



## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM Meeting #7 - Meeting Notes and Actions

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 7 December 2022
<b>Time</b>	2:30 – 4:30pm
<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, Julie Waylen, Sandy McKiernan, Debra Zanella, Felicite Black, Justine Colyer, Emma Jarvis, Melissa Perry, Denver D'Cruz, Kelda Oppermann, Mike Rowe, Lisa Rodgers, Dr. David Russell-Weisz, Dr. Adam Tomison, Lanie Chopping, Ralph Addis, Lindsay Hale, 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>	Honourable Simone McGurk, Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services; Olwyn Williams (Minister McGurk's office); Tegan Gibson (Graduate Officer) and Lara Connor (Department of Finance); Nicole O'Keefe (Department of Health); and Gail Beck (Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA).
<b>Apologies</b>	Debra Zanella, Julie Waylen, Emma Jarvis, Lanie Chopping, Emily Roper and Dr. David Russell-Weisz

### 1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

#### 1.1 Acknowledgment of Country

Forum Co-Chair Michelle Scott 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 Michelle Scott welcomed members, guests and acknowledged apologies.

#### 1.3 Confirm the meeting notes and actions from 20 September 2022

Members noted and confirmed the meeting notes from the 20 September 2022 meeting, noting there were no actions arising from the last meeting.

#### 1.4 Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts of interest were noted for this meeting.

#### 1.5 End-of-term review meetings – reflections from members

Forum Co-Chair Michelle Scott thanked members of the Forum for participating in the end of term review meetings and sharing their reflections on the strengths, learnings and challenges of the forum.

A briefing note on the reflections from the feedback has been prepared for the Minister's consideration.

The Forum noted general themes of the feedback:

- Overall, the majority of members indicated that they remain committed and supportive of the Forum and its work. In particular members indicated that the Forum is a unique opportunity to tackle complex challenges that can only be addressed with the input and capability of both sectors.
- The Forum has been successful in providing a platform to discuss complex and important issues and develop practical solutions. This was particularly evident with COVID-19 response. While COVID-19 brought challenges it also created opportunities for the Forum to make a significant contribution to the State's recovery efforts. Members indicated that COVID-19 provided a practical and critical purpose where both the community service organisations and government agencies further came together in a genuine partnership.
- Strengthening Aboriginal and multicultural representation, as well as maximising the expertise of members, was recommended for any future iteration of the Forum.
- Maintaining a focus on the notion of genuine partnership, collaboration, mutual respect, and trust between both sectors was highlighted, however, the relationships that have been established through the Forum provides additional opportunities to consult and partner outside the Forum.

Members were encouraged to reflect on ideas for the future of the Forum to ensure it remains effective and delivers positive outcomes for both sectors.

## **2. STRATEGIC POLICY AND REFORM**

### **2.1 State Commissioning Strategy Implementation Plan and Outcomes Measurement Framework**

Lara Connor, General Manager, Department of Finance, updated members on the State Commissioning Strategy Implementation Plan and Outcomes Measurement Framework.

Members noted:

- The Department of Finance is leading the development and implementation of the Outcomes Measurements Framework which aligns and intersects with implementation of the State Commissioning Strategy, specifically priority 8 coordinated by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
- The Department of Finance will undertake ongoing implementation of the Outcomes Measurement Framework in consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (Office of Digital Government) to consider options for data sharing. Finance will also work closely with other government agencies and the community services sector to develop commissioning capability.
- The State Commissioning Strategy Implementation Plan, in alignment with the Outcomes Measurement Framework, will support prioritisation of Aboriginal empowerment to support commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy. In developing the whole-of-government Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has worked in partnership with and consulted with the Aboriginal community, including the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA.
- Government agencies will continue to integrate the Outcomes Measurement Framework into their community services commissioning practices. Over time, this will embed common community outcomes in service agreement reporting and enable data analysis to identify gaps and overlaps in services.
- The Department of Communities and Mental Health Commission have progressed and completed their Agency Commissioning Plans.
- Information sessions facilitated by the Department of Finance on the Strategy and Implementation Plan for the community services and government sectors. The sector has embraced the Strategy

and the Supporting Communities Forum will be an important Forum to seek feedback to support implementation of the Strategy.

- Governance arrangements to support implementation of the State Commissioning Strategy has been finalised, including the Commissioning for Outcomes Deputies Group and amending the Terms of Reference of the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Working Group.

The Forum noted other progress as part of implementation of the State Commissioning Strategy, including the development of the Agency Commissioning Plan Framework which will further support agencies in developing their Agency Commissioning Plans.

Forum members indicated their strong interest to continue informing the work to implement the priorities in the State Commissioning Strategy Implementation Plan.

## 2.2 The Student Wellbeing and Care Taskforce

Lisa Rodgers, Director General of the Department of Education, updated members on the Student Wellbeing and Care Taskforce.

Members noted:

- The Department of Education has commenced comprehensive consultation to inform implementation of the Taskforce's six goals:
  1. Clarify the expectations of schools in relation to student wellbeing.
  2. Develop guidance and support for schools to implement effective whole school approaches to student wellbeing.
  3. Improve the support for schools to implement effective case management processes including interagency liaison and referral for vulnerable students.
  4. Consider the role and practice of school psychologist and school staff with student service responsibilities.
  5. Consider effective student wellbeing metrics.
  6. Identify the policy changes and system guidance required to support this.
- Consultation with staff and families has occurred in 85 regions throughout WA. The Student Wellbeing and Care Taskforce will help to build on and strengthen supports for student wellbeing, including better connecting and coordinating supports and improving performance data and information. The Taskforce aims to set clear expectations for, and embed, effective approaches to student wellbeing and care across the Western Australia public school system.
- Improving student wellbeing will require a holistic approach across government and community services. Contributing considerations include creating a positive and inclusive school culture, supporting staff, increasing mental health services across the community and promoting teaching and learning which are protective factors for children and young people.

Based on strong interest expressed by members on the topic of Student Wellbeing and Care Taskforce, it was agreed that an in-depth discussion would be beneficial. A one-hour special meeting will be organised to discuss this topic further and contribute to informing this important work undertaken by the Department of Education, including sharing of case studies and learnings from Communicare Academy in Western Australian and youth workers legislation in NSW and Victoria.

## 3 WORKING GROUP REPORTS

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

Members noted an update and discussion by the Working Group which is chaired by Lanie Chopping and Tricia Murray. The Working Group received an update from Dr Stephan Lund (UWA) who has been engaged by the Department of Communities to support the development of a generic Child Safe Code

of Conduct template for use by any state or local government agency, community sector service provider, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation or private industry. The draft template is informed by a jurisdictional scan and early consultation with the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP). The Child Safe Code of Conduct is intended to support the capacity of organisations to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) and responds directly to Recommendation 7.8 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Consultation is underway with broad and ongoing communications being an area of focus to ensure all organisations in the sector are reached. During Children's Week, a range of child safe resources and information were launched to support organisations on an ongoing basis.

The Forum noted that the work of the Working Group must continue to ensure organisations are compliant with the National Principles, regardless of the decisions about the future of the Forum.

#### **4 Address by Minister**

##### **4.1 Honourable Simone McGurk, Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services**

The Honourable Simone McGurk, Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services reflected on the important role and work of the Forum since the commencement of the term from January 2020. While the onset of COVID-19 in 2020 brought its share of challenges it also led to important opportunities for the Forum to make a significant contribution to the State's recovery efforts. The Minister thanked members for their flexibility since 2020 and for its valued contributions and work to achieve and progress the assigned priorities of the Forum during the last three years amidst the challenges of the pandemic.

The Minister particularly acknowledged and recognised the Forum's valued work to inform and help shape important WA Government priorities and initiatives, including the *All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030*, supporting the Department of Health in the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations to vulnerable cohorts and community services workforce; and the State Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan, including the Outcomes Measurement Framework.

The Minister acknowledged the Forum has immense potential and is a unique structure which brings together the expertise and capability of senior leaders from the State Government and community services sector to work collaboratively to address emerging issues and complex challenges to deliver positive outcomes for all Western Australians. At the meeting, Minister McGurk shared her intention to extend the term of the Forum by an additional six months until 30 June 2023, and for the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Working Group of the Forum to continue. During the six months, there is also an intent to further strengthen connections with the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA and the Ministerial Multicultural Advisory Council, working towards broadening the membership of the Forum to include more representation from the Aboriginal, culturally and linguistically diverse and multicultural communities. The Forum will further continue to inform the implementation of the State Commissioning Strategy for community services, and jointly consider the Forum's role, priorities and program of work.

#### **5 Closing**

**The meeting closed at 4.25pm**