

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 113

NUMBER OF CO-OPS: 44

AGENDA ITEM	INFORMATION PROVIDED	FEEDBACK	CEHL RESPONSE
Organisational Update	<p>Program Team: Jenni Dwyer will join the Program Team as Acting Team Leader for the next 12 months. She has temporarily transferred from the Co-op Development Team. This will enable the Program Team to deliver new projects in the year ahead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to hear about job role moves within CEHL keeps skills and knowledge in the organisation • Keen to know who they had replaced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff are a valuable resource to the program and it is great to see staff members choosing to stay at CEHL while further developing their career • Jenni has filled a new position Melissa P has filled Jenni's previous role Margaret has filled Melissa P's previous role Melissa W has filled Sue Chadwick's previous role.
	<p>Co-op Development and Strategy Team: Melissa Pope has been welcomed as an Acting Team Leader for the next 12 months. She has temporarily transferred from the Housing Services Team</p>		
	<p>Housing Services Team: Congratulations to Margaret Konikkara Sunny who will act as Team leader for the next 12 months</p>		
	<p>Real Estate Services Team: Melissa Wittig has been appointed as the new Real Estate Services Manager. Sue Chadwick has left to follow her career in Commercial Real Estate. The team are busy developing projects to deliver regional plans and making funding submissions to support this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like an organisation chart on the Members Portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The portal will clearly identify the key contact staff for each co-op and a new organisational chart will also be available.

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<p>Rent Model Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for updated Household Information Forms sent February Deadline for responses to the proposed rent model is 15 March (paper) and 15 April (portal) All households required to provide household income evidence HIFs can be submitted via Portal or by post A property valuation process is being developed For questions about the rent model - Rent Hotline on 9208 0806 For questions about HIF, call Admin 1800 353 669, or Financial Services 03 9208 0800, finserv@cehl.com.au 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More information was requested about how market rent on a property will be determined Anxiety was expressed in one forum that co-ops may be disadvantaged if there is an increase in Company Rent charges, even though more funds may be raised through rent increase. It was commented that the letter arriving at Christmas was bad timing and inconsiderate Information about new minimum and maximum rents was requested so that co-ops can inform potential applicants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market Rent is determined by a qualified rent valuation organisation. There is no current proposal to change the % of rent paid to CEHL as Company Rent. Any future changes would be considered by Company Rent and Affordability Benchmark Advisory Group in consultation with all co-ops. It was unfortunate that this information became available so close to Christmas, but it was believed that members needed to know have as much time as possible to prepare for potential changes, and many households were reassured by the information provided. Information about minimum rents is already available in the 2019/20 Household Rent: How to Guide on our website and all co-ops will receive copies of the legal notice of maximum rent as they are sent to each household. The summary of all minimum and maximum rents in the co-op will be sent out in the First Schedule after all rents are assess, but co-ops are welcome to call CEHL if more information is needed to advise applicants.

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<p>Rent Model Implementation</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern was voiced at one forum that no one would want to take on Director roles • A question was asked about whether people could apply to VCAT to claim an excessive [rent] increase? • Is the electricity subsidy included within the assessable income? • Is mobility allowance included within the assessable income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The change to rents should not have a specific impact on co-op directors that is different to any other member. Part of the CRABAG project will consider how co-ops might be able to recognise extra effort in a way that better targets those who are actually doing this work. • If a member is concerned that the rent charged is excessive in comparison to rents charged for similar properties in their area, they should gather information from local real estate agents and ask their co-op to seek a review of the rent charged from CEHL. If this review does not resolve their concerns, they can then apply to VCAT who will consider similar information in making their decision. • The Clean Energy Supplement is not classed as assessable income. • No

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<p>Rent Model Implementation</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several people expressed confusion about what their new rent would be and whether they had followed the right process for their rent to be assessed. • Concern was expressed at one forum that the rent change was not part of a CCA agreement re-negotiation. • Some members were worried that high income households will leave or will not want to be part of the co-operative if they can't access cheap rent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear understanding of the rent each household will pay can only be made once the household income has been assessed. Any questions about this process can be made to CEHL Financial Services on 03 9208 0800, or finserv@cehl.com.au. • The CCA requires that “The Company and the Co-operative acknowledge to each other that any change to the system of determining Tenant, Company or Maximum Rent shall be in consultation with Shareholder Co-operatives”. The Rent Model Advisory Group has led that consultation process over the past year. • Housing security, rent that can be adjusted to changes in your income, opportunities to contribute to decisions about your future housing and a sense of community are inherent benefits of our program that are highly valued by all, including members on higher incomes and can't be found in the private rental market.

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<p>Victorian Housing Register</p>	<p>VHR has now been launched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Victorian Government has released final policies The proportion of priority housing allocations for each agency is now determined by the funding arrangements for each property CEHL has met with VHR representatives, and it has been agreed that 3.73% of our vacancies each year must be offered to people on the priority waiting list Co-ops in the CEHL program already offer nearly 3 times as many vacancies to people eligible for priority housing each year. <p>CEHL Board Discussions</p> <p>The Board has received a formal offer from DHHS for CEHL to opt in to VHR . After considering the offer the Board determined that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement to offer 3.73% of vacancies to priority applicants is far less than the number of vacancies already offered by CEHL co-ops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mood in several forums was quite positive about ratio required taking from the VHR list, as CEHL currently easily meets that target Will people be able to select a co-housing option on the VHR list? Concerns were expressed about the potential requirement to house people with complex needs and co-operatives being unable to support them. How will co-ops find new members who will help in governance? How will applicants be offered training and information about the program? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an outcome that nearly all of the potential concerns raised about joining the VHR. This option will not be in the VHR database, but CEHL will work with affected co-ops to find ways to identify people registered on VHR who are interested in special interest co-ops. CEHL already offers more than 3.73% of vacancies to people eligible for priority housing – mainly through our over 55’s housing co-ops. All other co-ops can continue to offer vacancies to the same groups of people as they currently house. Co-ops will be offered a referral list just as they currently do and can use the same criteria to select new members. All people expressing an interest in co-op housing on the VHR will be invited to info sessions and/or training in the same way they currently do.

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<p>Victorian Housing Register</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. There are new opportunities available to agencies who opt in to VHR for property funding schemes, and more support options for co-op members e.g. Tenancy Plus 3. Apart from some administrative changes, opting in to VHR would meet all considerations Program participants have previously set in 2017 - handout 4. The extra resources required for administration will also allow CEHL to make other improvements requested by program participants 5. CEHL can review our experience of VHR in future and opt out of VHR without penalty if needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will shareholders have an opportunity to vote on big issues like this? • Do applicants need to be on the DHHS waitlist (VHR) to be on the CEHL referral list? • There was comment that it felt like the Board were making a decision despite the feedback from members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A board member has offered to take this question to the CEHL Board meeting. • Yes. The VHR will essentially act in the same way as our current EOI list and only applicants on the VHR list will be invited to info sessions and referred to co-ops. • The CEHL Board invited all co-op members to help them to identify all the issues to be considered in making a decision regarding opting in to the VHR. They have then reported back the findings about how those issues will be affected by VHR, investigated the likely impact (minimal change for co-ops and applicants) and reported this to members. Most recently they invited any further issues to be put forward and will consider this feedback in making its final decision.

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<p>Victorian Housing Register</p>	<p>Where to from here ...</p> <p>The CEHL Board has made an “in principle” resolution to opt in to VHR provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program participants are offered an opportunity to identify any further considerations that should be investigated before a final decision to opt in • Investigation of further considerations identified does not give cause for further concern • A formal review of the VHR experience is conducted after 12 months • All existing systems will be maintained in order that they can be resumed if CEHL should decide to opt out after the 12 month review. <p>Co-ops can submit any other considerations that they feel the Board should consider on the “Have Your Say” section of the CEHL website by Friday 12th April</p>		

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<p>Member Portal</p>	<p>From 1 April Co-op Resources and Have your say discussions will ONLY be available via the portal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need help? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help videos and troubleshooting guide • Ask your Co-op Champion • Coming up . . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Portal demo workshops + complete Annual Rent Review info • Must RSVP - see What's on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several attendees have logged on to the portal, they said it was quite easy to use and encouraged others to give it a try. • Suggestions for improvement included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paper which defines what 3rd schedule is. • Capacity to upload more than one document at a time • More information on the guide to identify each step • Navigation that takes you back to exactly where you were before. • Definitions for terms such as “co-operative files upload” • Should co-operative directors sign up to the portal? • What will happen for people with no IT access? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great to hear • These suggestions have all been logged for future upgrades. • Ideally all members should sign in, and there will be extra information available for Co-op Directors. • Members with no IT access can register for personal correspondence to be sent by mail and co-ops should be able to assist to access general resource documents. Don't forget that most smart phones can access the portal too!

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<p>Advisory Committee Updates</p> <p>Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)</p>	<p>Recently approved policies and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Policies and Procedures consulted on and approved by the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Response to Relocation Program Policy • Program Response to the Ending of a Joint Membership Program Policy • Policies are now available on the website in the Co-op Resource Centre. • January/February Consultation (closed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Property Allocation to Co-ops Program Policy DRAFT – Property Allocation to Co-ops Procedure DRAFT • April/May Consultation - 4 April to 16 May <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Security of Tenure Program Policy – Privacy Procedure – Exemptions Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's a co-operative champion? • Discussion was held in one forum regarding the low level of responses received. Suggestions to address this included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More info about what changes the policy will bring ○ Find new ways to engage with members and reduce apathy • Perhaps the lack of anonymity is deterring people from making comment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Co-op Champion is a co-op member who has offered to be available to members of their co-op (or others nearby) to help them to get started in using the portal, and to feed back any difficulties to CEHL. • CEHL is eager to provide better information to members and will be making implementation plans to ensure all changes are explained whenever new policies are approved. We would welcome suggestions about how members could best be informed of potential changes when policy is being developed. • It is important that feedback is clearly identified as being from a current co-op member and, if relevant, legitimately representing a co-op viewpoint. A healthy diversity of viewpoints is often the key to shaping the best decision and, so long as it is expressed respectfully, is always welcome.

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<p>PAC ELECTIONS</p>	<p><i>Have your say</i> via the survey found on the CEHL website</p> <p><i>Please note: The above policies and procedure identified at the time of the March Regional forum were subsequently deferred. These items are still identified as being in need of development, and will be rescheduled for consultation. The Relocation Assistance guide was provided for feedback. Further details can be found on the 'Have your say' webpage</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can joint members in a co-op each be voting members in the development of policy? • One member commented that it is now easier to make comments on the site • Are all co-operatives required to follow Program Policies? • Some members were unaware of the policies being up for consultation. • No nominations were received in several regions • Some members expressed interest if able to attend by skype or phone • 2 people were interested in job sharing the PAC role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no voting process for co-ops or members in development of Program Policy. Each policy is recommended by PAC to be approved by the CEHL Board after considering the feedback on early drafts from co-ops and members. Feedback can include a variety of views amongst the co-op or household. • That's good to hear! • Yes! This ensures that all requirements of the Housing Registrar and relevant laws are met. • It is important for co-op secretaries to keep members informed and each member can also find this info on the "Have Your Say" page of the website. Some co-ops have a policy officer or sub-committee to keep members informed and to develop co-op feedback. • New processes for nominations of PAC representatives are being explored, including flexible attendance options and sharing roles.

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<p>Training Advisory Committee (TAC)</p>	<p>2019 Training For Co-ops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First co-op training session is in May : “Making Meetings Work” Invitations soon – remember to rsvp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced, engaging trainers, will attract more people to training sessions • It was observed that only a small number are attending on a repeated basis • Training important but not possible to enforce – perhaps add training attendance as a requirement of Active Membership agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed – we have had very positive feedback about sessions delivered over the past year. • Numbers do vary from region to region and around 60% of co-ops have been represented at recent training sessions. Further suggestions about how co-ops can access training are welcome. • Building training expectations amongst co-op members is a great way to ensure all members have current knowledge.
<p>TAC ELECTIONS</p>	<p>Vacancies in TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 vacancies for TAC reps in 7 regions • Any member can put in an Expression of Interest • Expressions of Interest due by 17th March (take a copy) • Training suggestions or feedback to your TAC rep or email to training@cehl.com.au 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No nominations were received at the forum but several people said they would consider nominating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several nominations have since been received.

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<p>Improving Engagement</p>	<p>Engagement survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 80% of co-ops responded Some CEHL service delivery issues, getting in the way of engagement Co-ops also reported issues with member participation and the lack of ways for co-ops to talk to each other and share information, advice and positive stories. <p>December regional workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 150 member and CEHL Board members attended Ideas to improve participation in co-ops <p>Next steps circulated for discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being prepared for CEHL Board March meeting Will be circulated to co-ops We expect a big opportunity to discuss the findings and ways forward at the <u>June regional forums</u>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ballarat region suggested that co-op led time come first with the CEHL Forum to be done second Co-operatives need to own the Forum – keep co-operatives in the organisation and structure There was a request that CEHL support the region to organise and share trades etc. There was discussion about more interaction between the groups for training new members or potential members It was raised that requests for feedback (Have Your Say) should allow for anonymity as members do not want to provide some feedback as there is the perception that some feedback may impact on co-operative relationships One region suggested that they receive the Forum report prior to regional forums and use the meeting for deeper discussion of items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These are great suggestions to be put to the engagement discussion at the next regional forum.

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<p>Improving Engagement</p>	<p>Some of the progress to improve service frustrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved ways for members and potential members to access information and keep details up to date • Member Portal launched • Referral lists are being pre-screened by CEHL • Make communication simpler • Help videos for Member portal • Co-op Housing program video for new members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was commented that the presentation being read to the group is not most effective use of time, session could be more engaging • The video was well received with comments that it was comprehensive and very good. Some asked for more information about how it will be used • Members raised that there is a lack of understanding of the Referral List and allocations/priority process giving the example of a members daughter having been on the list for 8 years • Feedback received that the current co-operative recruitment process is not producing members that want to participate in co-operative activities. They believe there needs to be a structured compulsory training for applicants before they are referred to co-operatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The video will be used in training for staff and members to achieve a common understanding about what the Program is, and to inform discussions about how to influence Program direction • Once the implementation of VHR is clear, CEHL will commence a project and consult with co-ops to explore further improvements to the member referral and recruitment process.

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Co-op led discussion		Topics Discussed: Training <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tenancy selection workshop ideas• Working together to training new people in co-operative roles Building Positive approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One Co-op shared their story of being rejuvenated from very difficult financial situation to a great outcome through very hard work in the co-operative & positivity• Another co-operative offered their story of co-operative working together• Building confidence in people to take over• Motivating people by building connections and friendships outside of meetings• Reminding people about why they joined in the first place• Celebrating how lucky we are to be in this Program. Not just about housing.	

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<p>Co-op led discussion</p>		<p>Encouraging Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make meetings more interesting – speakers, CDC, solar • Develop Position Descriptions for roles – share between co-ops? • Discussions about how to stop people using mobile phones in meeting and addressing members not doing enough work <p>Future Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer list • Member selection • Facebook group ‘co-ops doing it for themselves <p>Some discussions took place in smaller groups, sharing information and thoughts about what was discussed</p>	

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<p>General questions and discussion</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea for CEHL to be able to login to co-op computers, when they call up and ask questions about CERC work, portal etc, and show them what to do 'virtually' Further rent model change questions A co-op in Geelong appeared to have an accidental re-zoning of their properties in recent rent assessments How are the proceeds from the sale of Stage 2 at St Mary's being used in Geelong? How many units in St Mary's still belong to CEHL? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This idea has been logged for consideration in further IT upgrades Any questions about the rent model should be made to the Rent Hotline on 9208 0806 If it appears an error has been made, co-ops can seek a reassessment by contacting CEHL Financial Services on 03 9208 0800, or finserv@cehl.com.au As discussed at the June 2016 Regional Forum "Through St Mary's allocations and regional acquisition planning CEHL anticipates providing around 10 downsizing options that meet the needs identified in Geelong Co-op's FDP plans. There are currently planning applications under way that it is hoped will result in 7 allocations to the Geelong region in the 2019/2020 financial year. CEHL owns 13 units

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member asked for more information about the scholarship program and if there are any restraints on the education topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about CEHL’s scholarship program can be found on our website at : https://www.cehl.com.au/Attachment?Action=Download&Attachment_id=411
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some regions suggested that Forums be rotated between venues across the region so that no-one is disadvantaged by travelling further. • Suggestions were received for some regional forums to be held on Saturdays or combined with the CEHL AGM. • How can members get a hard copy of the newsletter? • Members in the Peninsula Region liked the new venue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are great suggestions to be put forward at the Engagement Review discussion in the June Forum • Members with no IT access can register for correspondence to be sent by mail or ask their co-op to assist.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some members sought more information about properties listed for future handback on their FDP and how this affected maintenance decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDP plans identify properties which should be handed back at the next vacancy, unless major works are required beforehand. All routine maintenance should continue on these properties in the meantime.

Regional Forum March 2019

SUMMARY REPORT

