

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MAY 31, 2019

## **Addressing drivers of crime the most effective way to create safer communities: Jesuit Social Services**

A new Crime Prevention Taskforce, led by the Victorian Government, is a positive step forward in addressing the drivers of crime and supporting people to reach their full potential, says Jesuit Social Services.

“Minister for Crime Prevention Ben Carroll says that the best crime prevention measures are a job and a stable home and we agree – it is vital that wherever possible, people who have offended or are at risk of offending are supported in the community to access the types of services and opportunities that many take for granted,” says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards.

“We can’t expect people to turn their lives around if they don’t have access to a secure roof over their heads and the opportunity to contribute to society through education and employment.”

Ms Edwards will represent Jesuit Social Services on the Taskforce, Chaired by Minister Carroll, which also includes senior leaders from the AFL, Melbourne Storm, Channel 7, Woolworths, National Australia Bank, Lendlease, Trades Hall, the Aboriginal Justice Caucus and Victorian Council of Social Service.

The Taskforce will contribute to the design of a Crime Prevention Strategy and help to develop new and innovative programs that address the key factors behind offending.

“It is great to see a broad cross-section of representatives from the business, media, sport and community worlds come together to tackle these issues. We know that leadership and support from all corners of the community is important in creating pathways towards better futures for people in need.”

Ms Edwards says place-based investments are important to addressing underlying disadvantage in certain communities across Victoria.

“Our research into locational disadvantage, conducted over the last 20 years, shows that a small number of communities across the state are experiencing a complex web of entrenched disadvantage that limits outcomes and opportunities for residents.

“Our *Dropping off the Edge* reports published in 2007 and 2015 are a roadmap to the communities most in need of targeted support. These communities are not failing, instead we are failing them. Long-term commitments and investments by all levels of Government as well as business, community sector and the communities themselves can help to improve outcomes and ultimately work to reduce and prevent crime.”

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