



SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2020 – 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The community services sector is a key government partner in the delivery of services and a significant contributor to economic growth, employment and community wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable Western Australians.

The Government of Western Australia is committed to working with the community services sector to maximise opportunities to deliver quality services, by building a relationship based on partnership, collaboration, mutual respect and trust between both sectors. This work will also support the directions of the Machinery of Government reforms; the recommendations emerging from the Service Priority Review and the Sustainable Health Review; and the targets and actions arising from the *Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity* program.

The terms of reference for the Supporting Communities Forum were endorsed by the Community Safety and Family Support Cabinet Sub Committee (Sub Committee) on 21 October 2019.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE FORUM

The objective of the Supporting Communities Forum is to support the implementation of the Government's *Supporting Communities* policy and its commitments to increase the effectiveness of funding to Western Australians in need, by providing advice and recommendations regarding:

1. Opportunities to break down barriers between Government agencies and stakeholders to better deliver services and outcomes for Western Australians in need;
2. Improvements to procurement processes, and transition to a focus on measuring outcomes, as set out in the Government's *Supporting Communities* policy;
3. Further development and implementation of the Government's *Delivering Community Services in Partnership* policy;
4. Opportunities to maximise the delivery of quality services to the community, in particular, implementing recommendations for embedding examples of good practice in service planning, co-design, technical procurement skills and contract management, identified by the Forum in 2018-19;
5. Feedback and requests from the WA Aboriginal Advisory Council on matters under consideration by this Council, particularly those that relate to the design, delivery and outcomes of community services that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
6. Feedback and requests from the Multicultural Advisory Group on matters under consideration by this Group, particularly those that impact on the interests of the culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
7. Specific policy topics, to be identified by the Minister for Community Services at the commencement of each two-year term of the Forum; and
8. Any other matters impacting on the implementation of the *Supporting Communities* policy and the *Delivering Community Services in Partnership* policy, or the delivery of services

and outcomes for Western Australians, as requested by the Minister for Community Services.

3. COMPOSITION OF THE FORUM

The Forum will comprise two Co-Chairpersons, one drawn from the community services sector and one drawn from Government, a Deputy Chairperson drawn from the community services sector, up to 14 community services sector members, and up to eleven Government members.

3.1 Roles of the Co-Chairpersons and Deputy Chairperson¹

The Co-Chairpersons are jointly responsible for leadership of the Forum including:

- facilitating proper information flow to the Forum, from both community services sector and Government sources;
- facilitating the effective functioning of the Forum including managing the conduct, frequency and length of Forum meetings;
- communicating the views, advice and recommendations of the Forum to the community services sector and Government.

In undertaking this role, the Co-Chairpersons' responsibilities also include:

- in consultation with the secretariat:
 - setting the agenda for the matters to be considered by the Forum;
 - seeking to ensure that the information provided to the Forum is relevant, accurate, timely and sufficient to keep the Forum appropriately informed of any developments that may have a material impact on its deliberations;
- seeking to ensure that communications with the community services sector and Government are accurate and effective;
- facilitating open and constructive communications amongst Forum members and encouraging their contribution to Forum deliberations; and
- liaising with Forum members.

The Deputy Chairperson will perform the role and functions of either Chairperson in the absence of a Chairperson for any reason and be available to undertake the responsibilities of a Chairperson in instances where a Chairperson actually or potentially may be compromised due to personal or other conflict of interest.

The Deputy Chairperson will also be responsible for developing, establishing and managing strategies to identify young and emerging leaders for potential recruitment to future Forums, including mentoring opportunities for these young and emerging leaders.

¹ Adapted from Australian Institute of Company Directors, *Director Tools: Governance Relations – Role of the Chair*, accessed at https://aicd.companydirectors.com.au/~media/cd2/resources/director-resources/director-tools/pdf/05446-3-13-mem-director-gr-role-of-the-chair_a4-web.ashx, accessed on 13 September 2019.

3.2 Community services sector Co-Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

The Premier will recommend to Cabinet the appointment of the community services sector Co-Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson following an expression of interest process. The criteria for selection will include:

- significant and successful senior leadership experience in human service delivery or research, including relevant board (or similar) experience;
- extensive knowledge and experience of service delivery issues in one or more of the following areas: community services; youth services; services for Aboriginal people and communities; regional and remote services; disability services; health and mental health services; and services for culturally and linguistically diverse groups and communities; or systemic advocacy in one or more of the aforementioned areas;
- experience in driving reform and/or innovation processes within and across community services organisations;
- demonstrated ability to foster collaboration amongst board (or similar) members and to provide balanced, well-informed advice;
- ability and willingness to draw on sector networks to consult on behalf of the Forum and to engage support for the Forum's work; and
- expertise in corporate governance.

The community services sector Co-Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson will each be appointed for a two-year term.

3.3 General community services sector membership

The Premier will recommend to Cabinet the appointment of general community services sector members following an expression of interest process. The criteria for selection will include:

- successful leadership experience in human service delivery within the community services sector or in sector-related research;
- knowledge of service delivery issues in one or more of the following areas: community services; youth services; services for Aboriginal people and communities; regional and remote services; disability services; health and mental health services; and services for culturally and linguistically diverse groups and communities; or systemic advocacy in one or more of the aforementioned areas;
- ability to work constructively with others and provide balanced, well-informed advice; and
- ability and willingness to draw on sector networks to consult on behalf of the Forum and to engage support for the Forum's work.

Taken as a whole, the appointment of the community services sector membership will:

- reflect the diversity of the communities provided with services;
- include those people who have lived experience as a consumer or recipient of community services;
- reflect the diversity of the community services sector; and
- include new and emerging leaders in the community services sector as well as established leaders.

General community services sector members will each be appointed for a two-year term.

3.4 Government Co-Chairperson

The role of Government Co-Chairperson will be circulated among the general Government membership, with one Government member fulfilling this role for each two-year term of the Forum.

3.5 Government membership

General Government membership will consist of the Directors General or Commissioners of the following agencies:

- Department of Communities
- Department of Education
- Department of Finance
- Department of Health
- Department of Justice
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Lotterywest
- Mental Health Commission
- Public Sector Commission

3.6 Remuneration of members

The community services sector Co-Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and non-salaried members will receive remuneration and sitting fees in accordance with [Premier's Circular 2019/07 State Government Boards and Committees](#). All accommodation and travel costs for Forum related work will be supported in accordance with the [Public Sector Commissioner's Circular 2009-20: Reimbursement of Travel Expenses for Members of Government Boards and Committees](#).

4. MEETINGS

4.1 Timing of meetings and working groups

The Supporting Communities Forum will meet quarterly. The Forum, through the Co-Chairpersons, may establish time limited working groups that meet more frequently. These working groups may include non-Forum members as required, including private sector organisations with a track record of demonstrating their corporate social responsibility.

4.2 Work program, agenda items, minutes and communication

The Co-Chairpersons should seek to meet regularly with the Chairs of both the Western Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council and the Multicultural Advisory Group to discuss forward work agendas, including any requests for feedback and advice on matters of common interest, as identified in the Objectives of the Forum. This work should include identifying appropriate members of the Forum to act as a conduit between the Forum and the Western Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council and the Multicultural Advisory Group.

Proposed agenda items should be forwarded, via the secretariat, for approval by the Co-Chairpersons. Minutes of each meeting will be drafted and a communique will be issued

following each Forum meeting. These operations of the Forum and its meetings are set out in more detail in the Supporting Communities Forum's Board Charter, which is available on the [DPC – Forum webpage](#).

4.3 Confidentiality and conflicts of interest

Members may have access to information that relates to confidential Cabinet deliberations. Members must treat this material as strictly confidential and will be required to sign a declaration to this effect. During their tenure, members will also be required to declare conflicts of interest. These requirements are set out in more detail in the Supporting Communities Forum's Board Charter, which is available on the [DPC – Forum webpage](#).

4.4 Observers

Observers may attend Forum meetings at the invitation of the Co-Chairpersons.

Additionally, a small number of young and emerging leaders from the Aboriginal, CaLD, and regional communities of Western Australia may be offered the opportunity to attend Forum meetings as observers as part of the mentoring program established and managed by the Deputy Chairperson.

4.5 Reporting

The Forum will provide regular reports to the Community Safety and Family Support Cabinet Sub Committee through the Minister for Community Services.

5. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

An evaluation of the Forum will be conducted after two years of operation to coincide with the renewal of Forum membership. This evaluation will inform a review of the Forum's Terms of Reference. The Sub Committee may initiate an earlier evaluation if desired.