

COMMITTEE REPORTS – MARCH 2017

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HOSTEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2017, COMMENCING AT 5:00PM

PRESENT: Cr Steven O'Halloran (Chair), Simon Coelli, Cheryl McFarland, Mia Zaffina, Anthony Conway, Peter Lawler, Beverly Purtill, Helen Edmonds, Charmaine Murfet (Director, Corporate and Community Development)

Observers: Gen McConnell, Pam Martin

APOLOGIES: Councillor Byron

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and advised all members of the need for each member to complete Code of Conduct Training for Committee Members.

Acceptance of Minutes From Previous Meeting:

Following review it was agreed the minutes from the previous meeting should be accepted as a true record.

Moved: Cheryl McFarland
Seconded: Beverly Purtill

Business Arising from the Minutes:

1. *Hostel Car:* It was agreed to discuss this item under new business.
2. *Gophers:* It was agreed to discuss this item under new business.
3. *Fundraising:* It was agreed to discuss this item under new business.
4. *Manor Units:* It was agreed to discuss this item under new business.
5. *Rights and Responsibilities of Committee Members:* It was agreed to discuss this item under new business.

Director, Corporate and Community Development Report

The Director, Corporate and Community Development (DCCD) advised the Committee Council had been advised at its February meeting that it is expected the hostel will make a loss in the order of \$600,000 this financial year, which will need to be funded from Council funds.

The Committee requested that it be provided with a financial report for the hostel at each meeting to enable it to monitor the hostel's financial situation.

The Committee agreed to accept the report of the DCCD.

Moved: Anthony Conway
Seconded: Peter Lawler

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Hostel Coordinators Report

The acting Hostel Coordinator (HC) advised the Committee she was happy to be back at the Hostel but had found that a lot of the systems and paperwork that had been in place had lapsed. The HC outlined for information of the Committee many of the flaws that she had identified since her return.

The HC also advised the Committee that she had identified that a number of items were missing from the hostel, including a Niki pump that had cost around \$1400. The HC advised she is currently doing a full inventory of equipment.

The HC advised the Committee the gardens had been neglected at the hostel and her and another staff member were currently working on restoring this in conjunction with Council staff.

The HC is working with Council to implement 8 hour shifts for staff. The DCCD stressed the need to ensure there are sufficient staff to cover off shifts to ensure residents receive the required level of care. The Committee noted the advice of the HC that there are a number of staff prepared to return to work at the hostel if an 8 hour shift was re-instated.

Re-accreditation of the hostel is scheduled for early June. The Committee noted the HC is working on preparing for this. The HC advised the Committee that many of the regulatory requirements have not been completed and/or there is no documentary evidence to support that these have been.

The HC advised the Committee that the hostel kitchen currently requires maintenance work to ensure it is compliant with Food Safety Australia requirements. An audit was conducted in early 2016 and a further one is due around April this year. The cost of the required upgrade is \$7,400.

There are currently 9 permanent residents, 1 respite patient who it is hoped will become permanent and the possibility of another permanent resident to be transferred in. The Committee noted there were still vacant beds and discussed ways to increase occupancy at the hostel.

The HC advised the committee feedback she had received is that the community is furious that the car and gophers have been removed from the hostel.

The Committee agreed to accept the report of the HC.

Moved: Peter Lawler
Seconded: Beverly Purtill

New Business:

Hostel Car

The Committee queried the status of the hostel car. The Chair advised the Committee Council's General Manager had indicated the car was at the depot and was currently unregistered and required maintenance work.

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Following discussion of the importance of this car to the hostel it was agreed to recommend to Council that it take over the maintenance, insurance and registration costs for this vehicle.

Moved: Beverly Purtill
Seconded: Peter Lawler

Gophers

The Committee queried the status of the donated gophers that had previously been used by residents at the hostel and why these were no longer available. The DCCD explained to the Committee that there were insurance implications for Council should one of the residents be hurt while using the gophers. For this reason the gophers had been removed from the hostel.

Following discussion the Committee agreed to request the DCCD provide a report to its next meeting on the insurance implications of the residents using these gophers.

Moved: Peter Lawler
Seconded: Cheryl McFarland

Financial Position

The Committee was advised by one of its members that there had been an extremely negative report on the ABC regarding the hostel and the state of its finances. The DCCD explained to the Committee this news article had arisen as a result of the December Quarterly Budget Report to Council and the General Manager had, in fact, used this interview as an opportunity to present the hostel vacancies in a positive light and encourage people to consider this hostel as a place for themselves or their family members. The Committee further discussed this, their perceptions of this interview and their need to understand the hostel financial position more fully.

The Committee requested the DCCD provide its meetings with a full report on the status of the Hostel finances. It further requested that the DCCD provide a report that should be made available to the community explaining why the hostel finances had been allowed to deteriorate to the point they are.

Moved: Bev Purtill
Seconded: Peter Lawler

Manor Units

The Committee queried what Council's intentions in relation to the Single Purpose Units are. The Committee also discussed the licence fees for these units and whether these were appropriate to encourage residents into the units.

Discussion was held regarding whether funding which had been borrowed by Council from the hostel reserve to build these units had been returned to the hostel

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account. Peter Lawler advised the Committee it was his understanding that these funds had been returned.

The Committee requested that the DCCD provide copies of the lease agreement for the units and details of fees to its next meeting.

Moved: Bev Purtil
Seconded: Peter Lawler

Rights and Responsibilities of Committee Members

A query was raised regarding the rights and responsibilities of members of this Committee, and if the Code of Conduct training to be rolled out to Committee members would clarify this. The DCCD asked Committee members if they had Terms of Reference for this committee and if they were familiar with these.

Following discussion of the need for an agreed Terms of Reference the Committee requested the DCCD and the Committee Chair develop Terms of Reference setting out the role of the Committee for endorsement by Council.

Moved: Bev Purtil
Seconded: Peter Lawler

Fundraising Committee

The Committee discussed the issue of establishing a separate 'Friends of the Bidgee' group to fundraise for the hostel. The intent of this group will be to fundraise for items it identifies are required by the hostel and/or its residents, for it to operate separately from Council and have its own bank account. The DCCD explained to the meeting that as individuals they could establish this group. However, if they wanted to donate items to the hostel they would need to write to Council and offer to donate the items and set out the terms on which the donation is to be based, for example the group will raise the funds and purchase the item but it requires Council to take on the ongoing maintenance and insurance costs associated with the item donated. The DCCD further explained that as a group outside the auspices of Council they would require Council approval if they were proposing to use Council property for the fundraising.

Following discussion it was agreed to establish a 'Friends of the Bidgee' group to operate outside the auspices of Council to raise funds for the hostel and to recommend to Council that a representative of this group should be a member of the Hostel Committee to facilitate reporting of activities to Council.

Moved: Bev Purtil
Seconded: Anthony Conway

Advertising for Hostel

It was suggested by a Committee member that Council run a news article in the local paper to advise people that Gen McConnell is now back at the hostel to encourage people to consider the hostel for their family members or themselves. It was further suggested Council run ads to advise the community that it has vacant beds available as a way of promoting the hostel.

The DCCD advised the Committee that the Tourism Coordinator was working with the HC to develop a website for the hostel and links to this website would be placed on the Council website once it has been completed.

Committee Minute Taking

The Committee queried who was paying for Cherie's time when she took minutes for the Committee. The DCCD explained this was an operational matter outside the scope of the Committee, however, assured the Committee the hostel was not being separately charged for this service. Following discussion among Committee members it was agreed that future committee minutes will be prepared by Bev Purtil.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.20pm