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| **Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum****Minutes – Meeting No. 39 – Wednesday 04 December 2024**1pm-3pm Hybrid (In-person at Darebin Council Chambers, 350 High Street, Preston, Victoria) |
| **Attendees****Chair:** Mayor Cr Jim Memeti (City of Greater Dandenong (CGD))**In Person**: Mayor Cr Pradeep Tiwari (Maribyrnong), Mayor Cr Stefan Koomen (Casey), Cr Virginia Tachos (Brimbank), Elyse Rider (Brimbank), Mayor Cr Kristine Olaris OAM (Darebin), Shabaz Fattah (Darebin), Emma Pase (Darebin), Deputy Mayor Cr Sarah McKenzie (Yarra), Cr Nicky Luo (Monash), Tracey Egan (Monash), Celia Chang (Hume), Deputy Mayor Cr Daniela Zinni (Whittlesea), Uzma Akhlaq (Whittlesea), Mayor Cr Helen Davidson (Merri-bek), Emma Sampson (Merri-bek), Cristina Del Frate (Yarra), Jess Smith (Kingston), Peter Johnstone (CGD), Thiviya Nagenthiram (CGD).**Online:** **VIC:** Mayor Cr Jo Armstrong (Ararat), John Drennan (Ballarat), Jenna House (Wyndham). **NSW**: Claire Simmonds (Blacktown), Mayor Cr Tony Mileto (Orange), Cr David Mallard (Orange), Mayor Cr Kevin Mack (Albury), Cr Elizabeth Adamczyk (Newcastle), Garry Starr (Canterbury Bankstown). **SA:** Mayor Cr Claire Boan (Port Adelaide Enfield), Alicja Clisby (Port Adelaide Enfield), Tracy Hart (Port Adelaide Enfield).**Apologies:** **VIC**:Cr Bob Sanders (Ararat), Mayor Cr Elizabeth Nealy (Banyule), Lisa King (Banyule), Cr Des Hudson (Ballarat), Suzannah Burton (Ballarat), Mayor Cr Thuy Dang (Brimbank), Cr Ranka Rasic (Brimbank), Lynley Dumble (Brimbank), Mayor Cr Jack Kowarzik (Cardinia), Pradeep Peteti (Casey), Michele Burton (Darebin), Cr Gaetano Greco (Darebin), Ann Ly (CGD), Mayor Cr Daria Kellander (Hobsons Bay), Ben Pollard (Hobsons Bay), Cr Naim Kurt (Hume), Mayor Cr Georgina Oxley (Kingston), Cr Hadi Saab (Kingston), Charlie McFadden (Kingston), Cr Cuc Lam (Maribyrnong), Catherine Dwyer (Maribyrnong), Brooke Hobson (Maribyrnong), Kelsey Laffy (Maribyrnong), Mayor Cr Paul Klisaris (Monash), Kate Wijeyesinghe (Monash), Mayor Cr Dominic Bonanno (Macedon Ranges), Jennifer Anderson (Macedon Ranges), Lord Mayor Cr Nicholas Reece (Melbourne), Kara Barnett (Melbourne), Adam Pulford (Merri-bek), Nelum Buddhadasa (Merri-bek), Petr Svoboda (Merri-bek), Mayor Cr John Dumaresq (Nillumbik), Mayor Cr Mike Bodsworth (Surf Coast), Cr Liz Pattison (Surf Coast), Mayor Cr Aidan McLindon (Whittlesea), Dalal Sleiman (Whittlesea), Mayor Cr Mia Shaw (Wyndham), Cr Jennie Barrera (Wyndham), Cr Edward Crossland (Yarra), Amani Nyikang (Yarra), Mayor Cr Di Rule (Queenscliffe Borough), Mayor Cr Stretch Kontelj OAM (Geelong), Cr Trent Sullivan (Geelong), Sally Beck (Geelong), Mayor Cr Ava Adams (Moonee Valley), Jason Triolo (Moonee Valley), Mayor Cr Andrea Metcalf (Bendigo), Cr Andrea Metcalf (Bendigo), Nikki Williams (Bendigo), Pinar Maher (Bendigo), Mayor Cr Kylie Spears (Maroondah), Chris Riseley (Maroondah), Paul MacDonald (Maroondah), Mayor Cr Anthony Marsh (Mornington Peninsula), Chris Munro (Mornington Peninsula), Mayor Cr Louise Crawford (Port Phillip),Cr Heather Cunsolo (Port Phillip), Ewa Zysk (Port Phillip), Mayor Cr Scott Rossetti (Wellington), Mayor Cr Andrew Davenport (Whitehorse), Zoe Quinn (Whitehorse), Mayor Cr Aidan McLindon (Whittlesea), Mayor Cr Stephen Jolly (Yarra), Mayor Cr Jarrod Bell (Hume), Mayor Cr Tracey Hargreaves (Ballarat).**NSW**: Anni Gallagher (Orange), Catherine Davis (Orange); Mayor Cr Dylan Parker (Randwick), Cr Philipa Veitch (Randwick); Mayor Cr Ross Kerridge (Newcastle), Melanie Hill (Newcastle), Petria Jukes (Newcastle); Mayor Cr Mark Greenhill OAM (Blue Mountains), Deputy Mayor Cr Romola Hollywood (Blue Mountains); Cr Brent Hoare (Blue Mountains), Tracy Burgess (Blue Mountains); Mayor Cr Brad Bunting (Blacktown), Michael Maxwell (Blacktown), Kerry Robinson (Blacktown); Mayor Cr Dallas Tout (Wagga Wagga), Deputy Mayor Cr Georgie Davies (Wagga Wagga), Cassandra Webster (Wagga Wagga); Mayor Cr Darcy Byrne (Inner West), Cr Liz Atkins (Inner West), Sue Pym (Inner West); Deputy Mayor Cr Jessica Kellahan (Albury), Cr Kylie King (Albury), Frank Zaknich (Albury); Mayor Cr Bilal El-Hayek (Canterbury Bankstown), Graeme Beattie (Canterbury Bankstown).**TAS:** Lord Mayor Cr Anna Reynolds (Hobart), Alison Hines (Hobart); Mayor Matthew Garwood (Launceston). |

| **Agenda Item** | **Action** |
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| 1. **Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country (Host Council)**

The meeting commenced with a Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country by Mayor Cr Kristine Olaris OAM (Darebin).  | - |
| 1. **Introduction of participants - in person and hybrid**

In-person and online participants introduced themselves. | - |
| 1. **Endorsement of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Previous minutes were endorsed. | - |
| 1. **Overview of Mayoral Taskforce and Terms of Reference**
* A comprehensive update was presented on the ongoing advocacy efforts, including the Migration Amendment Bill and strategies for local councils to support advocacy initiatives.
* Discussion focused on the three levels of membership in the Taskforce

Executive Members:* Annual fee: $5,000 plus GST.
* Responsibilities: Driving implementation of strategic priorities, providing feedback, endorsing motions, and attending meetings.

General Members:* Annual fee: $500 plus GST.
* Responsibilities: Assisting in implementing strategic priorities, contributing to decision-making, and attending meetings.

Supporter Members:* + No fee.
	+ Responsibilities: Sharing organizational logos and promoting Taskforce activities.
* Victoria University Research Report on Back Your NeighbourCampaign Strategy Evaluation presented by Thiviya Nagenthiram, Master of international Community Development.

**Recommendations:*** + The Taskforce’s digital advocacy has proven effective but **increasing the frequency of posts** from monthly to weekly or even daily could sustain greater public interest.
	+ Rapid response to current events or policy changes via social media would also strengthen engagement.
	+ Encouraging more **consistent participation from all Taskforce members** is essential. This can be achieved by promoting leadership at multiple levels and **introducing rewards or recognition** for active involvement, fostering a sense of ownership and motivation across the network.
	+ Overcoming **financial and staffing limitations**. Securing consistent financial contributions and enhancing administrative support.
 | Taskforce members to suggest additional Community Organisations and Leaders to Secretariat.Encourage non-member councils to join the Taskforce. |
| * New Endorsements from Community Organizations
	+ 176 community organizations were contacted for endorsement of the campaign.
	+ 70 organizations have endorsed, with 43 endorsements secured this year.
	+ Actions requested from endorsed organizations:
		- Encourage their local councils to join the Taskforce.
		- Promote the campaign on social media.
		- Assist in collecting petition signatures
		- Distribute the campaign's e-newsletter.

Taskforce members will share contacts for community leaders who can pledge and amplify the campaign's reach.* **Next Step: Questions and Actions**
	+ Member Councils were encouraged to engage with MPs before the federal election and to share details of significant relationships with MPs to support advocacy efforts.
	+ Suggested to utilise networks like interfaith groups and community organizations to address myths about refugees and share personal stories.
	+ Merri-bek CouncilMayor suggested that councils could write to their local MPs advocating for issues like the Immigration Amendment. They offered to raise council-endorsed positions through formal motions and report submissions.
	+ Member Councils were requested to encourage more local councils to join the Mayoral Taskforce
	+ Promoting the campaign via social media, e-newsletters, and events.
 | Share two-pager fact sheets from the Refugee Council of Australia - Secretariat.Distribute the Taskforce’s submission on the Immigration Amendment Act - Secretariat.Share pledge templates and campaign materials for broader engagement - Secretariat. |
| 1. **Back Your Neighbour: Media Project**
* Lived experience videos developed by Monash University student Rida Zainab – Master of Communications and Media Studies were shared.
* Discussions arose about utilising such videos for digital platforms to showcase the positive contributions of refugees, counter stereotypes and inspire advocacy.
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| 1. **Opportunity for a Photo Pledge**
* The meeting ended with a group photo session for in-person attendees, followed by individual photos. Online participants were reminded to upload their pledge photos.
* Chair thanked attendees for their contributions and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
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| 1. **Next Meeting**
* Meeting schedule: monthly
* Next meeting date: Wednesday 29 January online 1pm-3pm; Chair Mayor Cr Jim Memeti
 | Secretariat to send calendar invitations. |
| 1. **Meeting closed 2.40pm**
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