COUNCIL POLICY

Collective Impact for Social Change

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Notes	

POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define how Council shall work together with community, government and the Non-Government Organisations (NGO) sector to deliver transformative outcomes for communities that have high levels of incarceration within the criminal justice system and in particular the over representation of Aboriginal people, high rates of drug and alcohol addiction, high levels of unemployment and other areas of over representation in measures of social disadvantage.

BACKGROUND AND RELATED LEGISLATION

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 23 October 2017, Council resolved in part the following:

"4. That Council endorse the principles of the 'justice reinvestment' concept and notes the trial currently being conducted in Bourke.
5. That Council notes the work being undertaken by local government in Burnie, Tasmania in identifying and addressing social problems.
6. That the General Manager be requested to provide a report to Council in December 2017 on the 'Burnie Works' initiative, and other similar regional initiatives, underway, summarising and analysing
•   What work is occurring,
•   What role local government is playing; and
•   Whether and how the initiative could be adapted to the Dubbo region.
7. That a Social Justice and Crime Prevention Working Party comprising the Mayor, five Councillors and relevant staff be established to formulate a draft policy document detailing how Council can lead in addressing entrenched social problems in our community."

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 18 December 2017 Council considered programs that address long term disadvantage on regional centres of Australia. Community efforts such as Burnie Works that were the result of long term and entrenched collaborative activity that was designed to assist the community to address complex and entrenched social issues. Typically a community has an event or circumstance that galvanise the broader community to act in a collaborative manner. In the case of Burnie the issue that created the sense of urgency for the Burnie community was when the pulp mill closed in 2010, resulting in approximately 2000 people losing their jobs. The issue in Logan that triggered collaboration, so Council has been informed, were riots in areas of social disadvantage within Logan City.

Community led programs are described as using the 'Collective Impact' model. Collective Impact uses five core principles to create change in communities:-
1. Common Agenda
2. Shared measurement systems
3. Mutually reinforcing activities
4. Continuous communication
5. Backbone support organisations.

Successful Collective Impact programs show that Council should not run any committee type body or program rather they enable success by providing administrative support and having a presence on the backbone team known as the Local Enabling Group. A Council based committee such as the Social Justice and Crime Prevention Committee should be regarded as in internal Council Committee that provides the strategic direction of Council and guides the organisations input into a Collective Impact program.

The various groups that sit within Burnie Works are chaired by business and community leaders. It is structured this way so that it is driven by those in the community that can influence and drive sustainable outcomes.

A number of case studies have identified five key enabling factors for communities that have had success in making the case for change and ultimately obtaining stakeholder support to successfully implement a change program that addresses long term disadvantage. Those five key enabling factors are:
1.   Community driven and 'owned'
2.   Use collective models to draw together all players to develop shared vision and goals
3.   Focused on the systemic structural reform required for lasting change
4.   Rigorous commitment to data and outcomes measurement
5.   Long-term strategy and investment

Another major learning was the need to build trust across community and stakeholders such as government agencies and NGOs. This is critical in future success and potentially takes 18 to 24 months before all stakeholders are truly collaborating with a genuinely shared agenda. Furthermore creating sustainable inter-generational change in outcomes for community and community members is described by independent experts as a long term process of up to 10 -15 years. Part of the success of collective impact models is building understanding across all stakeholders that funding cycles and electoral cycles across all levels of government are not necessarily consistent with achieving long term outcomes.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to the functional areas of Council that are resourced to interact at grass roots community level and to work collaboratively with agencies and the NGOs in the community development and services sector. This Policy also commits the elected body of Council to work collaboratively with other levels of government to achieve positive change to areas of long-term disadvantage in the community.

It commits Council to ensure that bodies of work that relate to addressing long term disadvantage are:

1.   Community driven
2.   Use collective models to draw together all players to develop shared vision and goals
3.   Focus on the systemic structural reform required for lasting change
4.   Have a rigorous commitment to data and outcomes measurement
5.   Are part of a Long-term strategy to bring about sustainable change.

POLICY

That Council recognise that there is no ultimate solution to the complex inter-related elements of long term social disadvantage rather a key tenet of addressing complex problems is to focus on creating effective rules for interaction. As such a key element to successful programs that are achieving transformation of social outcomes for communities is co – designing with community as an equal. This is part of creating a "Common Agenda". In this regard Council shall abide by the following Community Consultation & Engagement Principles (based on The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) review of The Southern Initiative NZ):

- Asking community how we might make the process the most convenient.

- Asking community what we can bring.

- Taking time to contact and potentially meet community members prior to interviews/ consultation sessions.

- Inviting other members of community to participate.

- Starting the interview in a relaxed manner, with a focus on getting to know each other.

- Asking community to set the "rules of engagement"

- Removing barriers for participation

- Thinking about how community can have decision making power in the process

- Acknowledging community as experts in their lived experience and in their communities.

- Acknowledging the potential to learn from community – stepping away from the expert model.

- Not being afraid of creating a model testing and trialling it and if it doesn't work starting the process again (not seeing a failure as failing but learning).

Stakeholder Interaction

Collective Impact means that through mutual understanding and trust, stakeholders such as the differing levels of government, community and NGOs shall recognise, complement, collaborate and add value to what is already happening on the ground. In this regard Council, rather than replicating or competing with other organisations and/or programs, shall:

- Work with community and stakeholders to identify and seek to fill gaps;

- Advocate for coordination and linkages across the systems;

- Provide direct support in areas identified with stakeholders as a strength of Council's capacities, Council's community relationships and within Council's available resources.

For collective impact to be successful it needs to remain politically nonaligned as if it is seen an initiative of a particular political grouping or political party are it significant risk of being defunded if an opposing government is elected. This has been the case in a number of jurisdictions in Australia.

Shared Outcomes Measurement

Council commits to the premise that addressing transformation of social outcomes for community builds on data and evidence. Any plan arising from community and sector consultation that targets transformative outcomes shall put forward a measurement and tracking framework that will openly and transparently explain progress and act as a prompt for scaling up and/ or changing activities and strategies.

There shall need to be a culture and commitment to the measurement framework across all partners and supporters of any Collective Impact based Plan. It is important to note that a shared measurement framework operates in the spirit of a collective commitment to achieving outcomes rather than as a contractual mechanism for compliance and/or an opportunity for denigrating the performance of others.

Mutual Accountability

Effective collective impact is a platform that encourages all parties to keep each other accountable for taking actions in line with the shared agenda for change. Partners are empowered to respectfully challenge a particular stakeholder should they be viewed as moving away from the shared goals.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director Liveability has the responsibility to ensure this policy applies to all Council programs and work packages that relate to the purpose of this Policy.