

18 September 2015

Ms Greta Bird
Committee Member
Carlton Residents Association Inc
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CITY OF MELBOURNE

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Dear Ms Bird

I really appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and your fellow members of CoRBA in August. I enjoy the opportunity to meet people from all parts of the Melbourne community and gain different insights into the opportunities and issues that face our city. Thank you for taking the time to provide me your questions and comments in writing. I'm writing here to respond where I can.

First of all, the matter raised regarding behaviour at Future Melbourne committee meetings. As we discussed when we met, this is an issue that I take very seriously. All people who attend our meetings – Councillors, Council officers and members of the public – have a responsibility to act respectfully towards other attendees.

All Councillors and Council staff sign up to Codes of Conduct that include an expectation of respectful behaviour in all situations. If you ever feel that this has been breached, you can direct complaints about staff behaviour to me and complaints about Councillor behaviour to the Lord Mayor.

Your second question was about insurance costs for residents associations. Since 2008 our Community Services Grants program has included the requirement that applicants must provide 'a certificate of currency for public liability or other relevant insurance'. If this is not provided, a risk assessment document, identifying risks associated with their application and explaining how these risks will be managed, is required. In effect, while insurance cover is recommended for grant recipients, it is not mandatory.

I do understand that insurance can be expensive for organisations and would refer you to the MAV Local Community Insurance Services that provide cost effective insurance specifically for not for profit community organisations.

You may also want to consider if CoRBA, as the umbrella coalition, could independently coordinate a joint or bulk purchasing program for the insurance needs to all member associations. If you would like independent advice on this issue, I would recommend you contact Justice Connect who provide free advice to not for profit organisations about risk and insurance issues. Voula Sarhanis in our Social Investment branch is available to discuss your concerns further, if you need: voula.sarhanis@melbourne.vic.gov.au.

And finally, I believe we covered many of your concerns regarding community engagement at our meeting. I would reiterate that the City of Melbourne has a very strong commitment to community engagement, based firmly on the organisation's values of integrity, courage, accountability, respect and excellence. That said, I will take any suggestion of poor performance by mv officers very seriously and encourage you to inform me of any specific

I thank you and your fellow CoRBA members for inviting me to your meeting. As always, feel free to contact me with any comments or concerns at ben.rimmer@melbourne.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'B' and 'R' followed by a long horizontal line.

Ben Rimmer
Chief Executive Officer

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