



Media release – 26 September 2017

Homelessness peak welcomes Lord Mayor's practical approach to rough sleeping

Victoria's homelessness peak body welcomes Lord Mayor Robert Doyle's announcement today that he will continue to focus Council effort on positive, practical and proven strategies to respond to people sleeping rough in inner Melbourne.

"Council have supported several initiatives over the past few months that are making a positive difference," says Jenny Smith, Council to Homeless Persons CEO.

"Investment in the night café, increased capacity to outreach people sleeping on the street, and improved coordination of inner city services responding to rough sleepers, have together led to easier pathways to services for people without accommodation."

"In 2016 and 2017, the Victorian Government has made a series of important investments responding to homelessness, many of which are now coming on line.

"The positive outcomes being achieved through the combined efforts of Council and State Government working closely with both police and services, has clearly demonstrated that provision of housing and the right support reduces rough sleeping.

"This approach adopts the lessons learnt from overseas, which show that punitive laws do not have a positive practical impact on homelessness, rather directly causing harm to people who are homeless.

"We welcome the Lord Mayor's announcement that he will continue to progress initiatives that assist people who are homeless, and not bring a vote on bylaws to a Council meeting this year.

"Council to Homeless Persons will continue to advocate for the social housing and support that is needed to end rough sleeping; this requires the federal government to underpin the efforts of state and local governments."

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