



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

Community Partnerships Roundtable

Terms of Reference

November 2022



Document control

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Approvals

Version	Date	Approver
2.0	16 Nov 2021	Community Partnerships Roundtable
1.0	5 May 2021	Community Partnerships Roundtable

Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Description
2.0	16 Nov 2022	P D'Orazio and R Nilon	Approved, updated corporate branding, removed watermark, and finalised
1.1	23 Sep 2022	C Irwin and L Giolitto	Biennial review – updated key activities, minor formatting and wordsmithing
1.0	10 Jun 2022	K Riddell	Finalised – watermark removed
0.6	6 Apr 2022	N Chestnutt	Updated principles and minor formatting
0.5	12 Jan 2021	K Riddell, P Kennedy and L Doherty	WACOSS feedback and stewardship content
0.4	5 Aug 2020	L Doherty	Preliminary discussions with peaks
0.3	29 Jul 2020	L Doherty / C Irwin	Updated

Version	Date	Author	Description
0.2	8 Jul 2020	L Doherty / C Irwin	Updated all
0.1	1 Jul 2020	L Doherty / C Irwin	Draft

Context

The Department of Communities (Communities) is a multi-function human services agency. The essence of why Communities exists is for ‘People, Place and Home’; providing services to a diverse range of people to improve social outcomes for Western Australians. Communities collaborates across government and the human services sector to create pathways that enable individual, family and community wellbeing, with a focus on five interconnected outcome areas: strong families and kin; safe children; empowered people; a place to call home; and inclusive and accessible communities.

Collaboration enables Communities to combine its efforts and capabilities with those of its partners to guide a system-wide approach to achieving collective impact.

As a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a series of taskforces were formed by Communities. It fast became evident that if managed effectively, the relationships and collaborative work undertaken through the taskforces could be harnessed to form the foundations for a long-term strategic partnership between government (Communities) and the community services sector.

There are multiple government and non-government organisations that contribute directly and indirectly to the provision of community and human services, impacting the lives of Western Australians. Communities acknowledges that effective, genuine and purposeful engagement with stakeholders is fundamental to building and maintaining trusted partnerships to collaborate purposefully and maximise opportunities. A strategically focussed sector peaks group will facilitate Communities, the community services sector and other key partners, to work together to improve social outcomes for Western Australian people and communities.

Purpose

The Community Partnerships Roundtable brings a broad and diverse range of experience, capability and expertise to jointly pursue collaboration as a mechanism to improve outcomes for vulnerable people in Western Australia by identifying and addressing system-wide issues. This group will provide a platform for members to become more aligned and jointly plan on matters of strategic importance relevant to the stewardship¹ and delivery of human services.

It provides an opportunity to draw on our diverse knowledge, capabilities and experiences to:

- Educate and inform each other so that we better understand the opportunities and challenges across the service system; and

¹ Stewardship outcomes comprise measurable *change/s* in at least one of the three universal stewardship components as a result of the stewardship outputs: (1) *resource constraints*: constraints on a resource are measurably reduced or eliminated; (2) *beneficiaries*: measurable increase in benefits to beneficiaries; and (3) *responsibility*: individuals or groups take on a (greater) level of responsibility for a resource, cause or process. [How can we think about stewardship? | The Mandarin](#)

- Develop, implement and evaluate collective approaches to respond to them.

Anticipated benefits from the Community Partnerships Roundtable include:

- Opportunities to harness relationships and partnerships to leverage off collective knowledge, expertise and resources.
- Guide the development of responses that are culturally secure, socially inclusive, and support people to reach their desired goals.
- Meaningful engagement and collaboration between groups in the design and implementation of key initiatives.
- Increased coherence and coordination of effort across sectors that impact community and human service outcomes.
- Shared awareness of each organisation's values and priorities.
- Ability to maximise opportunities, collaborate purposefully and communicate effectively.

Principles

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Communities worked alongside key partners from the community services sector to develop [tools to support the COVID-19 taskforces for vulnerable groups, one of which was a Partnerships Charter](#).

The Partnership Charter details key principles of partnership that are applicable to this group. Relevant principles include:

- We will strive to reinvigorate trust and free ourselves from historic patterns of relationships that have existed between organisations and sectors.
- We value culture and diversity and recognise the need to improve on the history of our working relationships.
- We work together as equals – while respecting our distinct roles and constraints.
- We communicate transparently and often.
- We share success and challenges.
- We have collective accountability.
- We understand the importance of using shared and mutually agreed language.
- We acknowledge the power differentials between stakeholders and undertake to identify and address any imbalances to achieve equity.
- We will be as transparent as our constraints allow and share information as promptly as possible.
- We understand positive results will take time and effort from all parties.
- We work from the understanding that parties share many of the same goals and outcomes; and
- We will work together from a position of what we have in common more than what we have in difference.

Key activities

The group will:

- Conduct joint strategic planning to inform the focus of the group.
- Share and connect on strategic priority areas.
- Consider the Department of Communities Agency Commissioning Plan and commissioning programs of work, through the Commissioning Working Group.
- Consider data sharing opportunities between Communities and the community services sector, through the Data Sharing and Outcomes Working Group.
- Consider emerging issues impacting the community services sector.
- Influence strategy by generating and contributing to discussions about sector and departmental priorities, commitments and performance.
- Collaboratively identify two to three strategic priorities to inform the group's annual program of work.
- Conduct workshops or events with a wider group of stakeholders as appropriate.

Membership

Appointment: Membership is by invitation from the Director General Communities and includes stakeholders with relevant knowledge and experience. The membership profile includes representation from Department of Communities and key peak bodies or sub-sector bodies where no peak exists.

Refer to **Attachment 1** for full membership.

Confidentiality and Conflict of interest: Members may have access to information that relates to confidential government information. Members must treat this material as strictly confidential and will be required to sign a declaration to this effect at the commencement of their tenure. During their tenure members will also be required to declare conflicts of interest. Members with a direct or indirect conflict of interest in a matter under group consideration must disclose this to the Co-Chairs.

Attendance: Members are expected to attend all meetings either in person / video link or by proxy. The proxy shall be one nominated person within the member organisation, without further delegation, unless a position becomes vacant. Members are responsible for ensuring the proxy has appropriate authority and briefing/s to enable constructive participation.

Where a member organisation is not represented at two consecutive meetings without a formal request or apology, they will be approached in writing and asked if they wish to continue involvement.

Resignation: Members may resign in writing to the Co-Chairs.

Duration of term: Group membership has no set term. The Co-Chairs may terminate membership in writing.

Meetings

Agenda and papers: Meeting papers will be circulated electronically by the Secretariat (within Strategy and Partnerships) ten business days prior to each meeting. Proposed agenda items related to the key activities should be forwarded, via the secretariat, for approval by the Co-Chairs.

Co-Chairs: The Communities Co-Chair is the Director General. The sector Co-Chair will be nominated from organisations represented in the membership, for a term of two years.

The role of the Co-Chairs is to provide leadership of the group and to ensure the group delivers its mandate effectively and efficiently, with appropriate engagement of all members. Co-Chairs will jointly agree on the agenda and alternate chairing of meetings.

Expenses: Members are responsible for any expenses incurred in attending meetings and other associated group activities. No sitting fees will be paid.

Guests: From time to time, members may, through the Co-Chairs or by meeting decision, invite other stakeholders or experts to participate in discussions or provide presentations on issues relevant to the agreed purpose of the group.

Meeting frequency: Meetings will convene quarterly. Meetings and consideration of issues may also be scheduled out of session.

Meeting location: Meetings will be hosted on Communities' premises or other locations by invitation. Costs associated with hosting meetings will be met by the host.

Secretariat support: Communities will provide secretariat support.

Sub-groups

The Community Partnerships Roundtable may from time to time establish sub-groups to address specific issues. These sub-groups will report to the Community Partnerships Roundtable and will operate until the Community Partnerships Roundtable deems they are no longer required.

Communicating and reporting

Members will treat all group discussions as confidential unless otherwise agreed.

Draft minutes will be sent to members for feedback and confirmation within ten days of the meeting. Communiques will be published on the Communities website within twenty-one days of meetings, and available for circulation.

Review

The Terms of Reference and the performance of the group will be reviewed every two years.

Attachment 1 – Membership

Membership of the Community Partnerships Roundtable includes:

Department of Communities

- Director General (Co-Chair)
- Sector Partnerships team members
- Relevant Deputy or Assistant Director General to attend as required.

Sector representatives

- Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia
- Centre for Women’s Safety and Wellbeing
- Child and Family Alliance WA
- Council of the Ageing WA
- Linkwest
- National Disability Services
- Noongar Family Safety and Wellbeing Council
- Shelter WA
- Volunteering WA
- Western Australian Council of Social Service
- Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia