



## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM Meeting #4 - DRAFT Meeting Notes and Actions

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 2 March 2022
<b>Time</b>	2:30 – 5:00pm
<b>Location</b>	MS Teams Meeting
<b>Members</b>	Michelle Scott (Co-Chair), Jodi Cant (Co-Chair), Kate George (Deputy Chair), Louise Giolitto, Dan Minchin, Tricia Murray, Maria Osman, Julie Waylen, Ross Wortham, Debra Zanella, Felicite Black, Kate Chaney, Justine Colyer, Emma Jarvis, Melissa Perry, Denver D'Cruz, Kelda Oppermann, Mike Rowe, Lisa Rodgers, David Russell-Weisz, Adam Tomison, Lanie Chopping, Ralph Addis, Jennifer McGrath, Sharyn O'Neill, and Emily Roper.
<b>Secretariat</b>	Community Policy Unit - Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) <a href="mailto:SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au">SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au</a>
<b>Invited Guests</b>	Lara Connor and Steven Hill (Department of Finance); Gail Beck (Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA); Sandy McKiernan (CEO - YACWA); Amanda Pickrell, Ashleigh O'Mahony, Kate Loudon, and Nadia Mirauda (Department of the Premier and Cabinet); Nicole O'Keefe and Revle Bangor-Jones (Department of Health); Mark Burgess and Stuart Cowie, SWICC (Department of Communities); and Olwyn Williams (Minister McGurk's office).
<b>Apologies</b>	Kate Chaney, Maria Osman, Melissa Perry, Lanie Chopping, Lisa Rodgers, David Russell-Weisz and Adam Tomison.

### 1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

#### 1.1 Acknowledgment of Country

Forum Co-Chair Jodi Cant acknowledged the Whadjuk Noongar people – the Traditional Custodians of the land throughout Western Australia – and paid respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

#### 1.2 Welcome (opening remarks, introductions and apologies)

Forum Co-Chair Jodi Cant welcomed members, guests, and acknowledged apologies, proxies, and the shift to meeting online as a safety precaution noting the recent increase in COVID-19 cases.

Members noted movement in membership of the Forum and the sector, including:

- Kate Chaney is running as an independent candidate in the federal election and will be on a leave of absence from the Forum until 1 June 2022.
- Sandy McKiernan was appointed as the permanent CEO of YACWA effective 1 January 2022, and will continue on the Forum as a representative of the youth sector.
- Tricia Murray is retiring as the CEO of Wanslea effective 1 July 2022, but will continue on the Forum and as Co-Chair of the Child Safe Organisations Working Group.

#### 1.3 Confirm the meeting notes and actions from 22 November

Members noted and confirmed the meeting notes from the 22 November meeting. Members noted the status of the action items as mostly completed, with one item ongoing.

## 1.4 Conflict of Interest Declaration

Co-Chair Jodi Cant acknowledged a declaration by Kate George that PWC Indigenous Consulting has been appointed by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) to assist with work on the Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

Members noted that an update on the Closing the Gap will be provided at the May meeting of the Forum.

## 2. STRATEGIC POLICY AND REFORM

### 2.1 State Commissioning Strategy

Lara Connor, General Manager, Government Policy and Strategy Advisory Services, Department of Finance (Finance), provided members with an update on the State Commissioning Strategy (Strategy).

Members noted:

- the key themes and principles of the (draft) Strategy were endorsed by Cabinet on 13 December 2021;
- an implementation plan for the Strategy, outlining key actions/activities, including key enablers, is currently being scoped and developed by Finance, Treasury and DPC;
- the key element of the implementation plan will be to embed enablers of commissioning as a foundation for both government and the community services sector to transition to commissioning;
- engagement with government agency and community services sector stakeholders on an initial draft of the implementation plan is planned for March and April 2022. Community services sector representatives will include members of the Forum, key peak bodies and nominated representatives from the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA;
- the Strategy and implementation plan will ensure alignment with the Community Services Outcomes Measurement Framework, and support prioritisation of Aboriginal empowerment in alignment with the commitments made under the Closing the Gap National Agreement and Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy; and
- the final strategy and implementation plan will be submitted to Cabinet in June 2022 for consideration and endorsement.

## 3. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

### 3.1 Implementation of the 10-year Homelessness Strategy 2020-2030

Members noted an update and discussion by the **Homelessness Strategy Working Group**, which is co-chaired by **Mike Rowe** and **Debra Zanella**.

Members noted:

- Membership of the working group has been finalised with appointment of three new additional members, namely:
  - Martin Clery, Department of Education;
  - Amity Hudson, WA Police Force; and
  - Nicole Matthews, WA Local Government Association.
- Recent governance changes (in the homelessness space) include the recent establishment of an 'Office of Homelessness' led by Jacqui Herring, Executive Director Homelessness, Department of Communities, and the appointment of a new ministerial portfolio for homelessness under the Hon John Carey BA MLA, Minister for Homelessness.

- The role of the Working Group will be finalised to accommodate these recent changes, and to reflect the preferred governance for the Office of Homelessness to support implementation of the Homelessness Strategy.
- The Working Group recognise that alignment is critical between the Strategy and other activity in the sector, such as the commissioning of homelessness services.
- Satisfactory progress of the Homelessness Action Plan 2020-2025 has been made, based on a preliminary 'traffic light' status report developed by the Department of Communities with input from the various lead agencies. A small number of actions (either off track or delayed) will require close monitoring by the Homelessness Working Group.
- Members of the Homelessness Working Group possess a broad insight across the homelessness sector, and are well positioned to identify and address obstacles, actively drive and promote the implementation of strategic actions, and monitor progress.
- The Forum considered the Homelessness Working Group's Project Plan, which includes the following key timeframes and milestones for the remainder of the term:
  - Stage 1: Invigorating strategic initiatives (Feb 2022)
  - Stage 2: Establishing sector-wide advocacy (May 2022)
  - Stage 3: Maintaining Implementation Momentum (August 2022)
  - Stage 4: Defining future priorities (November 2022)

### 3.2 Monitoring the further development and implementation of the State's Community Services Outcome Measurement Framework

Members noted an update and discussion by the Department of Finance (Finance), on the work to further develop the State's Community Services **Outcomes Measurement Framework (OMF)**.

Members noted:

- The Finance-led cross-sector Delivering Community Services in Partnership (DCSP) Policy Working Group and its OMF sub-group have confirmed the formal release of the OMF, its user guide and supporting documentation.
- Finance is currently finalising requirements for the initial implementation of the OMF, which includes:
  - a plan to communicate to both government and community services sector stakeholders (noting peak bodies have agreed to support this process);
  - roll-out of one-off training events and workshops for government which will include consideration of sector requirements, where possible be undertaken as joint events with the sector;
  - an update of procurement templates to reflect the OMF; and
  - release of an OMF user guide for implementation.
- The OMF sub-group will monitor progress on initial implementation of the OMF and develop a recommendation paper later in the year for the Forum's consideration. The paper will highlight key risks, resourcing gaps, data management requirements, lessons learned, and suggested next steps.

### 3.3 Building Capacity and Capability to Implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Members noted an update and discussion by the **Child Safe Organisations Working Group**, which is co-chaired by **Lanie Chopping** and **Tricia Murray**.

Members noted:

- The Working Group has extended its membership to include:
  - Pauline Roberts, President WA Branch, Early Childhood Australia, and
  - Debra McElhinney, State Coordinator, CREATE Foundation.

- The Working Group are progressing a program of work to identify exemplars and demonstration projects that highlight the opportunities, best practice and learnings related to National Principle implementation, to share across sectors and complement the information already available through the Commissioner for Children and Young People's (CCYP's) child safety knowledge hub.
- The Working Group noted that many organisations are unaware there are obligations upon them regarding Child Safety Principles (CSPs), particularly as the CSPs can apply across community service organisations, private business, and the government sector.
- The Working Group participated in a facilitated workshop with Christina Kadmos in February 2022 to develop parameters for identifying, selecting, and supporting demonstration projects of National Principles implementation.
- The Working Group have also distributed a survey to identify exemplars from a variety of settings to provide relevant guidance to broader community organisations.
- The Group are awaiting the final report from this session, as well as the results from the survey, and will circulate these to the SCF for feedback.
- The Working Group noted that in the community sector, the capacity for organisations to do the work that is needed in the CSP space is limited, and organisations are likely to need additional resources or support.

**Action 1: The Forum Secretariat to circulate the survey and implementation framework developed following the workshop to Forum members for noting before the next Forum meeting.**

### **3.4 Roll-Out of COVID-19 Vaccinations to Vulnerable People and the Community Services Sector**

Members noted an update and discussion by the **Roll-out of the COVID-19 Vaccinations Working Group**, which is co-chaired by **Vaccine Commander Gary Dreiberger** and **Louise Giolitto**.

Members noted:

- The significant program of work surrounding the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations and that the roll-out has progressed well. This included:
  - the launch of a Vaccination Community Funding Program (VCFP) in December 2021 to support bespoke community initiatives to **encourage** the vaccination efforts in the marginalised cohorts in the Western Australian Community;
  - two webinars hosted by the Department of Health and WA Council of Service Services (WACOSS) in early December 2021 for frontline workers to equip them with the tools they need to have persuasive conversations with vaccine-hesitant communities and dispel any myths they may have about COVID-19;
  - implementation of an Accelerated Aboriginal Vaccination Plan in December 2021, based on being Aboriginal community driven with Health led operations and supported by Divisional and Community Leadership Groups;
  - implementation of Door to Door vaccination teams for the Aboriginal Communities across the State to encourage uptake of vaccination for families and individual Aboriginal People;
  - participation by trusted Aboriginal Leaders and Elders in pre-engagement and vaccination delivery strategies, funded by the VCFP; and
  - implementation of bespoke strategies through consultation with culturally and linguistically diverse communities leading to vaccination clinics being held in Temples, Mosques, Synagogues and Churches.

The Working Group Co-Chairs recommended that the Roll-out of the COVID-19 Vaccinations Working Group be wound up, and that any remaining functions of delivering vaccination-related services are maintained by the Vaccine Commander.

The Forum generally agreed and supported the wind-up of the 'Roll-out of COVID-19 Vaccinations Working Group', acknowledging that the Vaccine Commander and the Department of Health are well-equipped and networked with a number of vulnerable and priority communities, including but not limited to:

- Residential Aged Care Facilities;
- Aboriginal Communities;
- Homeless and Rough sleepers;
- People living with disability; and
- Multicultural and multifaith cohorts.

The Forum considered the possibility of the Working Group pivoting its focus to support the sector in managing COVID-19, with a revised Terms of Reference. However, following updates from Government on work underway in the COVID-19 preparedness space (next agenda item), the Forum confirmed that continuation of the Working Group is not necessary given the existing and effective engagement between government and the community services sector, and the multiple avenues available to raise and address concerns, and share critical information and lessons learned.

Forum members also discussed:

- the importance of focusing on outcomes for Western Australians when supporting vulnerable cohorts through living with COVID-19 regardless of State / Federal responsibility for funding and support; and
- other areas of COVID-19 community support that the Forum could potentially contribute to, such as:
  - supporting vulnerable groups in living with COVID-19; and
  - harnessing the disruption of COVID-19 to identify opportunities to embed longer-term lessons learned from COVID-19 to improve working relations between the government and the community services sector.

**Action 2: Forum Co-Chairs to seek endorsement from Minister McGurk to wind-up the Roll-out of COVID-19 Vaccinations Working Group.**

## 4. Other Business

### 4.1 COVID-19 Preparedness

Forum members received updates on the COVID-19 preparedness of the sector from various Government agency representatives.

Members received an update from Emily Roper, Director General, and Amanda Pickrell, A/Deputy Director General, Intergovernmental Relations and COVID-19, Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

- Members noted information about the Public Health and Social Measures, testing and isolation protocols, changes to close contact definitions, the provision of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) to community service organisations and to WA households, and the critical worker furloughing policy.
- Members discussed:
  - the timing of the critical worker furloughing policy, and the need to acknowledge non-COVID-19 health, safety, and security risks in the current climate for vulnerable communities, particularly those experiencing homelessness or Family and Domestic Violence (FDV);
  - ensuring continuity of service in home care settings that might not be captured under the critical worker furloughing policy;
  - clarifying the involvement of the community services sector via the Department of Communities in scenario planning around COVID-19 policy settings; and
  - members noted comments from community sector leaders highlighting the need for immediate assistance and policy change to support service providers working with vulnerable cohorts.

- Members received an update from Nadia Miraudo, Deputy Director Strategic Communications, COVID-19 Communications, DPC.
- Members noted information about COVID-19 communications resources available and campaigns currently in market that relate to vulnerable community members and community service organisations, including translated and targeted resources. The DPC COVID-19 Communications team have been working with WACOSS, the Office of Multicultural Interests, and others on preparing these resources.

**Action 3: Forum Secretariat to share the [WA Government's Managing COVID-19](#) booklet once published, together with links to other key information and resources provided by DPC's COVID-19 Communications team.**

- Members received an update from Mark Burgess, Executive Director, Strategy, Strategy and Partnerships, Department of Communities.
  - Members noted information about the done to date and work upcoming regarding COVID-19-related support to the community services sector, including as targeted webinars, resource sharing, and the procurement and provision of PPE and RATs.
  - Members noted that Communities are also looking into the provision of funding (via reimbursement) for deep cleaning requirements, and the establishment of a platform and process to support community sector surge workforce needs.
- Members received an update from Dr Revle Bangor-Jones, Deputy Incident Controller – Public Health, Human Biosecurity Officer, State Health Incident Coordination Centre (SHICC)
  - Members noted information about the role of SHICC in managing and coordinating the State's COVID-19 response, the relative effectiveness and usefulness of RATs and PCR tests, and the COVID Care at Home policy.
- Members received an update from Stuart Cowie, Executive Director, Emergency Management, State Welfare Incident Coordination Centre (SWICC)
  - Members noted information about the role of SWICC in supporting the Department of Health and the SHICC in coordinating welfare services during COVID-19; the work SWICC have undertaken in preparation for living with COVID-19 in WA; and the types of support services SWICC can provide or connect with vulnerable groups and individuals.

**Action 4: Forum Secretariat to share a one-pager Community Service Support Referral Pathway referral pathway guide to Forum members once received from SWICC.**

## 5. Closing

The Forum Co-Chairs thanked members and guests for their attendance. The next meeting is on 23 May 2022. It is likely this meeting will also be held via MS Teams, however, this will be confirmed closer to the date.

**The meeting closed at 5:00pm**