2019 Strategic Plan

Mission:
Working in partnership with our communities to grow and deliver sustainable housing solutions

Vision:
A community where all people have safe, secure housing that is appropriate to their needs

Values:
- Respect – We are people focused and respect the diversity, equality and rights of people we come in contact with
- Community – We work as part of the community on common issues
- Professionalism – Our work and interactions are based on respect, integrity, transparency and accountability
- Quality – We strive for quality and equity in our work, our houses and people's lives
- Wellbeing – We strive for the long-term health, safety and wellbeing of people we come in contact with

Organisational Context

Homes Out West is a not for profit, registered community housing provider operating across the southern and western regions of New South Wales and aims to meet the housing needs of the communities which we serve.

With Offices located in Deniliquin and Albury, Homes Out West staff manage over 420 properties along the Murray river corridor from Albury to Wentworth, near the South Australian border.

Homes Out West work in partnership with a range of support providers to deliver services that assist tenants to successfully sustain their tenancies. We also support people experiencing housing crisis through the provision of transitional housing in partnership with support services. We also manage a range of properties on behalf of other housing providers on a fee for service basis.

After a period of internal analysis and consolidation, aimed at improving its internal processes Homes Out West is positioned to explore development opportunities to enhance and expand its services.

This plan takes into account Homes Out West's unique operating environment that includes:
- A current property portfolio that is geographically spread and remote in some instances
- A significant number of tenants who identify as Aboriginal
- An extensive and diverse fee for service portfolio
- Management of a large number of government owned properties
- No current property assets
- Limited access to support services in some isolated locations

Strategic Priorities:
1. Growing and diversifying
2. Partnering effectively
3. Delivering quality services
4. Ensuring financial sustainability
5. Being an employer of choice

1. Growing and diversifying

We will increase the size and diversity of our housing stock portfolio to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse range of potential clients.

We will actively seek new business opportunities.

Operational Strategies:
- Research options to buy or build additional capital assets
  - Conduct a feasibility study
  - Explore financing options (eg National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation, Specialist Disability Accommodation)
- Seek to increase fee for service delivery – (eg other housing providers, disability organisations)
- Explore short term let options as they arise (eg 'meanwhile use' of vacant motels, other building assets)
- Assess and improve cultural competence to improve level of service to and understanding of the complexities faced by Aboriginal communities

2. Partner effectively

We will increase our knowledge of our communities and support services.

We will increase our engagement with support services.

Operational Strategies:
- Identify all support providers across our service areas
- Increase liaison with homelessness services
- Actively seek to increase liaison with support providers
  - Establish a 'relationship lead manager' for key agencies
- Establish and strengthen relationships with local government
  - Investigate status of Albury City Council homelessness plan and seek to contribute
- Conduct bi-annual Tenant forums in all service locations

3. Delivering quality services

We will continually improve our expertise and professionalism.

We will seek to improve the standard of our portfolio.

Operational Strategies:
- Increase staff knowledge and understanding of their roles
- Review our communications and marketing strategy
- Seek regular feedback from all stakeholders
- Review and improve the timeliness of inspections
- Be more proactive in the prevention of property damage and the management of other tenancy issues
  - Develop sustainable tenancies strategies – (eg risk assessments, increased support)
  - Develop improved allocation processes (eg ensuring property and location is appropriate for tenant needs)
- Review current support agreements and refresh where necessary and establish new support agreements where required

4. Financial sustainability

We will ensure the financial viability and future sustainability of the organisation.

Operational Strategies:
- Reduce operating costs and increase operating revenue
  - Improved property allocation processes (eg ensuring property and location is appropriate for tenant needs)
  - Early intervention approach to tenancy issues
- Increased early engagement with support services when property care issues become apparent
- Ensure that any portfolio growth is financially viable and supported by feasibility analysis
- Gain a better understanding of individual portfolio and locational costs/sensitivities (eg individual Fee for Service contracts, specific towns/locations)
  - Improve financial analysis
- Enhance communication with the Office of the Community Housing Registrar

5. Employer of choice

We will establish and enhance our reputation as a supporter and valuer of our staff.

We will effectively support our staff and recognise their value to the organisation.

Operational Strategies:
- Reduce negative employee exits and foster positive ones
- Seek and use staff feedback – (eg regular staff engagement surveys to inform planning)
- Continue to offer and negotiate flexible working arrangements
- Enhance professional development through offering training and mentorship opportunities
- Provide clear and consistent communication through Executive Team to all staff (eg regular organisational updates)
- Market the organisation effectively as an employer of choice
- Explore employment accreditation systems to see if any would be appropriate for HOW to pursue