

From:
To: [Community Affairs, Committee \(SEN\)](#)
Subject: Re: Hansard corrections - Newstart and related payments inquiry - 8 November Launceston
Date: Wednesday, 20 November 2019 11:45:24 AM

Good morning,

I wish to give the information on our Strike It Out Inc - Burnie operations:

We started operations in Burnie from June 2019 and so far have delivered 134 Care packages which consist of food both perishables and fresh food along with toiletries and other essentials. The volunteers in Burnie operate on a Wednesday and a Friday. Donations of food supplies mainly come from IGA Penguin, Discovery Early Learning and Nichols Poultry along with the kind donations from the public.

Financial donations have been very limited and the Strike It Out Inc Launceston branch help with supporting the Burnie branch with financial donations that have been donated to provide the storage facilities and other supplies required for in Burnie.

We have just had a bigger shed built up in Burnie as a 6 x 3 metre shed with no power facilities was not sufficient. So the cost of a bigger shed with power facilities is going to cost \$180 per week plus the cost of power. We will purchase a fridge and freezer left over from grant money for refrigeration equipment for the Burnie branch. Currently the volunteers store food at their own premises using their own fridges and freezers so it will be fantastic to have everything set up in the one place.

The Launceston branch currently leases a large storage shed at Launceston Storage Solutions at a cost of \$1350 per month this includes the cost of power. We currently have a 40ft refrigerated container and 5 large chest freezers to stock food. We also have a refrigerated vehicle for the collection and delivery of food items.

Our Launceston branch collects twice a week from Island Fresh fruit and vegetables which would usually be thrown out and we then distribute out in food packages and to Neighbourhood houses and schools. We are also so fortunate that we get kind donations of free sausages from Nigels Gourmet Meats, bakery food nightly from JJ's Bakery, Wayside butchery for other supplies of meat at times, Pure food eggs, Tamar Valley for supplies of yoghurt and other businesses who instead of throwing out food contact us to collect which is fantastic.

Our goals are to have installed Lockers for those to store their items in that live on the streets, currently many have sore backs from carrying around their back packs all day everyday. I spoke with Danny Gibson at Launceston City Council in regards to this happening and he was supposed to contact me via email to arrange a meeting with himself and planning to proceed with this. This was 7 months ago what has happened since then is that I read in the Launceston City Council minutes that Danny himself put the proposal forward to Council with no mention of our organisation. Danny told me that 90% of the councillors agreed with the idea. Then I was told that Danny was too busy to be dealing with service providers such as myself and that I am to deal with John Davis. I arranged a meeting with Albert Van Zetten and John Davis to put our sleep pod proposal forward and for the possibility of setting up accomodation and mens shed, gardens etc at a property on Killafaddy Road called the Avalon as well as discussed the Lockers. I put the sleep pod proposal forward to the Government as well. I spoke to Roger Jaensch's assistant in relation to the property at Killafaddy and he said it was easy enough to change the zoning to accomodation or mixed use. The meeting with Albert and John I felt was very positive with them saying they will look into the Avalon idea and other empty halls, buildings around the Launceston area. The Avalon was sold and purchased by City Mission. So the Avalon was now not an option. I was then told I could not have further discussions with the Council until I arranged and had a meeting with Anglicare. I had the meeting with Anglicare where I was questioned for around an hour. I then contacted John Davis to let him know that meeting had taken place and now will the Council continue with discussions to be told that they could not help and that we had to source our own premises. I then attended a Council Chambers meeting on the 29th August 2019 which I was invited by the Youth team to attend as they were the ones who were directing this meeting along with Albert Van Zetten. At this meeting I was only allowed to ask one question so the question I asked was when are the Lockers

going to be Actioned? Albert replied with 2 -3 months with public consultation. When I sat down I looked over to Danny Gibson who was sitting opposite me but 2 benches up he was nodding his head with a No at me and not looking too happy. It is now the 20th November with no action or other updated time frames.

Next the Launceston City Council decide that they will form a committee with the local service providers as they told me they have no idea on how to deal with the homeless issue. I attended a meeting on the 22nd October 2019 at the Council which was directed by John Davis. Launceston service providers that attended were Vincent De Paul Society, Benevolent Society, Shekinah House, and ourselves. City Mission and Salvation Army Launceston, the main two big service providers were not present. Many questions were asked by the service providers with no answers from the Launceston City Council.

I cannot understand why the Launceston City Council nor the Government wish to help us to provide remedies to some of the Homeless issues. We are also not included in the two big yearly fundraising events the Winter Appeal and the Empty Stocking Appeal where City Mission, Salvation Army, Benevolent Society and St Vincent De Paul receive thousands of dollars each. I wrote a letter to ask if we could be considered but the answer came back as a NO. We struggle to have to constantly fundraise and ask for donations just to have enough coming in to continue to provide our service and the costs associated as well as operating our services.

We currently have 2 x 40ft Containers which we found out we have to have fitted out up to building standards before we are able to install the Sleep Pods in them this is now going to cost at least \$30,000 maybe \$40,000. We then have 10 Sleep Pods which can then be installed once the Containers are up to scratch. We will also install a shower and toilet. Then there is 2 x 40 ft containers available to setup mobile somewhere a safe space for 10 people to sleep.

Strike It Out Inc are wishing for ACTION to help some what in giving those out on the streets some basics such as a locker system and the sleep pods. It is only a small start but it has to start somewhere.

If only we could have the support from Launceston City Council and some funding from the Government, currently they are spending \$40,000 on having one container kitted out to a small living space for maybe one or two people. With \$40,000 we could achieve kitting out our containers and have a safe space for 10 people who are currently sleeping on the streets.

Strike It Out Inc takes up a lot of my time and I try to balance this with my study and business. Next year I really have to consider my input with Strike It Out Inc as I volunteer many hours a week, pretty much a full time job now and no income. For us to continue to grow and succeed we really require to have funds also to pay people to make this happen. I do not wish to become homeless because I put all my time, efforts and energy into volunteering with no income. I also do not have any holidays as again this Christmas we are filling the gaps with been the only service provider available for daily food and other essential requirements during the 3 week period.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Kirsten Ritchie
Public Officer
Strike It Out Incorporation
