

Housing Advisory Committee

Date: 22 November 2023

Time: 5.30 pm – 7:00 pm

Venue: Queens Park Room, Council Chambers



Attended
Members <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cr Paula Masselos (Chair)• Cr Sally Betts• Catherine Gilbert• David Johnston• Elias McGrath• Gabriela Quintana Vigiola• Mora Main• Ryan Van Den Nouwelant
Apologies Received
Council Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fletcher Rayner• George Bramis• Tim Sneesby• Leisa Simmons

Item	
Welcome, Apologies and Acknowledgement	The meeting commenced at 5.40pm. Mayor, Paula Masselos welcomed everyone to the meeting, and acknowledged the Bidjigal, Birrabirragal and Gadigal people, and paid respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders both past and present.
Code of Conduct Declarations	No conflicts of interest were declared.
Topics of Interest	David Johnston noted the changes proposed to the GSC and the uplift proposed by the Treasurer, and asked what opportunity exists to add to Affordable Housing Stock. Fletcher Rayner noted that it is difficult to compete with private developers and that the state government has foreshadowed increases to the Waverley Housing Targets. If the targets are raised, then Council will need to consider changes to the current planning controls to take this into account.
Housing Reform Submission	Comments from Fletcher Rayner regarding the Submission made by Waverley Council and reported to Council in September SPDC and subsequent meeting with Mayor Masselos and Minister Rose Jackson. Topics discussed: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Performance against current housing targets2. Fast-Track Affordable Housing Reform concerns3. Council's approach to affordable housing and key concerns4. How the Department can assist Council5. What do the current Federal and State budgets mean for Council in relation to housing policy?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members supported the Council position and agreed that reforms appear rushed and may present problems for the DPE to deliver expected outcomes.
Proposed Sub-Regional Affordable Housing Model	<p>Fletcher Rayner discussed the Sub-Regional AH Model and outlined key matters to be considered. Comments from HAC members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key challenges will be determining site suitability assessments in the future and ensuring alignment between all 3 Councils. All members supported the project as a means to providing more affordable housing as the option of purchasing additional units was deemed as less viable / lower value for money. A possible option to consider is Council maintaining ownership of assets and allowing a CHP to leverage the asset for funding purposes. Council should consider testing the market via an EOI with various options prior to agreeing on a preferred option to be considered by the Councils. Council to consider smaller scale models and the use of existing affordable housing estates within the sub-region to increase the affordable housing unit numbers and maximise use of existing land holdings.
Subsidised lease Policy	<p>A report will be considered by Council in December to prepare a Subsidised Lease Policy. Comments from HAC members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members supported the intent of changes focusing on the needs of lower income earners, however, some raised the question of whether essential workers on slightly higher incomes but in roles that are harder to fill should also be targeted in order to fill those roles in the community?
Affordable Housing Program Update	<p>Leisa Simmons presented a Powerpoint regarding proposed amendments to the Affordable Housing Tenancy Policy which was considered at the November FOCS Committee. Leisa noted that she carefully considered the Committee's suggestion not to advertise affordable housing properties but feels strongly that vacancies should be advertised to ensure access by everyone who may be eligible. The amendments are on public exhibition until 15 December 2023. Comments from HAC members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be useful to know how many people are on the waiting list for each service.
Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme Planning Proposal	<p>Tim Sneesby noted that the DPE had provided gateway Determination for the AHCS PP and provided a summary of the key matters being addressed. The proposal is currently being exhibited and is scheduled to be reported to Council in February or March 2024.</p>
Open Discussion	<p>Elias McGrath noted the opportunities in Waverley for commercial property purchases for rental and whether this could be used to expand Council's rental portfolio. He also raised the idea that Council should look to recycle older affordable housing stock, where maintenance costs become prohibitive, and could instead invest in commercial property to fund further subsidised leases. The need to maintain commercial floorspace particularly in Bondi Junction was noted.</p>
Next Meeting	<p>The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions. Next meeting will be notified once the 2024 Schedule of Meeting Dates has been endorsed by Council. Meeting closed: 7.00pm.</p>