



# MINUTES

**Meeting 21/11/07**

**Sub Group minutes – Safety, Perceptions of Safety and Enforcement**

**Attendees:**

Rob Stafford, Wendy Butler, Tanja Heil, Roger Wyndham, Ian Whitehead, Jonathan Sherren, Jackie Yong, Rose Banks, Deb Abbot, John Mennen, Steve Dennis, John Enticott, Kirsten Hughes, Mike McIntosh, Katrina Gorjanicyn

**Apologies:**

Councillor Karen Sait, Mark Spatz (resident)

**Introduction & Welcome**

Katrina welcomed the subgroup.

Katrina introduced herself and stated that she would be chairing the subgroup meeting on Streetscape/aesthetics, environment and maintenance.

Katrina acknowledged and thanked Taskforce members for attending and for their contributions to date.

Katrina stated that Cr Karen Sait had another commitment; Cr Sait asked Katrina to thank and recognise on her behalf the effort the Taskforce has invested in this consultation process.

Katrina introduced Mike McIntosh – Manager Economic Development & Tourism – and thanked him for overseeing the Taskforce.

Katrina stated that Mike would take the minutes.

Katrina asked subgroup members present to briefly introduce themselves and to state if they represented a particular group or Council.

**Update on Taskforce (Katrina)**

Katrina told the subgroup that she started her role on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

The Action Plan (circulated 01/10/07) encapsulates actions to improve Fitzroy Street proposed by Taskforce in July & April meetings; the Action Plan was put together by Katrina & Mike.

The first Taskforce Newsletter was circulated October 2007; it provided an update on some of the Taskforce's key actions; the next Newsletter is due Nov/Dec.

The Community Identity subgroup is progressing a proposal to introduce a quality busking competition in or near Fitzroy Street; currently this is planned for the end of summer/early autumn 2008 but will be reviewed by the Community Identity subgroup.

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The Fitzroy Street Dining Guide is in draft.

The *Diversity* – December issue has come out; it features the Taskforce and Fitzroy Street.

The CoPP Communications Branch working on a 'Summer Campaign' to promote safety, respect, trade and fun over summer in the CoPP.

Katrina attended the subgroup that she attended the launch of 'Equal Service: Business to Business' – a project which involved a group of high profile business coming together with the State Government & the Council for Homeless People to produce information leaflets and a video on respectful trading between homeless people and business; Katrina to provide information and links to this in next Newsletter

The State Government Victoria, Mental Health & Drugs Division of DHS, has published Victorian amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) and related drugs strategy 2007-2010 Discussion Paper; Katrina to provide link to this Discussion Paper in the next Taskforce Newsletter.

Improving Fitzroy Street continues to be a high priority for Council.

Katrina is due to present a Councillor Briefing on the Taskforce on 26/11/07; a Report on the Taskforce is due to be presented to Council in April 2008.

### **Purpose of subgroup meeting (Katrina)**

The purpose of the subgroup meeting is to comment on and evaluate the Taskforce Action Plan – focusing on Streetscape/aesthetics, environment and maintenance – and to determine which actions have progressed and which actions need to be developed further.

The format of the meeting is to work chronologically through the Streetscape section of the Action Plan; Council staff overseeing key actions to provide a brief overview and update of each action to be followed by group discussion

### **Principles of Taskforce meeting**

Katrina stated that the Taskforce was set up with a clear aim to bring together sections of the Fitzroy Street community to work collaboratively; Katrina requested that the group be mindful of this aim while discussing the actions

Katrina requested the subgroup members direct questions to her as the Chair to ensure that everyone speak in turn and in order to progress efficiently and in a way that is respectful of everyone's viewpoint

Katrina requested that subgroup members keep questions and comments relevant to the specific actions contained in the Streetscape section of the Action Plan

Katrina noted that no one who is a member of the Taskforce, which included everyone at the meeting, would be excluded on the basis of disability or lifestyle difference

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Katrina requested that subgroup members keep questions and comments relevant to the specific actions contained in the Safety section of the Action Plan

### **Item – Improve the lighting in Jackson Street car parks**

Tanja Heil (Place Manager Activity Centres) introduced the group to the recent lighting audit the Council undertook in response to the taskforce's concerns. The findings of the audit will be fed into the master plan program.

Ian Whitehead (FASRA) suggested there was a real need and urgency for lighting to improve the safety in Jackson Street. There was a concern that it would take too much time to improve lighting in the street. He asked whether lighting could be improved sooner.

John Mennen (St Kilda Police) agreed that lighting in Jackson Street was of concern.

The group explored whether there was an interim solution to the problem of lighting. Inspector Steve Dennis asked whether landlords and local businesses could place censor lights on door alcoves and rear areas of businesses to deter urinating and other anti-social behavioural problems.

### **Action**

- Council undertook to further explore the issue in Jackson Street and to advise the taskforce of the quickest possible solution to their concerns
- Taskforce members to contact local businesses requesting installation of rear censor lighting

### **Item – Install CCTV cameras in 'hot spots'**

Roger Wyndham (FSTA) advised that LLV requires CCTV cameras as part of any new liquor licence. These cameras provide some degree of coverage but the street needs a wider perspective. There has been a lot of talk about the costs of CCTV and the taskforce needs to explore the real cost of the cameras as over the years the costs of the infrastructure has greatly reduced. The issue is in recording and reviewing the footage provided by these cameras.

Steve Dennis (St Kilda Police) advised that there is a range of systems in operation with varying degrees of success. He suggested that City of Stonnington has recently entered into a 4 year agreement with the Chapel Street Traders costing around \$50K p.a.

Ian Whitehead suggested this was a priority and that he was greatly disturbed about safety. He was also concerned with the Mayor's comments on CCTV as he believed they did not reflect the sentiments of the wider community.

Steve Dennis advised that cameras alone would not solve all of the safety issues in the precinct.

Ian Whitehead also suggested CCTV be implemented within the Jackson Street car parks.

John Enticott (Rooming House Management) advised that they have since installed CCTV into their managed rooming houses. He advised that they weren't much good for deterring behaviour but were quite effective for evidence.

Jonathan Sherren (Cushion Lounge) advised that the cameras are a useful tool for advising patrons they are on camera and diffusing a potentially dangerous situation.

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John Enticott advised that while cameras are quite expensive he has observed a greater amount of community acceptance in recent years.

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### Action

- Council will explore the feasibility of CCTV within the precinct beginning by reviewing the City of Stonnington's arrangements in Chapel Street.

Ian Whitehead requested that Council be asked why this hasn't been done already

### Item 3 – review of the local law re drinking out of opened bottles/cans in the street

Kirsten Hughes (Coordinator Local Laws) introduced the context of the local law and the banning of alcohol and the need to manage drinking in the precinct. Kirsten advised that the local law banning drinking from opened bottles/cans in the street will begin from December 1. Signage will be located in the street in the first week of December advising of the controls.

Fines begin with a \$100 on the spot fine and Police will enforce and review with Council after the summer.

The question was raised as to why this was not a 24 hour ban. Kirsten advised that Council is taking a 'wait and see' approach to the laws particularly as they relate to reducing anti-social behavioural issues.

Ian Whitehead advised that the City of Port Phillip was a bit slow in responding to this issue and he asked if the Police would have the resources to manage it.

Steve Dennis advised that again, this law would not be the sole deterrent of anti-social behaviour in the street but was to be viewed as another tool to manage issues in the precinct.

Roger Wyndham advised that he was disappointed the ban was not for 24 hours and that the \$100 fine was inadequate. He advised that he had been in contact with council about this and understood that there would be a review at the end of March 2008.

Jonathan Sherren advised that it was unrealistic to wait until the end of March and didn't believe the ban would be effective.

John Mennen advised that the St Kilda Police had recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the City of Port Phillip. This MOU explained that Police would offer a warning first. He also explained that the hours were limited to ensure people could still enjoy a bbq and a drink in the parks, gardens and beaches within Port Phillip.

Katrina Gorjanicyn asked the group if they all agreed with the initiative and all agreed it was a good start.

Deb Abbot (St Kilda Police) advised that it was simply a tool. It would be useful to target visitors and it was as much about educating as it was about enforcement.

Ian Whitehead suggested that there was an influx of people that was a concern for the precinct and that council should look to reduce venues.

Jackie Yong (trader) advised that over the year during the day the precinct has improved as well. However, the night-time was still a large concern to her.

Deb Abbot advised that the night-time hours were introduced in the local law as it was tougher to manage people at night.

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John Enticott suggested it would be a huge political issue if and when the local law got extended to 24 hours.

Roger Wyndham also stressed the need for the taskforce to be aware of the State Government's Inner City Entertainment Precincts Taskforce and protocols (ICEPT)

### **Action**

- Taskforce to be advised of relevant initiatives from ICEPT which may assist them

### **Item 4 – Appointment of full time coordinator**

In response to the concerns of the taskforce the council have appointed the full time services of Katrina Gorjancyn. Katrina is the main point of contact for all taskforce related matters. Further details of the taskforce will also be placed on the council website.

### **Item 5 – Reduce Street Sleeping**

Roger Wyndham asked is there a problem?

John Enticott advised that about 20 people sleep rough in the precinct each night. This increases during the summer months. Often these people are hard to reach as they are transient, although some remain in the area on a long-term basis. Most of them are at the end of their choices.

Roger Wyndham asked: Who do you call to assist?

John Enticott advised that most people want you to walk on and not disrupt their sleep. He advised that a protocol had been developed and that he would circulate this to taskforce members and that there are outreach workers that can help.

Rose Banks advised that most of those that gathered out the front of the Gatwick were street sleeps and not residents of the Gatwick.

Wendy Butler advised that many sleep on the beach.

Rose advised that street sleepers were a problem for the Gatwick

Deb asked whether the homeless are affected by the local law and could this be followed up by council.

Ian Whitehead advised that he believes everyone supports social housing but are just concerned with the anti-social behaviour.

### **Action**

- John Enticott to circulate street sleeping protocol to taskforce members via taskforce coordinator

### **Item 6 – Improve and support the management of affordable housing within the precinct**

Ian Whitehead advised that most residents are concerned with the violence and anti-social behaviour in the precinct. Most residents also acknowledge this comes from visitors to the precinct. Ian also commented that rooming houses have a percentage of substance abusers and questioned whether this was creating a safe environment. Ian advised that council needs to consider the impact of rooming houses on the community. Ian further

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advised that he was simply reflecting the views of the community as most were concerned with violent behaviour. Ian then suggested he had evidence and statements about violence in rooming houses and asked again that council should explore how they are managed (evidence and statements not table in meeting or prior to circulation of minutes).

Katrina Gorjanicyn questioned the 'evidence' put forward and expressed a concern regarding anecdotal evidence. Katrina advised the taskforce had developed principles whereby taskforce members would undertake research on issues of concern relating to Fitzroy Street.

Ian Whitehead again advised that he was merely reflecting the views of the community.

John Enticott advised that council's role is largely around health.

Ian Whitehead stated that it is poorly managed and a drain on police resources.

John Enticott advised that the police and rooming house management have the capacity to address these issues. Affordable housing has significantly decreased in the community and this is a reflection of the changing demographic of the place.

Ian Whitehead stated that the impact of rooming house management is not being looked at.

Katrina Gorjanicyn asked the taskforce for an action.

Deb Abbot advised that the issue needs to be put in perspective. She advised that you can't determine who visits the area. This is a civil rights issue and council has been very effective in developing a strategy to explore these issues and looks at the issue with a solution focus. Deb asked if other taskforce members had read council's homeless strategy and advised that a greater understanding was needed on this issue.

Roger Wyndham agreed that a greater understanding and more information was needed to get a better idea around call out statistics to rooming houses. Also, what management tools and procedures were available and in place to manage any issues? What are we prepared to accept as a community? What does council accept? What do rooming houses accept?

### **Action**

- Council to distribute homelessness draft strategy to taskforce members
- Rooming house management to communicate management protocols to the taskforce to develop a deeper understanding of the situation
- The police to provide statistics on call-out numbers to rooming house incidents

### **Item 7 – Improve local confidence in policing**

Steve Dennis advised that to progress this issue it was best if the police respond by packaging up the range of services in which they are involved.

Roger Wyndham advised that policing has improved in the street. Traders must also be careful not to "cry wolf".

Steve Dennis advised that there has been a significant shift in policing of public spaces.

Roger Wyndham suggested that there were inconsistencies around police responses to issues.

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Deb Abbot advised that experiences differ due to police coming from different areas to police the area.

### **Action**

- Police to package up and advise the taskforce of the range of services in which they are involved.

### **Concluding remarks**

Katrina Gorjanicyn thanked the taskforce for their contribution for the evening and asked if all present were happy to sign off on agreed topics discussed. The taskforce was unanimous in its support for the topics discussed, and approved the Safety section of the Action Plan.

### **Where to from here?**

Katrina Gorjanicyn asked the taskforce where they would like to see the taskforce heading. This included discussion around representation and legitimate entitlement to be a part of the taskforce. The view expressed by Katrina was to perhaps move the taskforce to include a more formal governance structure to ensure adequate representation of key stakeholders within the precinct. Katrina stated that she would raise this issue with Councillors at a Council Briefing on 26/11/07.

Katrina asked the subgroup members to consider whether they wanted to keep meeting as subgroups; the subgroup decided unanimously that they would like to meet late March/early April 2008, by which stage the Fitzroy Street Masterplan will be underway.

The taskforce also agreed that the existing methods of communication were appropriate. In particular, it would be useful to make the newsletter more broadly available to the wider community.

Katrina asked the subgroup to consider what further responsibility the Taskforce might take on board for delivery of actions – ie. how do we share responsibility between residents, traders, community groups and Council?

### **Close of meeting.**