

13 TRANSITIONAL WOMEN'S HOUSING - MAIN STREET PAKENHAM

FILE REFERENCE INT1846433

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to:

- Execute the development agreement with WAYSS Ltd on the key terms set out in the report once the final form of the agreement has been agreed to by all parties.
- Give public notice in accordance with the provisions of Section 190 and 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 of the proposal to lease 6-10 Main Street Pakenham to WAYSS Ltd or another Registered Housing Agency under the Housing Act 1983 by private agreement, in accordance with Council Policy, and for the purpose of providing affordable housing. The lease will be conditional upon a planning permit being issued by Council. The principal terms of the lease to be:
 - Fixed Term – 50 years.
 - Commencement date – pending certificate of occupancy.
 - Rent – Nominal.
- In the event of submissions being received, a Committee comprising the Central Ward Councillors be convened to hear the submissions and the Acting Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make the arrangements to convene such a meeting.

Attachments*Nil.***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The intention of this report is to update Council on the Transitional Women's Housing development in Main St Pakenham as presented to Council Briefing 16 October 2017.
- This housing will provide short term (1-2 years) accommodation for women and children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to current or immediate family violence.
- This project involves four partners, these being; The Peter and Lyndy White Foundation, WAYSS, Windermere and Cardinia Shire Council. WAYSS will be the leading partner.
- Council will enter into two legal agreements with WAYSS. These being: a Development Agreement and a Lease Agreement.
- These documents are currently in draft to be finalised by 31 July 2018.
- A Planning Application has been submitted and is currently being managed by Council's Planning department.

BACKGROUND**Project Description**

To provide Transitional Housing for a period of up to 2 years for women and women with children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to current or immediate family violence.

Project Purpose

To provide security, stability and support to enable tenants to live positively and to flourish and live independently of support services. Throughout the tenancy the key focus will be on life skills development, community connectedness, access to resources and opportunities for tenants to identify life changes they want to achieve and maintain. Supported through targeted case management key areas will include accessing and maintaining stable accommodation, positive parenting, community engagement and participation in education/training/employment.

Project Target

Women and women with children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to current or immediate family violence, with links to Cardinia Shire and a demonstrated commitment to obtaining independent accommodation and sustain positive life change. The project will not target individuals with chronic drug and alcohol dependency, and or severe mental health issues where the intensity of case management and specialised practitioner skills sit outside the scope of Transitional Housing.

Site

6-10 Main Street Pakenham. This site is in walking distance to schools, services and transport. It is also in close proximity to the new Pakenham Health Centre, the Living and Learning educational and community centre and a number of recreational facilities.

Building design

- International literature demonstrates that normality and permanence of housing, together with tenant autonomy and self-determination, are critical features of supportive housing.
- The design is based on principles of indistinguishable housing intended to promote normality and community integration to foster independence.
- This low to medium density development will aim to support tenants around being cooperative, encourage behaviours that accommodate the needs of others and a sense of community belonging.
- There will be ten units comprising of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom apartments.
- There will also be a support office to accommodate workers and provide space for small group activities and counselling services.

Legal Agreements

These arrangements or transactions will be implemented through two agreements as set out below. These documents are still in draft to be completed by 31 July 2018.

Development Agreement

It is proposed that Council will enter into a long-term lease of the property with WAYSS, provided that certain conditions are fulfilled. Those conditions are captured in the development agreement – the conditions include obtaining development approval, secure funding for the project and construct the dwellings on the land as per the agreed design. Once the agreed works are completed, the lease will commence.

Lease

It is proposed that the lease will commence when the dwellings have a certificate of occupancy. WAYSS will be granted a long-term lease (50 years) allowing the use of the properties by WAYSS to grant affordable housing to vulnerable women and children. WAYSS will be responsible for regular cleaning and upkeep of the property. Council will be responsible for upkeep of the gardens, plus structural and capital maintenance. The lease will include suitable terms and conditions for a long-term lease of Council land.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Cardinia's Liveability Health Plan 2017 -2029 (Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)

Housing has been identified as a critical health issue in our community and as such is a dedicated policy domain area. Living in lower-quality housing has been associated with poorer mental health and higher rates of infectious diseases, respiratory problems, and injuries. Those who live in rented accommodation have worse physical and mental health than owner-occupiers, and some studies have shown housing tenure to be a better predictor of health compared to other measures.

Together We Can

Council has committed to the large collective impact project 'Together We Can' in partnership with Family Life. This project sees involvement from every sector to act in preventing and ending family violence in Cardinia Shire. Family Violence is recognised as a strong cause of homelessness for women, children and youth.

RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN

Our Community

- Improved health and wellbeing of our residents - Assist with establishing partnerships and social infrastructure opportunities that improve health and wellbeing outcomes for residents
- Our diverse requirements are met - Promote access to a mix of housing types to cater for the varying needs of people in the Cardinia community.

Our People

- Access to a variety of services for all - routinely review overall community needs for services and either deliver or advocate for others to provide services to meet these needs.
- Improved health and wellbeing for all - Support children, young people, families, older adults and people with disabilities by providing a range of accessible services and facilities

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Consultation has been undertaken with all parties and Council's Statutory Planning Department.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the building and grounds.

CONCLUSION

The development of Women's Transitional Housing for women and children will provide security, stability and enable tenants to live positively and to flourish and become independent from support services. Women will be provided opportunities to develop life skills, engage with the community, access resources and consider life changes they want to achieve and maintain. Through case management, key focus areas will include, accessing and maintaining stable accommodation, positive parenting, and participation in education/training/employment. This initiative supports Council's commitment to Together We Can.