



**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF
THE HUME CITY COUNCIL**

MONDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2018

CONFIRMED - 10 DECEMBER 2018

HUME CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE HUME CITY COUNCIL
held on Monday, 12 November 2018
at 7.00 PM
at the Craigieburn Global Learning Centre

Present:	a: Council	Cr Carly Moore	Mayor
		Cr Naim Kurt	Deputy Mayor
		Cr Joseph Haweil	
		Cr Jodi Jackson	
		Cr Drew Jessop	
		Cr Leigh Johnson	
		Cr Jack Medcraft	
		Cr Geoff Porter	
		Cr Ann Potter	
		Cr Karen Sherry	
		Cr Jana Taylor	
	b: Officers	Mr Domenic Isola	Chief Executive Officer
		Mr Peter Waite	Director Sustainable Infrastructure and Services
		Mr Daryl Whitfort	Director Corporate Services
		Mr Michael Sharp	Director Planning and Development
		Ms Kylie Ezzy	Director Communications, Engagement and Advocacy
		Ms Kristen Cherry	Manager Community Strengthening
		Ms Amanda Dodd	Acting Manager Sustainable Environment
		Mr Gavan O'Keefe	Manager Governance
		Mr Brad Mathieson	Senior Governance Officer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THIS LAND

The Mayor read the following:

"I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Gunung-Willam-Balluk land. The Gunung-Willam-Balluk of the Wurundjeri are the first and original people of this land. I would like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today."

Proceedings to be Recorded

The Mayor reminded Councillors and members of the Gallery that an audio recording of the Council meeting will be made and published to Council's website within 2 working days of the meeting.

Gallery Behaviour

The Mayor reminded the gallery that Council's Code of Meeting Procedures requires the gallery to be silent at all times, and that members of the gallery must not interject or take part in the debate. Any person who is called to order, may be asked to leave the Chamber. The Mayor advised that notwithstanding this, she will invite members of the gallery to speak, for up to two minutes either in support of or against an officer's recommendation.

ORDER OF BUSINESS**1. PRAYER**

The Mayor read the prayer:

Almighty God, we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessing upon this Council. Direct and prosper its deliberations to the advancement of Thy glory and the true welfare of the people of the Hume City.

Amen

2. APOLOGIES

Nil.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

The Mayor drew Councillors' attention to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 in relation to the disclosure of conflicts of interests. Councillors are required to disclose any conflict of interest immediately before consideration or discussion of the relevant item. Councillors are then required to leave the Chamber during discussion and not vote on the relevant item.

No Councillors declared any conflicts of interest.

4. CONDOLENCE MOTIONS**CNM11 CONDOLENCE MOTION – MR ALAN FREE**

Councillor Geoff Porter

Councillor Geoff Porter asked that Council acknowledge the recent passing of Mr Alan Free, and that, through the Mayor, a letter be sent to Mr Free's family, conveying its condolences.

CNM12 CONDOLENCE MOTION – MR SISTO MALASPINA

Councillor Jack Medcraft

Councillor Jack Medcraft asked that Council offers its condolences to the family of Mr Sisto Malaspina, and that Council pass on its best wishes to those injured in the Bourke Street attack on 9 February 2018. Cr Medcraft asked that Council also acknowledge the efforts of Victoria Police to reduce the harm caused by the event.

5. ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCIL

In accordance with section 80A(2) of the Local Government Act 1989, Council is required to report, as soon as practicable, to an Ordinary Meeting of Council, a record of any assemblies of Councillors held.

There are no records of assemblies to report on this section of the Agenda.

6. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 8 October 2018, the Ordinary Council (Town Planning) Meeting of 22 October 2018, and the Special Council Meeting of 1 November 2018, including Confidential Minutes.

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Leigh Johnson

THAT the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 8 October 2018, the Ordinary Council (Town Planning) Meeting of 22 October 2018, and the Special Council Meeting of 1 November 2018, including Confidential Minutes, be confirmed.

CARRIED

7. RECEIPT OF COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL TO BE ADOPTED

Nil

8. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

8.1 Residents of the Month

The Mayor advised that no nominations for the Resident of the Month award had been received for November.

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

NOM400 by Cr Drew Jessop

Moved Cr Drew Jessop, **Seconded** Cr Joseph Haweil

1. That Council:

Investigates the opportunity to establish a Botanical Garden in Hume City, with a report to an upcoming Strategy and Policy briefing on the initial:

- a) **Scale and scope of such a Garden, compared to other Botanic Gardens and Arboretums in metropolitan Melbourne**
- b) **Likely land requirements, including size and other attributes, such as road access, parking and utility services availability**
- c) **Possible locations within the City, including existing council-owned land holdings**
- d) **Timeframe and staging of construction**
- e) **Likely range of capital and ongoing operational costs**
- f) **Grants and other funding programs availability to offset costs,**
- g) **Potential environmental and heat-island reducing benefits of increased canopy cover**
- h) **Potential benefits for tourism attraction and on-site income generation, and**
- i) **Other relevant matters, as raised by officers in their investigation.**

CARRIED

10. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that no Public Questions had been received.

11. OFFICER'S REPORTS

Reports Not Otherwise Dealt With

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter

THAT the recommendations relating to:

Report No.	Report	Page in Agenda
CC077	Environmental Scholarships	5
CC078	Hume Enviro Champions Evaluation Report	11
SU355	Sustainability Taskforce Members 2019	35
GE303	Council Plan 2017-2021 (2018/2019 Actions) First Quarter Progress Report	41

be adopted.

CARRIED

Report No.	Report	Page in Agenda
CC077	Environmental Scholarships	5

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter

- 2.1 That Council acknowledge the awarding to the following individuals a Hume City Council Environmental Scholarship Grant:

Name	Course Title	Organisation	Amount
Ariel de Ramos	Permaculture Design Course	CERES	\$1500
Stephanie Pontet	Habitat Conservation and Management Course	Greening Australia	\$1200
Nadege Godfrey	Certificate in Nutrition Farming	Nutri-tech Solutions	\$640

CARRIED

Report No.	Report	Page in Agenda
CC078	Hume Enviro Champions Evaluation Report	11

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter

- 2.1 That Council notes the report and continues implementation of the Hume Enviro Champions program.

CARRIED

Report No.	Report	Page in Agenda
SU355	Sustainability Taskforce Members 2019	35

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter

- 2.1 That Council endorses the proposed new members for the Hume Sustainability Taskforce for the period February – November 2019.**

CARRIED

Report No.	Report	Page in Agenda
GE303	Council Plan 2017-2021 (2018/2019 Actions) First Quarter Progress Report	41

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter

- That Council notes the progress of actions and indicators of the Council Plan 2017-2021 (2018/2019 Actions) [refer Attachments One and Two].**

CARRIED

12. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Report No.	Report	Page in Agenda
PJL281	PJL281 Petition objecting to P21415 - Development of Two Double Storey Dwellings and One Single Storey Dwelling at 22 Shadforth Street, Westmeadows	4

Moved Cr Jana Taylor, **Seconded** Cr Joseph Haweil

- 1.1 That the Petition be received, circulated to Councillors, and the first named signatory of the Petition be advised that the matter has been referred to the Manager Statutory Planning and Building Control Services for investigation.**

CARRIED

13. DEPUTATIONS

Nil.

14. URGENT BUSINESS

URGENT BUSINESS - JOINT STATEMENT AGAINST CHANGES TO THE STATUS RESOLUTION SUPPORT SERVICES (SRSS) PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

Moved Cr Naim Kurt, **Seconded** Cr Ann Potter

That the Report, Joint Statement Against Changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program for People Seeking Asylum, be admitted as Urgent Business and transacted at the meeting.

CARRIED

The Urgent Item of Business – *Joint Statement Against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) Program for People Seeking Asylum* has been included with these Minutes as an appendix.

UB26 LATE REPORT - JOINT STATEMENT AGAINST CHANGES TO THE STATUS RESOLUTION SUPPORT SERVICES (SRSS) PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

Moved Cr Karen Sherry, **Seconded** Cr Naim Kurt

That Council:

- 2.1 Endorse the 'Joint Council Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services' for people seeking asylum as outlined in Attachment 1.**
- 2.2 Join the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce for Supporting People Seeking Asylum as an Executive member.**
- 2.3 Notes that as an Executive member, Council may be asked to provide a financial contribution to support future Taskforce activities.**

CARRIED

15. DELEGATES REPORTS

Nil.

16. GENERAL BUSINESS

JOH037 CONGRATULATIONS TO EASHA NASIR IQBAL

Councillor Leigh Johnson

Moved Cr Leigh Johnson, **Seconded** Cr Jack Medcraft

That Council writes to Easha Nasir Iqbal, VCE student from Ilim College, Dallas and congratulates Easha on being a finalist in the VCE Leadership Awards 2018 (8 Victorian students nominated).

CARRIED

MED245 CORRESPONDENCE TO VICROADS REGARDING ROAD REPAIRS – RIDDELL & SUNBURY ROADS SUNBURY

Councillor Jack Medcraft

Moved Cr Jack Medcraft, **Seconded** Cr Leigh Johnson

That Council writes to VicRoads for an update on road repairs for Riddell Road and Sunbury Road, Sunbury.

CARRIED

MED246

CORRESPONDENCE TO ROADS MINISTER REGARDING BULLA BRIDGE AND BULLA BYPASS

Councillor Jack Medcraft

Moved Cr Jack Medcraft, **Seconded** Cr Jana Taylor**That Council write to the Roads Minister (new or old) for answers to the following:**

- a) **When will Bulla bypass commence and finish?**
- b) **What contingencies are in place for Major accidents on Bulla bridge?**
- c) **Where are the reports stating that the incline is too steep?**
- d) **With Sunbury Precinct Structure Plans coming online, how will extra traffic be able to cope on a single bridge?**

CARRIED

HAW035

ILLEGAL DUMPING ON PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LAND – COUNCIL ENFORCEMENT

Councillor Joseph Haweil

Moved Cr Joseph Haweil, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter**That a report be provided to a forthcoming Strategy and Policy Briefing session of Council:**

1. **Explaining Council measures currently in place to deter illegal dumping of builder/developer materials on private vacant blocks of land and public land; and,**
2. **Listing the number of infringements issued to respond to this illegal behaviour in the current term of this Council.**
3. **Suggesting future measures to enhance enforcement of regulatory powers and to reduce such behaviour.**

Councillor Ann Potter left the meeting after the motion had been moved on item HAW035 the time being 7:29pm, and did not return to vote on the item.

CARRIED

HAW036

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE METROPOLITAN ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE HELD AT BROADMEADOWS GLOBAL LEARNING CENTRE

Councillor Joseph Haweil

Moved Cr Joseph Haweil, **Seconded** Cr Karen Sherry**That Council:**

1. **Notes the success of the Metropolitan Roundtable held at the Hume Global Learning Centre on Thursday 8 November 2018**
2. **Write to Mrs Sonia Vignjevic and other organisers of the International Metropolis 2018, thanking them for visiting Hume City to learn about settlement service provision in the City and congratulating them on the success of the Conference held between 29 October – 2 November 2018.**
3. **Invites conference delegates from Victoria to present to a future Strategy and Policy Briefing session, sharing their**

experiences and advice on how to optimise the settlement process in Hume.

Councillor Ann Potter returned to the meeting after the motion had been moved on item HAW036, the time being 7:31pm, and prior to the vote on the item.

CARRIED

HAW037

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING STATE SCHOOLS PACKAGE AND COMMITMENT

Councillor Joseph Haweil

Moved Cr Joseph Haweil, **Seconded** Cr Jana Taylor

That Council writes to The Hon. James Merlino MP, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Ms Ros Spence MP, State Member for Yuroke, welcoming the recently announced \$850 million state schools package, including the commitment to deliver 6 new schools in the Yuroke electorate.

CARRIED

JES256

THANK YOU TO THE HUME COMMUNITY

Councillor Drew Jessop

Moved Cr Drew Jessop, **Seconded** Cr Jodi Jackson

That Council thanks the Hume community for their participation in the Centennial commemoration activities of the 1914-1918 War, including the construction of the Craigieburn War Memorial.

CARRIED

JES257

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF CARPARK AT CENTENNIAL PARK

Councillor Drew Jessop

Moved Cr Drew Jessop, **Seconded** Cr Joseph Haweil

That Council investigate the opportunity to construct a carpark to the immediate north of the barbecue area and informal tennis court located within Centennial Park at Mareeba Way, Craigieburn, and report back to an upcoming Strategy and Policy Briefing session.

CARRIED

SHE017

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CENTRE AT VALLEY PARK WESTMEADOWS

Councillor Karen Sherry

Moved Cr Karen Sherry, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter

That Council writes to the Department of Health and Human Services, and Frank McGuire MP, asking for an update on the provision of a Community Centre at Valley Park, Westmeadows

CARRIED

TAY028

**RECOGNITION OF COUNCIL'S FLEET RESPONSE TO
FLOODS ON MELBOURNE CUP DAY**

Councillor Jana Taylor

Moved Cr Jana Taylor, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter**That Council, through the Mayor, recognise the commitment of our Fleet Crew and their rapid response to call-outs to road flooding on Melbourne Cup Day, especially in Gladstone Park.****CARRIED**

POR131

**CORRESPONDENCE TO FRANK MCGUIRE MP REGARDING CAR
PARKING ADVOCACY IN BROADMEADOWS STATION**

Councillor Geoff Porter

Moved Cr Geoff Porter, **Seconded** Cr Jack Medcraft**That Council writes to the local member for Broadmeadows, Frank McGuire MP, to advocate for more commuter car parking at Broadmeadows Station on behalf of the community. This is a follow up to the Premier's media release on 16 September 2018.****CARRIED**

POR132

**STRENGTHENING COUNCIL'S PLANNING AND BUILDING
ENFORCEMENT**

Councillor Geoff Porter

Moved Cr Geoff Porter, **Seconded** Cr Joseph Haweil**That Council officers provide information/details at a future Strategy and Policy Briefing session that support and strengthen Council's ability to enforce planning and building conditions to deter rogue operators' poor behaviours.****CARRIED**

POR133

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ST GEORGE CHALDEAN CATHOLIC
CHURCH**

Councillor Geoff Porter

Moved Cr Geoff Porter, **Seconded** Cr Joseph Haweil**That Council write to Father Maher Gorges of the St George Chaldean Catholic Church, congratulating them on the 'Consecration of the Altar' of their new house of prayer on Friday 9 November 2018.****CARRIED**

KUR044 UPDATE ON THE DALLAS PLACE FRAMEWORK

Councillor Naim Kurt

Moved Cr Naim Kurt, **Seconded** Cr Jodi Jackson**That Council receives an updates at a future Strategy and Policy Briefing session about the Dallas Place Framework and:**

- a) how much has been achieved under the propositions to "Facilitate better living and Housing Choices", to "create a vibrant Public Realm", to "improve Movement connections" and to "facilitate community and business development" in the Dallas neighbourhood;
- b) how much has been spent on projects since 2016 when the Framework was adopted and how much more may need to be added to achieve the objectives under the Framework; and
- c) an update on the Dallas Neighbourhood Activity Centre on what has been achieved so far, what is planned and future plans for the precinct.

CARRIED**KUR045 GROWTH OF MINI-ROOS IN HUME**

Councillor Naim Kurt

Moved Cr Naim Kurt, **Seconded** Cr Leigh Johnson**That a report be prepared for a future Strategy and Policy Briefing session about the growth of Mini-Roos in Hume and the facility needs for Mini-Roos and any financial expenditure which may be required with the view that that this report be ready for budget considerations early next year.****CARRIED****KUR046 FEASIBILITY FOR AN INDOOR SKATE PARK IN HUME**

Councillor Naim Kurt

Moved Cr Naim Kurt, **Seconded** Cr Geoff Porter**That the Hume "Indoor Sports Plan" considers plans for an Indoor Skate Park and the feasibility of such a project as outlined in the Hume Skate, Scooter and BMX Plan.****CARRIED**

Councillor Leigh Johnson left the meeting after the motion had been moved on item KUR046 the time being 8:11pm.

Councillor Leigh Johnson returned to the meeting prior to the vote on item KUR046, the time being 8:12pm.

17. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

The Meeting may be closed to members of the public to consider confidential matters.

Moved Cr Ann Potter, **Seconded** Cr Jana Taylor

THAT the Council close the meeting to the public pursuant to Section 89(2) (sub sections as listed), of the Local Government Act 1989 to consider the following items, which are confidential for the reasons indicated:

Report No.	Title	Reason for Confidential
COSU109	Contract - MAV - Supply of Bulk Fuel, Fuel Cards and Lubricants	(d) contractual matters
COSU110	Contract - Supply and Delivery of Three Side Loading Garbage Trucks	(d) contractual matters
COSU111	Deed of Variation - Contract - Agreement for Recycling Sorting and Acceptance	(d) contractual matters
COGE213	Contract - Provision of Painting Services for Hume City Council	(d) contractual matters
COGE214	Contract - Provision of Locksmithing Services	(d) contractual matters
COGE215	Assemblies of Council - October 2018	(h) any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person

CARRIED

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:13pm.

The meeting was reopened to the public at 8:21pm.

18 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:21pm.

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COUNCILLOR CARLY MOORE
MAYOR

APPENDIX

REPORTS – CULTURE AND COMMUNITY
12 NOVEMBER 2018

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF COUNCIL

REPORT NO:	Proposed Urgent Business Item
REPORT TITLE:	Joint Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program for people seeking asylum
SOURCE:	Julie Andrews, Community Capacity Building Coordinator
DIVISION:	Community Services
FILE NO:	HCC
POLICY:	Social Justice Charter 2014
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:	1.1 Support and enhance skill development and educational opportunities to reduce disadvantage, improve employment prospects and quality of life.
ATTACHMENT:	1. <i>Joint Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) for People Seeking Asylum</i>

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report seeks Council endorsement to support a Joint Council Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services program (SRSS) for people seeking asylum.

Hume City Council has one of the highest rates of refugee settlement in Victoria. In the last 10 years, Hume has had the largest number of refugee and humanitarian program arrivals (10,594), and has 553 asylum seekers (as of March 2018) on Bridging E visas.

Hume City is also a Refugee Welcome Zone and part of the Welcoming Cities Network. Council's involvement in these initiatives is underpinned by the Social Justice Charter (2014).

In May 2018 the Federal Government's enacted changes to the SRSS program, which will significantly reduce access to the program by people seeking asylum in Australia (from 13,300 to 5,000).

The Refugee Council of Australia anticipates that as a result of these changes many vulnerable cohorts, such as pregnant women, families with young children and survivors of torture who do not meet the Department's heightened vulnerability criteria, will be left without any form of income to pay for rent, prescriptions, or adequate daily food requirements.

A Local Government Taskforce led by the City of Greater Dandenong, has been formed to advocate on behalf of asylum seekers currently residing within the respective members municipalities.

Hume City Council has been invited to participate in the Taskforce and to sign a joint statement against the changes to the SRSS (Attachment 1). To date 16 Victorian Councils are signatories to the Joint Statement.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 2.1 **Endorse the 'Joint Council Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services' for people seeking asylum as outlined in Attachment 1.**
- 2.2 **Join the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce for Supporting People Seeking Asylum as an Executive member.**
- 2.3 **Notes that as an Executive member, Council may be asked to provide a financial contribution to support future Taskforce activities.**

REPORTS – CULTURE AND COMMUNITY
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ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF COUNCIL

REPORT NO: (cont.)

3. LEGISLATIVE POWERS:

- 3.1 The Local Government Act (1989) stipulates that the “primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions”. Furthermore Councils must give regard to the objective “to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community”.
- 3.2 The Hume City Council Social Justice Charter (2014) aims to advance a fair and just society and promote respect for every citizen, encourages community participation, strengthens community wellbeing and reduces the causes of disadvantage. Within the Social Justice Charter, the definition of social justice includes: “that every effort should be made to reduce economic and social inequality. All people should be guaranteed equal human rights and all people should be enabled to participate fully in society”.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications relating to this report, however participating Taskforce members may be asked to contribute to activities (i.e. Executive members contributed \$5,000 each to the Stage 1 media campaign).

5. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no sustainability considerations relevant to this report.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no climate change considerations relevant to this report.

7. CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS APPLICATION:

- 7.1 For Council to be a signatory to the Joint Statement against changes to SRSS for people seeking asylum, considerations of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2016* includes:
- 7.1.1 The right to protection of families and children (Section 17)
- 7.1.2 The right to liberty and security (Section 21) which includes the right ensure protection from environmental threats, violence and other harm.

8. CONSULTATION:

- 8.1 During community consultations for the Multicultural Action Plan review in August 2018, the SRSS program was raised by stakeholders as one of the issues currently affecting asylum seekers who reside in Hume City. During these sessions, stakeholders and community groups identified advocacy on issues affecting Hume’s multicultural community as one of the key roles of Council.

9. DISCUSSION:

- 9.1 The most current data from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (March 2018) indicates that 553 asylum seekers on a Bridging E Visa currently reside in Hume City, including families with dependent children.
- 9.2 SRSS program provides support to asylum seekers (basic living allowance, which is typically 89% of Newstart allowance or approximately \$247 per week. Support also includes casework support, assistance in finding housing and access to torture and trauma counselling).
- 9.3 Previously people seeking asylum could remain on SRSS if they demonstrated a need, but would lose dollar-for-dollar of their living allowance for every dollar of income earned (unlike the threshold of Newstart). Changes now mean that many people will lose access to support once they are assessed as not having met a very high threshold

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REPORT NO: (cont.)

- of vulnerability criteria. They will lose access to their basic living allowance even if they have not yet secured employment.
- 9.4 Changes now mean that asylum seekers are exited from the support program once they are assessed to be 'job ready'.
- 9.5 To qualify for payments under the new SRSS program, clients have to provide evidence of physical or mental health issues or caring responsibilities. Eligibility is determined by:
- 9.5.1 Physical health barriers that is ongoing; such as permanent disability; or cognitive impairment.
- 9.5.2 Mental health barriers, with a current diagnosis and treatment plan in place.
- 9.5.3 Single parents with pre-school aged children (children under six); pregnant women *with complications*; a primary carer for someone with a significant vulnerability, as well as people aged 70 and over.
- 9.5.4 A major crisis for the client such as family violence, house fire/ flood.
- 9.6 Asylum seekers who are studying full time or part time are considered 'job-ready' and are not eligible for SRSS payments.
- 9.7 This has significant implications for the 553 asylum seekers currently residing in Hume City. Asylum seekers, who are assessed as job ready, are expected to find employment without the assistance of a living allowance and case management.
- 9.8 The redesign commenced on 1 May 2018. Cuts to payments followed and will continue to be applied in a rolling manner.
- 9.9 As reported in the media by the Refugee Council of Australia and Australian Churches Refugee taskforce, *'whilst a person may be considered to be job ready by a generalist employment service, securing employment is a whole other challenge. Removing people from financial support because they are considered job ready can mean a person will be without any financial income until they secure employment to support themselves and their family. Furthermore, the compounding stressors can prevent a person from securing employment due to impacts on their on mental health'*.
- 9.10 Cutting the incomes of people who are already vulnerable as a result of such social security policy changes, will likely place additional burdens on local community and charitable organisations, who will see an increase in people seeking emergency relief for food, clothing, blankets, support to pay rent and other services such as health and housing. There is also a concern within the local government sector that additional burden will be placed on Council's to coordinate material aid responses.
- 9.11 Council wrote to the Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection in April 2018 expressing concerns about the potential impact the changes would have on Hume City's asylum seeking community, requesting the Minister to reconsider the policy changes. A letter from the Minister, responding to Council's request was received in June 2018, informing Council that the SRSS changes would remain.
- 9.12 In response to the Federal Government's changes to the SRSS, Local government authorities, led by the City of Greater Dandenong, formed a Mayoral Taskforce.
- 9.12.1 Brimbank, Darebin, Moreland, Monash, Greater Dandenong, Hobsons Bay and Yarra Council's form the Executive of this Taskforce.
- 9.12.2 From Victoria, Banyule, Cardinia, Ballarat, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Wyndham and Whittlesea Councils have joined as non-executive members of the Taskforce.

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REPORT NO: (cont.)

- 9.13 The Taskforce aims to develop and execute joint state-wide advocacy but also share resources and ideas about responses to the humanitarian support the SRSS cuts will potentially cause. At the first meeting of the taskforce, conducted 31st July 2018, it was agreed to name the group the 'Local Government Mayoral Taskforce for supporting People Seeking Asylum'. It is anticipated that the taskforce may deal with other issues relating to supporting people seeking asylum.
- 9.14 The Executive plans to meet monthly until at least the end of 2018. In early 2019 it will be re-assessed as to whether the frequency will decrease to bi-monthly.
- 9.15 The Executive will function as a steering committee, taking a leadership role of possible initiatives that member Councils can be requested to deliver collectively.
- 9.16 Member Councils may be requested to contribute resources to joint initiatives.
- 9.17 The Executive is open to the Mayor (or a delegate), other interested Councillors, and relevant officers.
- 9.18 Council has been invited to join the Executive, due to the high number of people seeking asylum residing in Hume City who will be potentially affected by the changes to the SRSS.
- 9.19 In addition to the invitation to join the Executive, Council has been invited to support the campaign by becoming a signatory to the Joint Statement (Attachment 1).

10. CONCLUSION:

- 10.1 The recent Federal Government's change to the SRSS program has the potential to significantly impact the 553 asylum seekers on Bridging E visas currently residing in Hume City.
- 10.2 Hume City has been invited to join a Local Government Taskforce, led by the City of Greater Dandenong, to advocate on behalf of asylum seekers. To date 16 Victorian Councils are signatories to the Joint Statement.
- 10.3 Council's involvement in this Taskforce would align with the Social Justice Charter (2014) and Council's status as a Refugee Welcome Zone and part of the Welcoming Cities Network.

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Attachment 1 - Joint Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) for People Seeking Asylum

Joint Statement against changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) for People Seeking Asylum

We the undersigned representatives of local governments in Victoria issue the following statement:

We want the Australian Government to provide adequate resources to meet the needs of people seeking asylum who live in the community.

Over 4,000 children nationally could be affected by the changes and we call upon the Australian Government to adhere to its national and international obligations in accordance with the Charter of Human Rights.

We strongly believe more effective collaboration and coordination is essential between Commonwealth, State and Local Governments and we seek the following commitments from the Australian Government:

Commitment One: We want the Australian Government to reverse the recent assessment changes to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program and provide adequate income and case management support for people seeking asylum while they seek sustainable employment.

Commitment Two: We strongly call on the Australian Government to provide funding to enable accurate initial job readiness assessment by trained employment consultants who understand the unique and significant barriers that people seeking asylum face.

Commitment Three: We want the Australian Government to provide additional funding to enable asylum seekers to be registered as Stream B and C job seekers within the jobactive network of agencies to facilitate ongoing job readiness assessment and skilled employment consultant support.

Commitment Four: The Australian Government needs to improve local area coordination in cooperation with local government areas. We call on the Australian Government to work with local municipalities in exploring the feasibility of local coordination points to better respond to local area need.

Commitment Five: We strongly call on the Australian Government to provide greater resourcing to reinforce the capacity of community service and voluntary organisations to assist people seeking asylum to live safely in local communities and receive emergency relief and material aid support until such time as they receive a substantive visa or are deported.

Accountability

Additional resourcing will bring with it an obligation to ensure that Local Government allocates resources appropriately and resource areas of identified need.

We commit to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

We commit to evaluate the application of resources in people seeking asylum support programs by measuring service delivery against agreed objectives and targets. The evaluation process will include annual program reports and Inter-Governmental consultations to review program effectiveness and refine objectives and activities.