

Rotary Club of Melton Mowbray

Meeting of Vocational Committee 21st November 2014

Present:

Atul Dawda; Bill Hill, Ben Abbott; Michael Osborne, Diana Osborne, David Morris

Summary of Matters Discussed

Melton has an underclass of disaffected young persons who are homeless, drug takers, and petty criminals living at the limits of society. Homelessness is not just those who sleep rough on the streets, but there are many who do not have a home of their own and move from house to house "sofa-surfing". As these young person grow older, their habits become entrenched resulting in more serious criminal activity and ultimately imprisonment.

What can Rotary do to influence these young persons positively and relieve them from the burden of homelessness and a life of crime?

There are already persons in Melton who either work with the underclass of young persons or are aware of the situation; they use their efforts and sphere of influence to bring about change. These include fellow Rotarian Pam Posnett; potential Satellite Club member Mark Frisby and the former member of Melton Aurora Ronan Brown. The Learning Hub under David Cowell's control is also involved in teaching young persons who have been excluded from school.

It was agreed that we would arrange to meet with the above, plus anyone else within the local community who is able to make a positive contribution. Is there a way in which we as Rotarians can provide needed help to these young persons which will guide them and lead them to a better life? We need focus and direction to ensure we do not duplicate what others are doing and that our efforts are successful.

Another factor with this underclass is that many of them have been excluded from school and have literacy problems. Thisacerbates the problem and limits their ability to apply for regular employment. This issue also needs addressing if we are to deliver on the matters raised earlier.

Melton Aurora is working on a project with young people and in some ways overlaps what we are working on. We must ensure that what the two clubs do is complementary to each other and not competitive.

Other Relevant Issues Not Discussed

There is scope for help with persons in custody, both young and not so young. Lack of literacy is common amongst inmates and if not addressed will inevitably lead to further re-offending.

On a more positive note, the success of the Melton Business Forum is an example of a Rotary initiative locally which is befitting the small and medium sized business community.

Plan of Action

1. Arrange to meet with persons named above to gain focus and direction on how best Rotary can become involved and help.
2. Work with persons in the borough who are tasked with dealing with these issues.
3. Identify specific area of the town to be targeted.
4. Hold regular committee meetings to ensure progress is maintain and that all appropriate action is taken.