

## Hobsons Bay Inter-Agency Network Statement of Purpose Version 1

Welcome to the Hobsons Bay Inter-Agency Network, proudly supported by Hobsons Bay City Council. The Network facilitates a knowledge exchange between local workers from diverse community sector and volunteer organisations, promoting a culture of shared learning about local services and emerging issues in Hobsons Bay. New participants are always welcome!

### Introduction

The Hobsons Bay Inter-Agency Network was formed in 1997 by two local community centre managers. It has been meeting for over 20 years! In 1999 the Emergency Relief sub-committee was formed in response to emerging demand in the local area and new funding and partnerships. The sub-committee ended in 2015. Throughout its history Hobsons Bay City Council has provided ongoing support and since 2012 the Director of Community Wellbeing has attended to update the Network on Council priorities. In 2018 a participatory process to review the purpose and processes of the Network was undertaken in order to facilitate a shared approach and renewed commitment to the Network. This document is the outcome of that process and can be reviewed as required by the Network.

### Purpose

The primary purpose of the Hobsons Bay Inter-Agency Network is to build an informed and connected community sector through community-led networking.

The Network facilitates a two way knowledge exchange where workers from diverse local community sector and volunteer organisations (including Council) both share and learn information and intelligence about local services and emerging issues in the Hobsons Bay area. The currency is local knowledge.

This Network is informed by a community development framework and is a way to facilitate a stronger collective and collaborative approach in the community sector landscape, with the ultimate goal of maximising the supports on offer to the Hobsons Bay community.

Participants can leverage the networking and follow-up connections outside of the Network meeting. On occasion the Network may form specific informal action groups on emerging issues.

### Key characteristics of the Network:

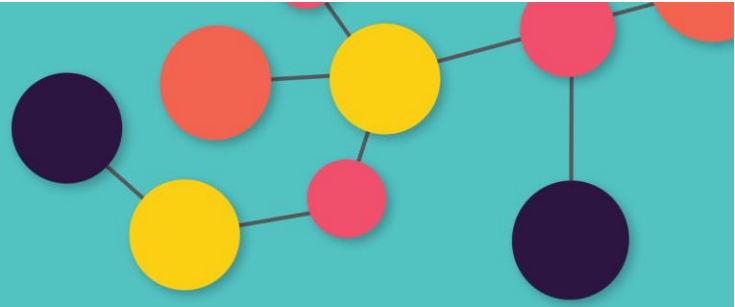
- Local, place-based in Hobsons Bay
- Community-led, participatory, democratic, collaborative and voluntary
- Open and transparent (regarding sharing information, knowledge and Network participant's contact details)
- Informal, flexible and agile in order to respond to emerging community issues, including trends and changes in government policy
- Focusing on Community and Volunteer sector workforce
- Congruent with the values of the organisations involved.

### What it is not:

- A formal body that "decides on things", so it does not have minutes or motions, follow standing orders, or other such

### Formal meeting protocols

- It is not a committee of management or an advisory committee
- It is not an internal Council program or advisory group or Council-led meeting.
- Not a forum that replaces Council consultation processes or activities
- Not about networking with clients or service users, or local residents representing themselves
- Not a Network for "silent" participants, where contact details are withheld



## Network Participants

New participants are welcome to join the Inter-Agency Network and participate in meetings at any time throughout the year.

Participants in the Network are delegated representatives of an organisation in some way, whether it be as a paid worker or in an unpaid volunteer, student or intern role. Council workers across various departments are also considered Network participants.

In the spirit of openness and collaboration, participant details will be shared with the Network. By virtue of participating in the Network, permission for your contact details to be shared is assumed. The Network Participant contact list will be circulated twice yearly (in February and August) and include participant's name, the organisation they represent and a contact email, website/social media address.

In order to maintain the vibrancy of the Network, participants are expected to attend at least once per year to remain on the mailing list.

It is the responsibility of all participating to invite other stakeholders who align with the purpose of the Network.

## Governance

**Custodians** - Although the Network is an informal networking group, there is a group of "Custodians" who facilitate the knowledge exchange and sustain the Network over time.

This group have been the initiators or long term participants. They often hold community development positions in local organisations, have broad and deep local connections and a demonstrable commitment to Hobsons Bay through their work. They are active connectors, sustainers and mobilisers.

The Custodians provide:

- Leadership and continuity for the Network
- Facilitation of the Network meeting
- Liaison with Council

Custodians offer a contact point for participants and a contact point for Council, primarily the nominated Council Officer supporting the Network as part of their role

Custodians will review and update the mailing list at the end of year in order to keep it relevant.

One of the Custodians will be the nominated Facilitator of the meetings. In case the nominated Custodian is not available to facilitate the meeting, the Custodians will nominate one of their number to step into the role of Facilitator for that session. At the end of the year, the Custodians will discuss who will be the Facilitator.

The role and responsibilities of the Facilitator is to act as a liaison point with Council and the Council Officer, and to facilitate the Network's meeting. The Council Officer is not a "Custodian".

Action groups may be formed in response to emerging local issues as identified by Network participants. A regular item in the Agenda will discuss emerging issues e.g. Emergency Relief. Working groups will involve participants from local organisations who have a physical presence in Hobsons Bay, who have strong local knowledge and connections, including specific knowledge about the issue of concern, and a commitment to Hobsons Bay and the Inter-Agency Network. At least one Custodian may also be involved in these Action groups.

**Terms and sustainability** - The number of custodians may change according to the energy, needs and preferences of the Network. In order to sustain the Network it is envisaged that there will be between 4-8 Custodians. Network participants may self-nominate and be appointed with the endorsement of the current Custodians. Others may be co-opted by the existing Custodians. Custodians are expected to make a minimum commitment of 1 year to the role of custodian. Exiting custodians or the facilitator may step down from this role, informing the other custodians. An election may be called where necessitated, as called by the participants or custodians.



## Meetings

There are six meetings over the year occurring in February, April, June, August, October, and December.

Meetings are usually held on Tuesday afternoons. Times and dates are advertised via the Council website and participants will be notified by email. Meetings are held at Council as this is a central and accessible location.

A summary of the meeting (one page with dot points) will be circulated after the meeting. Presentation slides from guest speakers may be included if available. You will need to be at the meeting to hear the full details of the content.

## Guest speakers

Nominating who will be guest speakers is the responsibility of the Network. At the end of the year a proposed list of important topics and suggested Guest speakers will be developed in consultation with those in attendance at that final meeting of the year (December). The Facilitator and/or other Custodians will invite and confirm the guest speaker for each session. The Facilitator and/or other Custodians monitor this as the year progresses.

Guest speakers will be briefed about the purpose of the Network and the purpose for their involvement. Their presentations must be interactive, creating a dialogue with participants and add value to the knowledge exchange.

## Agenda

The following is an outline of the Agenda for the meetings. Changes to the Agenda must be discussed with the Facilitator.

1.55pm Participants sign in and write own name tag. Place items on sharing table.

2.00pm SHARP Meeting commences - Facilitator welcomes all (10 minutes)

- Acknowledgement to Country
- Reminder to complete sign in sheet with contact details
- New participants are welcomed and receive the "Statement of Purpose"
- Participant introductions - name and organisation you represent

2.10pm Emerging Issue/s update (10 minutes)

- For example - Emergency Relief (Facilitator to outline the nature of the issue)
- Who is providing Emergency Relief (eg hampers, Open Pantry)
- Data on Emergency Relief provided since last meeting eg How many? Who to?

2.20pm Council representative (10 minutes including question time/dialogue)

- What is happening at Council - key priorities and issues.

2.30pm Guest speaker (15 minutes + 5 minutes question time/dialogue)

- At conclusion, discuss theme/guest for next session

2.50pm Information exchange & dialogue (40 minutes)

- Keep to time (2 minutes maximum per person) and on topic!
  - Your name & organisation
  - NEW items/initiatives/programs/projects/events
  - NEW emerging or advocacy issues
  - Recommendations for other key networks on relevant issues
  - NOT a general report on your organisation and its purpose. (Participants can refer to your website or flyers on the sharing table for this)

3.25pm Conclude exchange - Facilitator to summarise any emerging issues and whether to include as an Agenda item next meeting

3.30pm Informal networking over afternoon tea (30 minutes)

4.00pm Close- reminder of next date and Guest speaker