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Western Australia.*

## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM

### COMMUNIQUE

#### 17 May 2023 – Quarterly Meeting and June 2023 Update

The Honourable Sabine Winton, Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services, attended the meeting to provide a summary of State Budget highlights and key initiatives and advise members of her vision on the future of the Supporting Communities Forum (Forum) beyond its term ending on 30 June 2023.

The Minister outlined State Budget key initiatives relevant to the work of the Forum, including cost of living support for households, increases to the Hardship Utilities Grant Scheme, funding for family and domestic violence initiatives, youth justice prevention and early intervention initiatives and increases to child protection services for children at risk of harm and families.

The Minister acknowledged the significant pieces of work progressed by the Forum and the important role of the community services sector as a key Government partner. The Minister shared her intention to extend the forum at the meeting.

Members noted an update from Carol Innes, Co-Director, Danjoo Koorliny and Rachel Siewert, Deputy CEO, WACOSS on the three-day biennial WACOSS Conference held over 1 to 3 May 2023. The Conference represented an opportunity for community services organisations, Aboriginal organisations, and Government to build better relationships and work together in partnership.

Emily Roper, Director General, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet provided an update on federal policy priorities reflecting on outcomes of the April National Cabinet meeting. Members noted the Australian Government's broad reform agenda in health; the National Disability Insurance Scheme Financial Sustainability Framework to ensure NDIS can continue to provide life-changing outcomes for future generations of Australians with disability; reforms to strengthen renters' rights; development of a national strategy for the care and support economy, energy transition; the upcoming referendum on Constitutional recognition; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

Members also discussed the State Commissioning Strategy (Strategy) and the implementation of the Outcomes Measurement Framework as part of the broader implementation of the Strategy. The Agency Commissioning Plan (ACP) Framework developed by the Department of Finance and endorsed by the Commissioning for Outcomes Deputies Group is supporting government agencies in developing their biennial ACPs and will provide a mechanism to clearly communicate with the community services sector (sector) and government on how line agencies are driving change at a departmental, program and individual service level. Online commissioning tools and resources are now available and information and online training dates for the community service sector will be made available in July.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Working Group provided an update on the important work progressed by members of the working group to build capacity and capability to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles).

At the Working Group meeting on 5 May 2023, Yorgum Healing Services, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC), Department of Communities (Communities) and Parkerville Children and Youth Care (Parkerville) presented examples of implementation of the National Principles to support shared learning across the sector. Members noted examples of organisations implementing the National Principles including SportWest, Shooting Stars, and Uniting WA. The Working Group also agreed to bring together a range of organisations engaged in child-related work for a workshop during this year's Children's Week in October, to showcase

examples of implementation of the National Principles and to further support organisations to create child safe environments. Four Working Group members nominated to work together with Communities to plan the Workshop.

Members were updated on current activities to support organisations implementing the National Principles, including the Child Safe Knowledge Hub a central location for organisations to access and stay up to date with information and resources, and development of a 2023-24 Campaign targeting organisations, children, young people, families, and carers.

Members noted the update from Lisa Rodgers, Director General, Department of Education (Education) on the progress of the Student Wellbeing and Care Taskforce. The Director General acknowledged and thanked Melissa Perry, CEO Communicare for hosting Forum members and providing a tour of [Communicare Academy](#) on 1 May 2023. Forum members noted the opportunities to incorporate learnings from the Academy into Education's framework, to leverage Australian Government funding to support development of wellbeing tools in WA public schools, and to connect with broader school communities to support student wellbeing.



In June 2023, the Hon Minister Winton advised the Co-chairs of the Forum of the WA Government's decision to extend the term of the Forum by an additional six months until 31 December 2023. During the six months, the Forum will focus on National Principles in Child Safe Organisations, State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services, consider how NGOs and agencies without statutory reporting obligations under the *Carers Recognition Act 2004* can better identify, and support staff and/or clients who are unpaid carers, Federal policy opportunities, and Target 120.

During the extended term, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet will undertake an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to appoint members for the next iteration of the Forum beyond the current six-month extension. The Department will notify members and interested applicants when the EOI advertisement is published on the [wa.gov.au](#) and Forum webpage.

The EOI process will commence in August and be open for a duration of four weeks. Final appointments will be made in November 2023 and announced subsequently. Questions on the planned EOI process should be directed to the Forum Secretariat at [SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au).

Dates for the balance two quarterly meetings to be held in September and November 2023 will be published on the [Forum's webpage](#) once confirmed in coming weeks. Meeting notes once endorsed by the Forum, and Communiques from each of the Forum meetings are available on the [Forum's webpage](#). Please feel free to distribute this Communique to your wider network, and if you would like to register to the Forum's mailing list or have general enquiries on the work of the Forum, please email the Forum Secretariat at [SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au).