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| **Local Government Mayoral Taskforce supporting People Seeking Asylum**  **Minutes – Executive Meeting No. 23 - Wednesday 26 October 2022**  11-11.42am via Microsoft Teams |
| **Chairperson:** Cr Rhonda Garad (Greater Dandenong Council (CGD)).  **Attendees:** Cr Rhonda Garad (CGD), Mayor Cr Steve Staikos (Kingston), Wambui Thirimu (Brimbank), Shabaz Fattah (Darebin), Celia Chang (Hume), Urmila Ravikumar (Moreland), Mayor Cr Mark Riley (Moreland), Nelum Buddhadasa (Moreland), Teresa Thomson (Casey), Tara Bewley (Yarra), Elisabetta Robecchi (Kingston), Emma Sampson (Moreland), Peter Johnstone (CGD), Marek Krol (CGD) and Ann Ly (CGD) – Minute Taker.  **Guests:** Mayor Cr Samantha Byrne (Moonee Valley), Cr Rose Iser (Moonee Valley), Meghan Hopper (Moonee Valley) and Greta Williams (Moonee Valley).  **Apologies:** Lynley Dumble (Brimbank), Callum Pattie (Casey), Renae Buckley (Casey), Pradeep Peteti (Casey), Mayor Cr Lina Messina (Darebin), Cr Gaetano Greco (Darebin), Cr Susan Rennie (Darebin), Mayor Cr Jim Memeti (Greater Dandenong), Cr Lana Formoso (Greater Dandenong), Mayor Cr Peter Hemphill (Hobsons Bay), Cr Jonathan Marsden (Hobsons Bay), Mayor Cr Carly Moore (Hume), Cr Joseph Haweil (Hume), Kristen Cherry (Hume), Julie Andrews (Hume), Susan Quach (Kingston), Mayor Cr Stuart James (Monash), Cr Brian Little (Monash), Cr Josh Fergeus (Monash), Colin Bostock (Monash), Fee Harrison (Monash), Pamela Kosij (Monash), Petr Svoboda (Moreland), Mayor Cr Sophie Wade (Yarra), Cr Gabrielle de Vietri (Yarra), Cristina Del Frate (Yarra), Cr Hadi Saab (Kingston), Mayor Cr Jasmine Nguyen (Brimbank) and Cr Susanne Newton (Darebin). |

| **Agenda Item** | **Discussion Points/Comments** | **Follow up Actions / Who** |
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| 1. **Welcome and Introductions** | * Chair welcomed all representatives attending and acknowledged Traditional Owners. * Apologies noted. |  |
| 1. **Endorsement of Minutes of Previous Meeting** | * Previous minutes moved by Cr Rhonda Garad (CGD) and seconded by Marek Krol (CGD). |  |
| 1. **Review of Outstanding Action Items** | * N/A |  |
| 1. **Update – Back Your Neighbour (BYN) Campaign** | Meetings with MPs during September to October   * Taskforce representatives and community advocates met with ALP Andrew Giles MP, Dan Repacholi MP, Cassandra Fernando MP, Michelle Ananda-Rajah MP, Ged Kearney MP, Peter Khalil MP, Julian Hill MP, Senator Linda White, Attorney General Mark Dreyfus, Independent Kylea Tink, Allegra Spender MP and Zoe Daniel MP. * Overall at meetings, there was goodwill from Labor to deliver on their pledges. * Meetings has given BYN Campaign prominence and a positive and worthwhile exercise. * MPs indicated that the Department of Home Affairs will need to be rebuilt ‘from the ground up’ due to chronic underfunding, staff shortages, ‘cultural problems’; MPs keen to allocate additional resources to clear backlog and resolution of issues. * No clear timeframes provided by MPs. In meeting with Minister Giles, he suggested an announcement in this calendar year. * Strong stand from Minister Giles that boat arrivals will not settle in Australia. Plans to resettle boat arrivals and Medevac refugees in New Zealand or USA. He seemed committed to looking into family reunification and community placement program. |  |
| 1. **Evaluation of Mini-Budget 2022** | * No concrete outcomes on study/work rights, restoration of SRSS or other social support but hoping that there will be a further announcement in November 2022 or 2023 Budget. * $12.6 million over two years for a pilot program to assist Temporary Visa Holders who are experiencing domestic violence. * $18.4 million over 4 years for additional three-year Temporary Humanitarian Concern Visas to Ukrainians and to extend Medicare for 12 months for Ukrainians on Bridging Visas. * $42.2 million over two years to increase visa processing in the Department of Home Affairs. * Labor has appointed a new Executive in the Department, so a shift in the culture is expected. * Taskforce will prepare a collective letter to Andrew Giles MP and Claire O’Neill MP about approach on communication of information. * Refugee Council of Australia has indicated that they will targeting advocacy to Claire O’Neill MP moving forward. | Emma Sampson (Moreland) to share key points for letter. |
| 1. **Other Business** | * Cr Rhonda Garad indicated that this will be her last Taskforce meeting and thanked the Taskforce members and Secretariat for their work and commitment. * Mayor Cr Steve Staikos (Kingston) and Mayor Cr Mark Riley (Moreland) thanked Rhonda for role as Taskforce Chair, efforts and care. * Daniel Scoullar acknowledged for work for the Taskforce and in brokering and facilitating meetings. * There will be new Mayors elected in November – handover for outgoing/incoming Mayors is recommended. Potentially identify Cr delegates to represent on Taskforce. * Next meeting in December will evaluate next steps for Taskforce, review of priorities and membership structure. |  |
| 1. **Next Meeting** | 1-3pm, Thursday 8 December, 2022 |  |
| 1. **Close** | 11.42am |  |