



SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM

COMMUNIQUE

13 November 2023 – Final Quarterly Meeting Update

The 13 November meeting marked the final meeting of the current Supporting Communities Forum (SCF), with its term ending on 31 December 2023.

The Co-Chairs welcomed the Honourable Sabine Winton, Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services, who attended the meeting to participate in meeting discussions and to thank members for their valued contributions and important work over the years.

Members noted an update from the Department of Communities (Communities) as the lead agency delivering on priorities of the Target120 program, an early intervention program supporting young people at risk of becoming repeat offenders by addressing underlying issues that lead to offending. Members discussed Target120 locations and program service delivery model and providers, including recent findings, outcomes and the evaluation process commissioned by Communities.

The Department of Communities presented to the Forum on activities relating to the application and administration of the [Carers Recognition Act 2004](#) and ensuring compliance to the Western Australian [Carers Charter](#), alongside representatives from the Carers WA Advisory Council.

The Department of Communities has recently been accredited as a Carer Friendly Workplace. The Carers WA and Communities representatives presented on the benefits of being a carer friendly employer and the three levels of the carer and employer program. Members noted the valuable inclusions and access to key resources and benefits of being an accredited employer.

The Department of Finance provided an update on the implementation of the State Commissioning Strategy. As part of implementing the Agency Commissioning Plan framework, central agencies have reviewed the Agency Commissioning Plans and feedback has been provided to agencies in October. Agencies will finalise their plans for publishing in December 2023. Departments of Treasury and Finance hosted a webinar to talk to the 'community services commissioning and authorising environment', which was well received by the community sector, with more sessions to be held in the new year including for government employees who expressed an interest in the topic. The development of further commissioning education, training and guidance material is also progressing, which includes the recent release of online modules and tools, made available to both sectors.

The Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet as Co-Chair to the Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce provided an update on activities of the Taskforce following the 31 August Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing (CWSW) summit and the sector's key asks across the continuum of prevention through to recovery. The first two priorities of the government have been the establishment of a Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce; and Lived Experience Advisory group. Members noted the work progressed by the Taskforce and together with Hon. Minister Winton acknowledged the urgent and critical need for government and the community sector to partner together to address family and domestic violence and progress this critical work.

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

The Working Group reported on its two major activities:

- The Child Safe Organisations Campaign 2023-24 that was spotlighted in Children's Week (21-29 October 2023); and
- The Child Safe Organisations Forum, that took place on 24 October 2023 with over 160 participants in attendance in person and 100+ participants online, primarily senior management

representatives of community services sector organisations. The Forum raised awareness of the importance of implementing the National Principles and provided some capacity building support for organisations; including keynote speeches on cultural safety in implementing the National Principles and online safety and awareness; two workshops and a panel session.

The CSO Working Group's final meeting of the year is scheduled for December, and members acknowledged and noted the working group's commitment to continue collaborating on capacity building of organisations to implement the National Principles.

Hon. Minister Winton extended her thanks to the Forum Co-Chairs Michelle Scott and Jodi Cant for their leadership over the past four years guiding and stewarding the important work of the Forum. The Minister also thanked and commended members of the Forum for their important contributions and flexibility in refocussing efforts over uncertain times over the years.



The first quarterly meeting of the new Forum 2024 -2025 will be scheduled in March 2024.

Following announcement of Government's decision on membership and priorities of the Forum 2024 – 2025 in December 2023, newly appointed members of the Forum 2024 – 2025 will be notified in January 2024 of governance arrangements and meeting dates ahead of the first meeting.

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.