SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM
WORKING GROUP: COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE FORUM – MARCH 2019

1. Project scope

1.1 OBJECTIVE

- To ensure that the Supporting Communities Forum will promote engagement in support of its workplan and those of its working groups, to communicate about its activities and report on its achievements.

1.2 BACKGROUND

- The previous Partnership Forum used a number of mechanisms to communicate including website, communiques following meetings and events.
- The Premier has requested the Forum to identify ways to engage with the broader community, consistent with the directions of the Supporting Communities Forum, which will require a different approach.
- Understanding the activities by the other six Supporting Communities Forum working groups are critical.
- The importance of translating the good will that exists around the establishment of the Supporting Communities Forum into our communications cannot be underestimated.

2. Project governance

Working groups report to the Supporting Communities Forum that ultimately reports to the Premier and Minister for Community Services.

The membership of the Working Group includes a range of skills and expertise:

- Co-Chairs: Helen Creed and Emily Roper
- Forum members: Julie Waylen, Ross Wortham and Suzi Cowcher
- Additional participants:
  - Jennifer O'Mullane (Local Drug Action Group)
  - Pip Strempel (Department of Communities)
  - Annette Morrissey (A/Senior Media Coordinator, Communications, Department of Health)
  - Tina Holtom (CEO, Child Australia)
  - Astrid Serventy (Director Govt Relations, Cannings Purple)

Please note: Emily Roper, acting Deputy Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet is the Working Group Co-Chair from Feb 2019 for three months, while Michelle Andrews is acting Director General at the Department of Communities.

3. Stakeholders

The Working group suggests that it is useful to differentiate communication from the Supporting Communities Forum in terms of internal and external stakeholders.

Internal:

- Premier, Members of Cabinet Sub-Committee, Ministers, MP's
- Within the SCF- i.e. between Forum members, within and between Working Groups

External:

- Forum member's own networks
- Sectors- public and community
- End users (different populations groups)
- Community/general public

Elements such as what, how, when will be different for different stakeholders (e.g. different formats and language for different groups; need for clarity around type of engagement (e.g. where along the continuum of informing, educating, consulting etc.); determining the principles of engagement (e.g. timely, balanced, accessible, inclusive, not use jargon or acronyms).

An example of the engagement continuum is attached.

4. Timeframe and milestones

Milestone	Timeframe
Development of key messages - drawn from Supporting Communities Policy and work of Supporting Communities Forum (and Working Groups to date); including ways in which key messages can be used	Completed
Development of a communications strategy and suite of documents (listed below) for consideration by the Forum at the 10 December meeting: - Communication Strategy and Implementation Plan - Communications Action Plan template; and - Communications Protocol.	Completed
Update Forum Presentation with Strategic Framework slide and Working Group key messages	February 2019
Review and update Working Group Project Plan	February 2019
Draft a paper (paper 1) Communication with the Sector – to explore options for holding one large Forum event.	March 2019

Draft a paper (paper 2) Regional Networks and the Supporting Communities Forum – to explore metropolitan and regional consultation and engagement opportunities.	March 2019
Update three communication documents	March 2019.

This project plan will be an evolving document, to be reviewed after the communications elements relevant to the work plans of the other Working Groups have been clarified.

5. Resources required

The Working Group will be able to draw on currently available government communication channels – CEO gateway, DPC website etc. as well as other channels through the Office of Digital Government as they become available to implement the communications strategy. This will be actioned through the Forum's secretariat in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

6. Assumptions and risk analysis

The Working Group has had a preliminary discussion about the key risks for the project and how to manage these:

RISK	LEVEL	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Stakeholders misinterpret the scope of the Forum's role and their expectations are raised about what the Forum can achieve.	Medium	The Forum's communications plan will reference the IAP2 scale to ensure that communications are drafted/presented consistent with the 'inform' and 'consult' categories only.
There is a low-level of community interest in work of the Forum.	Low	The Forum communications plan will identify a list of key stakeholders to ensure relevant and interested parties are receiving updates from the Forum, in the first instance. A feedback mechanism will be established on the Forum's webpage.
The content of Forum's communications is not useful or interesting for Forum stakeholders.	Low	The Forum communications plan will identify the Forum's priority focus areas for communications. A mechanism will be established for Forum members to report back on how communications from the Forum are being received by their formal and informal networks. A feedback mechanism will be established on the Forum's webpage.

Forum communications are not provided or accessible to all relevant stakeholders.	Low	The Forum will utilise a number of different mediums (i.e. public webpage page, newsletter articles, face-to-face meetings etc.) for communication to provide multiple ways for stakeholders to be updated/engage in the Forum's work.
Communication with regional and remote-based stakeholders is low.	High	The Forum's communications plan will identify regional and remote based peak bodies, organisations development commissions, and community leaders etc. through which the Forum's communications can be shared.