

## Resolution of Council

**13 May 2024**

### Item 15.3

#### **Collaborating on Community Wellbeing in Glebe**

Moved by Councillor Davis, seconded by the Chair (the Lord Mayor) –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) last month there was a distressing incident where some young people were alleged to have assaulted a food delivery rider on Glebe Point Road late at night. The Police have since arrested a man and five young people involved. Three young people - aged between 14 and 17 - will appear before the children's court and two children aged twelve will participate in youth conferences;
- (ii) following negative media attention and, frustrated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids in Glebe were being blamed, more than 40 First Nations people, including local Elders and workers from Glebe Youth Services, Scarred Tree Ministries, met on 30 April 2024 to discuss the issues and identify their priorities for a community-led response;
  - (a) listening at the meeting were City of Sydney staff, Councillor Yvonne Weldon AM, Kobi Shetty - Member for Balmain; and representatives from the Office of the Lord Mayor;
  - (b) the community agreed they wanted a community-led response and identified priorities including:
    - change the narrative around the kids of Glebe to counter negative media;
    - increase funding and support for Glebe Youth Services, a Glebe-based service that has the trust of young people and the community in Glebe; and

- reinstate the Street Beat Bus operated by Weave Youth and Community Services to take kids home when the After Dark program finishes;
- (c) the community thanked staff from Glebe Youth Service for their extraordinary work in engaging with local stakeholders and supporting local young people and families. They acknowledged that Glebe Youth Service do not have enough case workers to manage the current workload and meet community needs;
- (d) the community thanked and endorsed the work of Glebe Youth Service's Aboriginal youth worker Kirawhan Fernando (whose part-time role has been funded by a City grant). The community recognised that Aboriginal social workers are best placed to work with the Aboriginal community; and
- (e) cultural-specific City of Sydney Council known and funded organisations that have a longstanding relationship working directly with youth and community such as KaraTitui Torres Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, ASSI-Port Jackson and Culturally and linguistically diverse advocacy groups;
- (iii) on 2 May 2024, local Police held an extraordinary Community Safety Precinct Meeting to discuss the same issues with Glebe Youth Service, Scarred Tree Ministries, City of Sydney staff including the Chief Executive Officer, Homes NSW, Broadway Shopping Centre, and representatives from the Council of Glebe Groups and Forest Lodge and Glebe Groups, as well as representatives from my Office and the Office of the Lord Mayor. Everyone agreed:
- (a) with the priorities identified by the community at the earlier meeting, including the need for the Street Beat Bus to take kids home;
- (b) that the wellbeing and safety of kids must be prioritised, that everyone wants to prevent kids entering the youth justice system and that local services and agencies need to work with the community to collectively solve this problem; and
- (c) that the NSW Government needs to contribute with enhanced funding and more funding certainty for all youth services and case workers, including for Glebe Youth Services;
- (iv) immediately following the meeting local services and agencies, including the City of Sydney, began mapping existing services to identify:
- (a) what services, programs and recreational activities are available;
- (b) whether there is capacity within the existing resources of other agencies and services to better support better support Glebe, Ultimo and Pyrmont youth program providers and organisations, including the After Dark Program in the short and medium term; and
- (c) the ongoing resource and funding gaps and what additional programs and services are needed and should be resourced by the NSW Government; and

- (v) the City agreed to coordinate this mapping process working closely with Glebe Youth Services and to consult with local young people about the response;

(B) Council further note:

- (i) After Dark is an award-winning program of safe, supervised night-time activities for young people, run by Glebe Youth Service. The program was developed in response to concerns from local Police, businesses and community members about at-risk behaviour of young people on the streets late at night and early morning, and runs from a safe space where young people are less likely to come into contact with Police in negative ways;
- (ii) since 2004, the City has provided about \$3.4 million to Glebe Youth Service to run the program, and year on year funding has been increasing. Initially funded for \$75,000, funding increased to about \$110,000 in 2016; \$220,000 in 2019 and \$294,000 in the 2023/24 financial year; and
- (iii) currently the program offers a teen-only space on Friday nights from 6.30pm to 10pm, and a community-wide event each Saturday night from 6.30pm to 10pm. A healthy meal is also provided, along with activities including basketball, music, art, movies, cultural activities and more; and

(C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:

- (i) continue to work with local area specific community services and grass roots community organisations to identify existing youth services programs and activities across the city, any potential gaps, and any systemic funding issues; and
- (ii) investigate options for the City to provide additional youth programs and support for youth across the city, particularly in Glebe, Ultimo and Pyrmont and report back to Council as appropriate.

Carried unanimously.

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