Council's Role in this Matter:	Executive
Site:	
Lot Area:	
Attachments:	
Maps/Diagrams:	

Purpose of Report

To seek Council support of a strategic approach in addressing and providing assistance to those experiencing homelessness in Rockingham. To advocate and seek direct financial support from the State Government to deliver an assertive outreach service, infrastructure and support service for the region.

Background

On 16 July 2019 Council resolved to:

That Council:

1. Continues to **SUPPORT** the City of Rockingham's role as a stakeholder in the State's Strategy on Homelessness.
2. **DIRECTS** the CEO to prepare a Discussion Paper on homelessness focussing on:
 - (a) Actions taken by the City over recent years including:

Membership of the Rockingham/Kwinana Homelessness Interagency Group, the management of the database of Homelessness Sector contacts, the production of the Homeless Reference Card, the successful advocacy for the Street Doctor at the Salvation Army, partnership with the Salvation Army during August each year to hold the Annual Homelessness Week event – a day that local service providers come to one location to link in with the homeless and numerous other actions to support homeless people.

- (b) New activities to support the homeless including:
- (i) Community education and awareness campaigns focused on increasing community resilience and building Not For Profit capacity;
 - (ii) Continued support and training to the Not For Profit and volunteer sector which is highly valued;
 - (iii) Continued support through the Community Grants Program for eligible and worthwhile initiatives aimed at decreasing homelessness across the City; and
 - (iv) Other strategies that arise in the preparation of the Discussion Paper.
3. The CEO **PRESENT** the discussion paper for consideration via a Councillor Engagement Session by November 2019 pursuant to the City's Governance and Meeting Framework Policy.
4. The CEO and Mayor **ADVOCATE** and **LOBBY** the State Government for:
- (i) The provision of infrastructure and services for homeless people in Rockingham;
 - (ii) The provision of funding for a dedicated Police Mental Health Unit to be based in Rockingham to support the Police; and
 - (iii) The location and provision of key services for homeless people within the Rockingham CBD.

In line with the Council resolution Officers undertook detailed analysis and presented a discussion paper to councillors at the November 2019 Councillor Engagement Session (CES). The outcome of the CES was that the following initiatives and costings were to be investigated by officers and results presented to a future CES in 2020:

- Assertive outreach services
- Sleepbus initiative

Following the compilation of the above information a second CES was held on 11 February 2020, which resulted in a request that Officers obtain further information on:

1. Data Collection and Analysis Methodology – the City to commence a headcount process.
2. Assertive Outreach Service – research possible funding through State Government.
3. Sleepbus – more specific information to be obtained.
4. Proposed to conduct a grant workshop aimed at Not for Profit agencies to advise them of the City's Community Grants Program.

Now all the information has been compiled and provided to councillors over two CES council needs to consider how to progress the issue of homelessness on a local level and from an advocacy standpoint to the State Government.

Details

Homelessness is worldwide social issue with many definitions, however most commonly utilised in Australia is the Australian Bureau of Statistics statistical definition published 12 November 2012:

“When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if the current living arrangement:

- *Is in a dwelling that is inadequate;*
- *Has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or*
- *Does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations”*

It is difficult to capture a number of how many people are experiencing homelessness on any given night as it is experienced in varying levels of complexity. Chamberlain and Mackenzie (2008) provide a cultural definition as it relates to the diversity of homelessness as follows:

- **Marginally housed:** people in housing situations close to the minimum standard;
- **Tertiary homelessness:** people living in single rooms in private boarding houses without their own bathroom, kitchen or security of tenure;

- **Secondary homelessness:** people moving between various forms of temporary shelter including friends, emergency accommodation, youth refuges, hostels and boarding houses;
- **Primary homelessness:** people living without conventional accommodation (living in the streets, in deserted buildings, improvised dwellings, under bridges, in parks, etc.); and
- **Culturally recognised exceptions:** where it is inappropriate to apply the minimum standard, e.g. seminaries, gaols, student halls of residence.

The WA Strategy to End Homelessness (released 13 April 2018) states '**chronic homelessness**' as 'continuous homelessness for at least one year, or at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years with a combined length of time of at least 12 months.' It is evident from consultation with the support services sector that there are people across each of the above definitions of homelessness within the City, however the exact numbers are hard to determine.

The provision of funding for direct service and accommodation is the remit of State and Federal Government. It is believed that working in partnership with the State Government as the lead agency, enables the development of sustainable longer term outcomes aimed at the prevention of homelessness and at reducing the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness.

On 4 December 2019, the State Government announced a \$71.8 million funding increase for homelessness services across the State. This includes an additional \$34.5 million set aside over five years for a Housing First Homelessness initiative (including rental subsidies) to extend successful housing-first collective impact approaches to new locations across Western Australia including Perth, Rockingham, Mandurah, Bunbury and Geraldton. This funding is in addition to the \$90m that the State Government spends on specialist homeless services.

The Housing First approach is based on the principle of providing a person experiencing chronic homelessness with access to permanent housing without any housing readiness requirements. The person is housed with relevant support services to be able to overcome complex histories (such as health, mental health, and alcohol and other drugs) by providing a homeless person with wraparound services to enable them to sustain permanent accommodation and connection back into the community. This model requires extensive wrap around support services to be successful.

Homelessness was identified in the Community Support Services Strategy 2017-2022 as a focus area for the support services sector. The strategy articulates a significant gap in Assertive Outreach Services and crisis and transitional accommodation within the City and surrounding local governments. In 2018, the City engaged a consultant to undertake a Community Support Services Mapping exercise to assist the City to understand service gaps in line with current and projected population data. This report indicated that homelessness was identified as a key issue and noted, the need for assertive outreach, wrap around services and emergency/crisis and transitional accommodation.

The City's role in responding to matters surrounding homelessness is to provide community sector coordination, advocacy, training, community prevention programs and referrals for individuals that request support and assistance.

The City developed a strategic leadership group in September 2019 involving key stakeholders at a decision making level to assist in advocating for, and influencing change to enhance services to respond to homelessness. This group is chaired by Department of Communities (DoC), Regional Executive Director, and has set three priorities being:

1. Data Collection
2. Assertive Outreach and wrap around support services
3. Accommodation

The City has taken a proactive approach on a local level in the homelessness space and currently provides the following support to the homeless sector:

- Community Support Sector coordination and leadership
- Administration support to Rockingham/Kwinana Homelessness Interagency Group
- Opportunities to connect communities/ individuals/ service providers / referrals
- Community education / awareness / events eg: Homelessness Week & Anti-Poverty Week
- Community grant funds and support for grant applications to other funding bodies

- Collaborative internal processes to manage illegal camping of homeless people
- Training for not-for-profit sector and volunteers
- Provision of resources e.g. homeless reference cards
- Advocacy
- Registry/headcount activities that enables data collection and analysis

The Rockingham/ Kwinana Homelessness Interagency network has identified a service gap in the provision of assertive outreach services in Rockingham, alongside crisis accommodation as the two priority areas. Currently the Salvation Army have employed 1.4 full time Assertive Outreach Workers over the past two years, made possible by funding received through the Western Australian Primary Health Alliance with a focus on Mental Health. Whilst this has enabled them to work with some street present people, it has not been the primary purpose of the funding which is due to conclude at the end of the 2019/2020 financial year. There is no dedicated homelessness specific outreach service in Rockingham although several volunteers have been providing this service in an unofficial capacity.

The City has recently coordinated a point in time headcount that was conducted on the night of Monday 16 March 2020. A point in time head count is not designed to gather any demographic data or personal circumstance information of individuals, rather to count the number of people seen to be sleeping rough in a selected area. This point in time count reported 45 people, some of whom were not sighted during the evening, but were known by the volunteers conducting the count to be in locations deemed unsafe to visit after dark. This data provides a baseline figure for Rockingham, however it must be noted that it only includes those experiencing primary and chronic homelessness.

Assertive Outreach Program

Best practice shows that an assertive outreach program should provide a minimum of two suitably trained outreach workers to engage directly with rough sleepers in the community. The outreach workers provide a flexible point of contact to help with housing support and specialised homelessness support services. A successful model of assertive outreach is purposeful, proactive and a persistent approach with the main goal being assisting those to end the cycle of homelessness and gain permanent accommodation and employment.

A successful model for Rockingham would require flexibility for the assertive outreach workers to work outside of regular business hours including weekends and nights due to the current limitation of afterhours support services. An effective outreach model must also have capacity to support people after they have been housed to ensure they have the skills and tools to maintain housing.

Through investigation with providers of assertive outreach it is estimated that the provision of the service would cost approximately \$300,000 per annum for two trained and qualified Assertive Outreach Workers (AOW) and that a three year service would be most effective. The provision of a fee for service model would be the preferred delivery mechanism for the City.

Whilst the City is aiming to take a proactive approach in this area it is still considered vital that the state government support the provision of this service by allocating funding to the fee for service model. Therefore, it is prudent to seek a 50% financial contribution from the state government to deliver this service as the area of homelessness is a state government responsibility.

If the City was unable to attract matching funds from the State Government then consideration should be given to delivering the fee for service model under a reduced scope.

Sleepbus

The Sleepbus concept was founded by Mr Simon Rowe in 2016 and is based in Melbourne, Victoria. Sleepbus re-purposes old buses and fits them out with 22 sleep pods to provide homeless people a safe and secure place to sleep. Sleepbus is owned and managed solely by Sleepbus. It is funded by donations, and the formation of community partnerships, however the ownership of the bus remains with the founder of Sleepbus.

The cost of a Sleepbus is \$100K which breaks down to \$20k to purchase the vehicle, \$60K to fit it out as a Sleepbus and \$20K to cover the costs of volunteer training, insurances, road worthy certification and vehicle registration. The model is operated by two volunteers per shift with some support from a third party security company, for two hours for the on boarding of people to sleep at the beginning of the shift.

Sleepbus has operated on a trial basis in Melbourne for the period of 2017-2019, the operational hours are 8pm – 8am. During this trial, Sleepbus did not solely operate in one local government area and operated its services within City of Melbourne, City of Greater Geelong, City of Maribyrnong, City of Wyndham, City of Port Phillip and City of Mornington-Peninsula. Upon the City contacting each of the listed local government authorities (LGA's), all reported that no formalised permission was granted for Sleepbus to operate, however Sleepbus founder advised that the City of Melbourne acknowledged the risks to them, however granted a noncommittal 'verbal' ok' to test the service.

Sleepbus has not formalised any specific outcome measures for the service, however reports that it was able to provide 3122 safe sleeps over a two year period. During the trial the bus operated 3-4 nights per week due to funding constraints prohibiting a seven day per week service. Sleepbus does not intend to provide long term outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and stated that the service is frontline and provides safe sleeps only. The City has requested further information from Sleepbus regarding the trial, outcome measurements, sustainability of funding models, content of volunteers training and recruitment, risk management, and processes and procedures in relation to client selection and on board behaviour management. At the time of writing this report, Sleepbus have not as yet provided the City with the further information requested.

From the information provided, Officers believe it is sensible to give the concept of the Sleepbus further time to provide information, complete the trial reinforce statistical data collection, methodology and analysis outcomes. This will provide an opportunity to investigate the issues surrounding operations in public place with regard to required changes to local laws and longer term outcomes.

A good example of working with the State Government through the DoC was between the periods of August 2019 to January 2020. The City actively partnered with the DoC Project Officer - Homelessness, the Salvation Army, Rockingham Police and volunteer agencies to accommodate 22 people who were residing in Bushland adjacent to Ward Road.

While this partnership approach was successful, unfortunately many of these individuals are finding themselves back on the street, highlighting the urgent need for assertive outreach and case management for wrap around support services for homeless people in Rockingham. People who have experienced long term homelessness have complex needs and require ongoing support once appropriate accommodation is sourced. This project highlights the complexity of homelessness and the sometimes 'revolving door' of the issue. It is a long term and ongoing complex problem worldwide.

Implications to Consider

a. Consultation with the Community

The City has and continues to undertake extensive consultation with key stakeholders in relation to homelessness. The Rockingham/Kwinana Homelessness Interagency Group has a membership comprising of 17 local agencies that are allocated some role in preventing or responding to people experiencing homelessness. These agencies include; Salvation Army, Coastal Districts Care, Anglicare WA, Housing Authority, WA Police, WA Homeless Advocate, Street Chaplains, The CREW, Western Australia Centre of Social Services (WACOSS), St Patricks Community Centre, Reclink, St Vinnies, MerceyCare, Orange Sky laundry, Street Doctors, SWAHP, Department of Communities, Office for Mark McGowan, Office of Madeline King.

The City also liaises with the community on an ongoing basis in relation to queries raised regarding homelessness.

b. Consultation with Government Agencies

Several meetings and ongoing communication has been held with DoC to gain a stronger understanding of the State Government's direction for the delivery timelines surrounding the funding announcement in December 2019.

c. Strategic

Community Plan

This item addresses the Community's Vision for the future and specifically the following Aspiration and Strategic Objective contained in the Strategic Community Plan 2019-2029:

Aspiration 2: *Grow and nurture community connectedness and wellbeing*

Strategic Objective: *Community safety and support – Provide support to residents and visitors so they feel safe and secure at home and outdoors.*

Community Support Services Strategy 2017-2020

Key Element One: ***Building an Effective, Accessible and Sustainable Sector***

Provide governance support and leadership to the sector for collaborative or joined up approaches

Advocate for more affordable and social housing within the City.

d. Policy

Nil

e. Financial

The total cost of the Homelessness Assertive Outreach program over a three year period is estimated at \$900,000. It is intended to advocate that the State Government provide 50% of this funding.

A minimum of \$150,000 per year would be required to offer a fee for service to an external provider to deliver a Homelessness Assertive Outreach Service.

f. Legal and Statutory

Nil

g. Risk

All Council decisions are subject to risk assessment according to the City's Risk Framework.

Implications and comment will only be provided for the following assessed risks.

Customer Service / Project management / Environment : High and Extreme Risks

Finance / Personal Health and Safety : Medium, High and Extreme Risks

Nil

Comments

Homelessness continues to be the subject of debate within the Rockingham community and although the amount of people considered as homeless could be seen as quite low the high visual profile of those 'sleeping rough', particularly around the Rockingham foreshore, leads it to being an ongoing contentious community issue.

Whilst the remit of homelessness is clearly a state and federal government responsibility the research undertaken by officers has shown the localised support of data collection and analysis coupled with the delivery of an assertive outreach program has beneficial outcomes for those experiencing homelessness.

The provision of accommodation and support services should remain a state government responsibility with federal government funding. The City could support relevant state government departments by providing information, data and feedback through the assertive outreach program to support infrastructure and support services delivery to help people get off the streets and into accommodation. It must be acknowledged that this is a long process and requires support from a multitude of service providers including mental health, alcohol and other drug services, family and financial counselling and community re-engagement.

The City will be undertaking a registry activity during the 2020/21 financial year as a second step to the point in time headcount. This will provide a more in depth register of people experiencing homelessness in Rockingham and lead to the development of a 'By-name register' between agencies. It is intended that the assertive outreach model will be more effectively supported by the By-name register to ensure that people do not slip between service system gaps during their transition in and out of accommodation and support services. This will provide longer term sustainable outcomes for individuals and provide more accurate data on the need for crisis accommodation, as well as the types of crisis accommodation needed e.g. singles, seniors, youth etc.

The implementation of a three year, fee for service contract, for the delivery of a local Assertive Outreach Service that includes the capability to case manage and support people in their transition to and within accommodation is a worthwhile initiative. It is anticipated that the three year timeframe will provide the opportunity for the state government to deliver a coordinated approach in relation to the delivery of the State Homelessness Strategy particularly around accommodation and support services located in the Rockingham, Kwinana or Mandurah area (southern districts).

From the information gathered and provided officers believe that the Sleepbus model does provide some people experiencing homelessness with a safe place to sleep, although it is a very temporary solution for its users. Relevant data has not been provided to indicate with any certainty if the Sleepbus has enabled people to transition from homelessness to permanent accommodation. The short term nature of the accommodation does not appear to be a solution that will greatly assist the issues Rockingham is facing for the long term. The concept of the Sleepbus should be deferred and reviewed as part of the new Community Support Services Strategy that is currently being developed for Council adoption in 2021.

It is interesting that even with the success of the Ward Road project that many of the 22 people are already back on the street. This can be attributed to the magnitude of issues including; none or limited wrap around support services to assist with transition from street to home, anti-social behaviours causing disturbances to other tenants in the complex and other homeless people staying with those housed causing disturbances. This is another example of the complexity surrounding the homelessness issue.

As the City continues to expand through ongoing population growth the issues of homelessness will continue to be experienced as it does with nearly all cities around the world. Whilst it is understood that taking a proactive local approach should support those experiencing homelessness it is apparent that the role of the state government is key to supporting the longer term solution through the provision of accommodation and the delivery of wrap around support services.

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. **SUPPORTS** a three year assertive outreach fee for service contract to an amount of \$150,000 per annum, to be delivered by a suitability qualified and experienced not for profit agency and provides funding in the 2020/2021 – 2022/2023 budgets accordingly.
2. **DIRECTS** the Chief Executive Officer to write to the state government seeking financial support for the assertive outreach program
3. **ADVOCATES** to the state government to allocate one of the Common Ground models to be located within Rockingham, Kwinana or Mandurah local governments (with the south metropolitan region).