

Local Government Mayoral Taskforce for People Seeking Asylum

Strategic Priorities

Background

Through the Mayoral Roundtable held on 31st July 2018 it was determined that there is a need for a more collaborative approach across all Councils in Australia. It is paramount that all councils unite forces to establish a joint voice for people seeking asylum affected by the SRSS cuts.

A group of Councils then agreed to launch a taskforce, called the *Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum*. Its purpose is:

Coordination of joint national advocacy by Australian Councils and sharing resources and practical responses by Australian communities to the issues caused by the SRSS cuts.

1. Overall Strategic Direction

- All councils to lobby against SRSS cuts to create a joint strategic approach
- Simplify messages to create a better understanding of key messages and issues – changing community attitudes
- Create different messages and targeting different audiences
- Highlight lack of logic of policy change and the real likelihood of people being forced into desperate situations - suffering homelessness, poverty, and poor mental health
- Build on already established networks within local communities to better support people seeking asylum in each region
- Share resources amongst all councils
- Enhance opportunities to support and attract people seeking asylum

2. Advocacy Approach

- Establish a network of councils across Australia to advocate against SRSS cuts
- Use advocacy resources effectively
- Humanise the issue by sharing stories of individuals and communities impacted while exercising appropriate duty of care
- Engage with the peak bodies, service providers and other community organisations to assist councils with lobbying against SRSS cuts
- Target and enlist the support of Local Federal and State members
- Bring communities and services together to raise awareness
- Provide factual, easy-to-read information to the broader community

3. Employment, Education, Material Aid and Housing

- Actively explore opportunities for employment for people seeking asylum within urban and rural councils and/or locally
- Advocate for an increase in access to social housing and/or rent assistance
- Advocate for access to education and educational support services
- Advocate for increased funding for material aid services
- Support collaboration of material aid services to increase service provision to people seeking asylum

4. Social Cohesion

- Support social cohesion within the different regions and reduce social isolation
- Foster a clearer understanding of the different perspectives of older migrants and new groups of refugees