

## Local Government Mayoral Taskforce supporting People Seeking Asylum Minutes – Executive Meeting No. Wednesday 5 December 2018 Moreland City Council, 90 Bell Street, Coburg

**Chairperson:** Mayor, Cr Roz Blades (CGD)

**Attendees:** Cr Matthew Kirwan (CGD), Peter Johnstone (CGD) – Minute Taker, Mandy Bathgate (Darebin Council), Mayor, Cr Susan Rennie (Darebin City Council), Terri Soumilas (Brimbank City Council), Mayor Natalie Abboud (Moreland City Council), Nelum Buddhadasa (Moreland City Council), Kristen Cherry (Hume City Council), Mayor, Cr Jonathon Marsden (Hobsons Bay City Council), Amber Cassidy (Hobsons Bay City Council), Pamela Kosij (Monash City Council)

**Guests:** Connor Parker (The Agenda Group - TAG), Seamus Bradley (The Agenda Group - TAG), Bo Li (VLGA)

**Apologies:** Cr Daniel Nguyen (Yarra City Council), Mayor, Cr Shane McCluskey (Monash City Council), Mayor, Cr Linda Congreve (Brimbank City Council), Mayor, Cr John Kavanagh (Moreland City Council), Libby Gott (Moreland City Council)

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/Comments	Follow up Actions / Who
1. <b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledgement of traditional owners. Mayor Cr Roz Blades welcomed representatives from Hobson's Bay as part of the Executive.</li> <li>Apologies noted</li> </ul>	
2. <b>Consideration of application by Hume City Council to be an Executive member</b>	Mayor Cr Roz Blades sort endorsement of Hume City Council to be a member of the Executive. Hume City Council has already committed to making a contribution to the campaign expenses. Kristen Cherry (Manager of Community Strengthening, Hume City Council) welcomed to the meeting.	Endorsed. Moved: Cr Roz Blades Seconded: Peter Johnstone
3. <b>Endorsement of Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	Corrections to meeting no. 4, 31 October noted and will be updated. Minutes are endorsed on this basis.  Moved: Mayor, Cr Natalie About Seconded: Mayor, Cr Susan Rennie	Peter Johnstone (CGD) to correct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes to include additional info noting Cr Abboud's concerns around name of Back Your Neighbour (BYN) clashing with Amnesty International campaign.</li> <li>Location of meeting to be corrected.</li> </ul>

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<b>4. Review of Outstanding Action Items</b>	Review of Outstanding Action Items. Peter Johnstone (CGD) informed the group that the Material Aid Prototype software developed by CGD can be shared on a view only basis for implementation consideration by other Councils. Client data will be protected and no access to personal data will be available.	Individual councils to contact Peter Johnstone to arrange.
<b>5. Review of Launch</b>	Members gave brief comments reviewing Media Launch. Summary of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at launch by so many council representatives and non-council supporters was encouraging. Personal stories shared at the launch were considered very powerful. Members noted that the absence of metro media was regrettable and disappointing however several council media &amp; communications unit were able to utilise press releases provided. Councils able to promote launch and campaign at their own local level. Sincere thanks expressed to Victorian Local Governance Association for the use of their premises and overall support.</li> <li>• Seamus Bradley from The Agenda Group informed the Taskforce members of the process and attempts made to attract media attention – particularly The Age newspaper. Attendance of the The Age was promising right up until 5pm on the Sunday prior to the launch when Seamus received a call from their afternoon shift editor apologising that they had ‘run out of reporters’ and therefore they would not be running a story and no Age journalists would attend the launch. Seamus explained that if the Age ran a story that there would be a 90% chance of other media (talkback radio, TV) being responsive.</li> <li>• Connor Parker from The Agenda Group shared what was occurring or planned on the social media front of the BYN campaign. Connor reported that the most effective advertising was linked to the personal stories e.g. Nayran’s story had a good result. \$1,500 of targeted advertising has been focused on federal seats with moderate liberal incumbents who will put pressure internally at caucus level. Over 100 people have joined the campaign and provided their email addresses via the website. The ‘ask’ will be for these people to write to their federal member re reversing SRSS cuts. NYB Facebook (FB) has 500 likes. Connor reported that there has been some negative (racist) FB comments and he has removed these. Connor emphasised the need to have different stories for different audiences hence the need for a multiplicity of stories that can influence.</li> </ul>	Information – no follow up actions required.

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<p><b>6. Back Your Neighbour campaign – plan for December</b></p>	<p>With the run up to Christmas Seamus also explained the differences between ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ news from a journalistic perspective. Hard news in the SRSS context equates to a major policy reversal or similar by the government whereas soft news focusses on the human interest side of a story e.g. a feature story such as a person who has been made homeless by the SRSS cuts – with the option of including hard data as a follow up section. He explained that it was unlikely that there would be any hard news in relation to the campaign in the immediate future and therefore focussing on soft news – for example people seeking asylum at a Christmas meal provided by the Salvos – either as participants or those serving. Another suggestion for publicity at a local level is for mayors to weave the BYN campaign and situation into speaking opportunities, for example, Christmas messages. Seamus explained that at the local level stories will be opportunistic – generating material whereas at a metro level it will be focussed on what people are already talking about.</p>	<p>Individual councils to focus on opportunistic stories where available for their own local media.</p>
<p><b>7. Back Your Neighbour campaign – potential next steps</b></p>	<p>The Agenda Group distributed a proposal for the second stage of the Back Your Neighbour Campaign (Attachment 1) and provided a verbal explanation to members. Connor explained that the strategy behind the campaign has not changed and that the generation of new content would be crucial to maintain interest and to further direct the public to register as supporters. The Agenda Group members then left the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>8. Back Your Neighbour campaign – next steps discussion</b></p>	<p>Executive members were generally positive towards the proposal presented recognising that a call for more voluntary contributions would need to be asked for from member councils. There was no objection from executive if this was required. CGD as secretariat was asked to confirm the timeframe from TAG as the expectation from the executive is that the proposal would cover from 16 Jan until 18 May (to align with the current expected federal election date). Tabled proposal does not stipulate timeframes. The secretariat was also asked to enquire with TAG as to the possibility of being engaged on a retainer basis.</p>	<p>CGD to clarify with TAG the service delivery timeframes of proposal along with options for being engaged on a retainer.</p>
<p><b>9. Membership Update</b></p>	<p>Cr Kirwan reported that two NSW councils have joined as members: City of Wagga Wagga and City of Hawkesbury. Discussions are continuing with Hornsby Shire, Inner west, and City of Lismore. It was suggested to follow up with City of Greater Geelong and City of Manningham who expressed initial interest. Mayor Cr Marsden volunteered to follow up with Melton City Council.</p>	<p>Cr Kirwan to follow up NSW councils, Greater Geelong and Manningham.  Cr Marsden will follow up with representatives from City of Melton.</p>

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<b>10. SRSS Situation &amp; Sector Advocacy</b>	No update from RCOA or ASRC available.	
<b>11. Regional/Local Updates</b>	Northern Alliance – mapping of services across Councils, report from AMES Australia indicating that large numbers of single clients have been exited in the area.  PSAAR Taskforce (South-East) Regional material aid/humanitarian response collaboration. Discussions on how to mitigate homelessness and introduction to two agencies who have initiated a pilot house share program within inner city. At this stage no intention to expand to suburbs further out. Taskforce will monitor progress.	
<b>12. Other Business</b>	Cr Roz Blades shared Cr Youhorn Chea's suggestion re a CGD forum for federal MP's whose electorates fall across or within the municipal boundaries. To be further investigated.	Peter Johnstone (CGD)
<b>13. Next Meeting</b>	<b>Wednesday 16 January 2019, 1:00pm-3.00pm, Hume City Council, 1079 Pascoe Vale Road, Broadmeadows</b>	
<b>14. Close</b>		

Other proposed meeting dates and venues (to be confirmed)

Wednesday, 13 February      Hobsons Bay

Wednesday, 13 March      Monash

Wednesday, 17 April      Greater Dandenong