

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee

Agenda item 6.2

Homelessness Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference and Expression of Interest

20 July 2021

Presenter: Dean Robertson, Director On Street Support and Compliance**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement for both the continuation of the Homelessness Advisory Committee (HAC) and the revised HAC Terms of Reference (TOR) (refer Attachment 2) and to authorise management to undertake an expression of interest process for HAC membership in 2021-23.
2. At Council's meeting on Tuesday 15 December 2020 Council considered appointments to advisory committees and external organisations. As part of this resolution Council: *Noted management's intention to review the Homelessness Advisory Committee and requests a report to a future Council meeting setting out any new advisory structure arising from the review.*
3. The HAC, operating from 2011 to 2020, was originally established to provide advice on homelessness policy and to assist in the implementation of homelessness priorities. The 2018-20 HAC term concluded in August 2020.
4. In the 2018-20 period, the HAC comprised of 11 members: one designated Aboriginal member; one designated youth member; four members with a lived experience of homelessness; three homelessness sector representatives; one business representative and one Victoria Police representative.

Key issues

5. A review of the 2018-20 HAC operation and the TOR has been completed. This included benchmarking against other Council Committees and feedback received from the HAC 2018-20 members. Based on this review, the following key updates have been included in the revised TOR (Attachment 2):
 - 5.1. An increase of membership from 11 to 12 positions
 - 5.2. The creation of one additional community membership position
 - 5.3. Provision of an induction session for all committee members
 - 5.4. An adjustment to the meeting format to enable both in-person and remote/online engagement.
6. The undertaking of an expression of interest process supports an equitable and transparent process to a Council advisory committee.
7. Endorsement of recommendations for member appointments to the HAC will be presented at the Future Melbourne Committee in October 2021.

Recommendation from management

8. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 8.1. Endorses the continuation of Homelessness Advisory Committee (HAC) and the revised Terms of Reference.
 - 8.2. Authorises the undertaking of an expression of interest process to fill membership positions on the HAC.
 - 8.3. Authorises the Director On Street Compliance to make any further minor editorial changes to the terms of reference for the HAC prior to publication.
 - 8.4. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, appoints the Lead of the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging Portfolio as Chair (Chair) of the HAC.

- 8.5. Requests the Chair write to the 2018-2020 members of the HAC, thanking them for their participation and informing them of the application process should they be eligible and wish to be considered for the new HAC 2021-23.
- 8.6. Approves the payment of a sitting fee of \$200 to members of the HAC who are not in paid employment of any type and who are holders of a Centrelink benefit card.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 9)
2. Terms of Reference (Page 4 of 9)

Supporting Attachment

Attachment 1
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Legal

1. There are no legal issues arising from the recommendations from management.

Finance

2. The cost associated with the undertaking of the expression of interest process, secretariat co-ordination of meetings, and a sitting fees of \$200 per meeting paid to eligible HAC members not employed and holders of a Centrelink Benefit Card, are covered within existing budget allocation (approx. \$3000-5000 per annum) . This payment structure was put in place 2018 and feedback from the 2018-2020 HAC membership supports its continuation.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. Occupational health and safety issues in convening of the HAC meetings are addressed in a risk assessment that includes COVID-safe planning and online participation.

Stakeholder Consultation

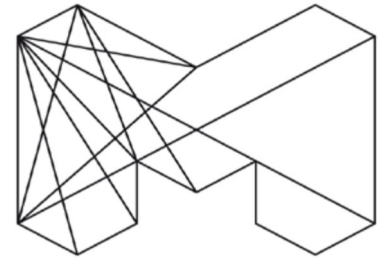
5. The 2018-2020 HAC members were consulted in the review of the TOR in 2021.

Relation to Council policy

6. Melbourne 2026, the draft Council Plan 2021-2025, the draft 10 year Community Vision and the Affordable Housing Strategy 2020-30 all highlight homelessness as a key priority for Council and the community. Council's Community Engagement Policy outlines its commitment to engaging with the community. The HAC is an important platform to facilitate formal engagement with people with a lived experience of homelessness, the homelessness service system and the community.

Environmental sustainability

7. Environmental sustainability principles will be included wherever possible in implementing any future HAC meetings and or HAC activities.



CITY OF MELBOURNE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CITY OF MELBOURNE

Homelessness Advisory Committee

2021-2023

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 homelessness responses in the city.

Background

Melbourne City Council is committed to creating sustainable pathways out of homelessness by supporting individuals, developing robust partnerships and building strong and inclusive communities.

Strategically, Council is committed to and works towards the community's goal to create a 'city for all people'. Councils work to address homelessness is guided strategically by:

- ***Future Melbourne 2026.***
- ***Council Plan 2021-25***
- ***Draft 10 year Community Vision***
- ***Affordable Housing Strategy 2020-30***
- ***Community Engagement Policy***

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.

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

Role

The Homelessness Advisory Committee will provide Council with strategic advice on homelessness and related issues that can be addressed 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 options 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 City of Melbourne's Homelessness response and any strategies or plans that might be developed through the life of the Committee.
- Provide comment and feedback on other Council policies, strategies and initiatives relevant to Homelessness
- 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, participate in consultations and discussions on homelessness and related issues across City of Melbourne's functions and services.

2. Membership

Advisory Committee Members

The Homelessness Advisory Committee will include twelve (12) representatives with personal and or professional experience, knowledge and expertise in homelessness and related issues.

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, or those who can contribute on behalf of diverse communities affected by homelessness such as specific age cohorts, gender, disability, sexual preference, religious or cultural diversity. Membership to the committee is on an individual basis and each membership is limited to a maximum of two terms.

Under Section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, a dedicated Indigenous membership has been considered to support Aboriginal representation on the Committee. A dedicated youth position has also been identified. Both positions recognise the importance to provide advice to Council on the views, needs and interests of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people and young people under the age of 25 years.

Membership will include:

- persons with a lived experience of homelessness (minimum three members)
- Indigenous representative(s)
- youth representative(s)
- professional homelessness representative(s) (not-for-profit/ government sector)
- Melbourne business community representative(s)
- Victoria Police representative

The City of Melbourne is committed to fostering a deeper culture of public participation and have developed a policy, as part of the Local Government Act 2020 that commits to deliberative engagement practices.

Member expertise

Committee membership will be sought on the basis of achieving a balanced representation in alignment with the three categories of homelessness (primary, secondary, tertiary) from a personal and/or professional perspective, as well as connections with the Melbourne community through business, residential status or other associations connected to homelessness. Members will have expertise and/or experience in one or more of the following homelessness related fields:

- 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, disability, gender, sexual preference, health status
- physical and mental health
- urban environment and public space
- education, skills development, employment training
- government, business, industry and commercial.

Homelessness Advisory Committee members will be recommended to Council for endorsement by the nominated Chairperson and the Director On Street Compliance.

Terms of Membership

- Members will be appointed following a formal expression of interest submission.
- Members will be appointed for a period of three years.
- A member who is absent from two consecutive meetings, without forwarding an apology, will be assumed to have resigned.

- Any vacancies will be filled by reviewing previous applicants or by placing a public advertisement, as soon as possible.
- Committee members may be required to undergo Police and/or Working with Children checks.

3. Committee structure

Committee membership will comprise:

- a Councillor, who will chair the meetings with a nominated committee member as co-chair
- homelessness advisory committee representatives (including at least three people with direct personal experience of homelessness, an Indigenous representative and youth representative)
- Victoria Police representative
- Director On-Street Compliance
- Director Strategic Projects
- Director Aboriginal Melbourne
- at least one senior officer from a relevant branch of Council.

Support functions will be performed by a Council officer within the On Street Compliance branch.

Appointment

The Committee will be appointed for three years through a public application process and proposed members will be referred to the Future Melbourne Committee for endorsement.

Meetings of the Committee

It is proposed that the Committee will meet four times annually and on special issues as needed. Meetings will be held at the Town Hall in Swanston Street between 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm on an agreed week night and available online. Light refreshments will be provided at face to face meetings.

Operation and working group meetings

- All new members will participate in an induction process
- Members may nominate to attend and participate in a working group to explore identified issues and present recommendation/s for endorsement at the Homelessness Advisory Committee

Council support for committee members

The Committee will operate on a voluntary basis. Resources, including printed materials will be provided (if required) by Council. Council will provide a committee induction and briefing session for all committee members.

Council will provide interpreters, carers, cab vouchers, car parking vouchers and any other requirements (as advised) to support members to attend and participate in meetings

A sitting fee of \$200 will be paid to members who are not in paid employment of any type and who are holders of a Centrelink benefit card.

Review

The Homelessness Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed after the current three year term. Next review due January 2024

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 the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging Portfolio on matters of importance or priority.

4. Protocols

As an appointed advisory committee of Council, the Homelessness Advisory Committee will be chaired by the Portfolio Lead of the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging Portfolio or another nominated Councillor.

The roles and responsibilities of the Council:

- to Chair the Committee
- 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 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.

The roles and responsibilities of committee members:

- to be fully prepared for meetings
- to agree to actively participate in a collaborative meeting format
- to provide informed and considered advice and guidance on policy and operational issues.
- to bring personal, professional knowledge and broad community experience to the table
- to consider and raise relevant issues, proposals and ideas

Code of Conduct and interest provisions

In performing the role of a member, a committee member must:

- act honestly
- exercise reasonable care and diligence
- not make improper use of their position
- not make improper use of the information acquired because of their position
- adhere to City of Melbourne's Code of Conduct. ¹

Where a member of the committee has an interest or conflict of interest in relation to a matter which the committee is to consider, or is likely to consider or discuss, the member must disclose the interest to the committee before the matter is considered or discussed at the meeting. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

¹ Good Governance Advisory Board (2004) Good Governance Guide

Confidential and sensitive information

- Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provisions contained in Sections 77 and 89 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to HAC will often be in draft format and not ready for wider community distribution.

- Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the advisory committee.
- Draft documents cannot be referred to or used in any grant applications, presentations or in the private or working roles of members.

Contact

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