



**Meeting Minutes and Actions**  
**Supporting Communities Forum**  
Meeting #1 – Tuesday 23 April, 2024

<b>Location</b>	Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street, West Perth – Level 4, Yonga Meeting Room (MS Teams Option)		
<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 23 April, 2024	<b>Time:</b>	2:00 – 4:00pm
<b>Members</b>	Lanie Chopping (Government Co-Chair), Dan Minchin (Community Sector Co-Chair), Sandy McKiernan (Deputy Chair), Jodi Cant, James Christian, Justine Colyer, Matt Fulton, Louise Giolitto, Mark Glasson, Tim Grey-Smith, Jeremy Hubble, Emma Jarvis, Angela Kelly, Maureen Lewis, Kylie Maj, Kelda Oppermann, Sharyn O’Neill, Jenna Palumbo, Melissa Perry, Pauline Roberts, Lisa Rodgers, Emily Roper, Wendy Rose, Mike Rowe, Jo Sadler, Vicki-Tree Stephens.		
<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 Sabine Winton, Minister for Community Services; Julie Armstrong (Minister Winton’s office); Sarah Charbonneau (DPC); Caron Irwin, Hannah Penney and Nikki Kozulin (Communities), Kathryn Abbott and Steven Hill (Department of Finance); Sash Tomson (Health, proxy for Angela Kelly).		
<b>Apologies</b>	Emma Jarvis, Lisa Rodgers and Angela Kelly.		

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

**1.1 Acknowledgement of Country**

Co-Chair, Lanie Chopping, opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

**1.2 Welcome and Conflict of Interest Declarations**

The Co-Chairs welcomed members, new and returning, to the first meeting of the Supporting Communities Forum (Forum) in its new term for 2024 and 2025.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**1.3. Opening Address by Honourable Sabine Winton BA BPS MLA, Minister for Community Services**

The Hon. Sabine Winton, Minister for Community Services attended the meeting and provided an update on the Forum’s past achievements, future directions, and her vision for the Forum over 2024 – 2025.

The Minister acknowledged the recent death of a child in out-of-home care and recognised the profound impact of the tragedy on people who work across Government and the community services sector and the important role of collaborative groups, such as the Forum, in bringing together Government and the sector to achieve improved outcomes for the broader Western Australian community.

The Minister acknowledged previous Co-Chairs, Jodi Cant and Michelle Scott, for their leadership and significant contribution to the Forum. The Minister conveyed her appreciation to the new Co-Chairs, Lanie Chopping and Dan Minchin, and Deputy Chair, Sandy McKiernan, for taking on their respective roles, and

bringing their valuable knowledge and expertise to the Forum. The Minister also welcomed new and returning members and recognised the strong and diverse membership of the Forum, which is reflective of the broader community sector it serves.

The past achievements of the Forum and its significant influence over major policy reforms were acknowledged by the Minister including:

- All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020 - 2030;
- Support provided to the Department of Health in the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations to vulnerable cohorts and to the community services workforce; and
- Further development of the Outcomes Measurement Framework progressed as part of implementing the State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services (August 2022).

The Minister confirmed the Forum's new priorities, which build on the work of the previous Forum and have been endorsed by the WA Government. These are:

- 1. Implementation of the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#), led by the Department of Communities.** Building on previous work of the Forum to develop child safe practices across WA is essential, and the Forum will have an important role in leveraging its expertise and networks to ensure a consistent implementation approach, particularly given the introduction of an independent oversight mechanism governing this work on the horizon.
- 2. Application of the [Carers Recognition Act 2004](#) in WA, led by the Department of Communities.** The Minister expressed her interest in seeing wider support for carer recognition, particularly young carers, who are rarely acknowledged. The Minister urged the Forum to identify opportunities to support implementation of the Act and best practice, across both Government and non-government sectors.
- 3. Implementation of the [State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services](#), led by the Department of Finance.** The Forum's engagement with, and input into, development of the new 2024-2026 Implementation Plan is an important part of continuing to deliver on the State Commissioning Strategy. Engaging with the Forum on the Strategy will also complement and build on previous work, ensuring human and community services are delivered in a coherent, holistic, and coordinated manner.

The Minister expressed her commitment to strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal people and organisations and encouraged the Forum to apply that lens to its future work.

## 2. SCF Forward Program

### 2.1. Member Introductions and Work Program for 2024 - 2025

Forum Co-Chairs reflected on the previous work of the Forum and Co-Chair, Dan Minchin highlighted one of the strengths of the Forum is the ability to come together and build on positive connections between government and non-government sectors.

New and returning Forum members introduced themselves, sharing what had worked well during previous Forums and their hopes for the Forum in its 2024 – 2025 term. Members' hopes for the Forum included progressing meaningful action against the three focus areas; ensuring communities are empowered, consulted and recognised; time to deeply consider issues confronting Western Australians and their communities; and transforming that deep consideration into meaningful, outcomes-focussed action. Members also acknowledged that the 2024-25 Forum marks the first time the philanthropic and sport sectors are represented.

### 2.2. National Principles in Child Safe Organisations

The Department of Communities provided an overview of 2023 achievements of the Child Safe Organisations Working Group (CSO Working Group). Originally convened by the Forum in its previous term, the CSO

Working Group focussed on raising awareness of, and supporting the community to implement, the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) (National Principles). This was achieved by launching a [Child Safe Organisations Knowledge Hub](#), developing the Child Safe Organisations Campaign, and running a Child Safe Organisations Forum in October 2023.

The Department of Communities recognised the importance of the Forum's partnership approach in driving action to date and indicated that development of a new plan will continue to drive implementation efforts in WA.

The Department of Communities thanked and acknowledged previous Co-Chairpersons of the CSO Working Group, Lanie Chopping and Tricia Murray, for their leadership and significant contribution to the group. Members agreed the Working Group approach to this priority had worked well and a new working group should be established to progress this work under the current Forum. The wide-ranging representation on the previous CSO Working Group, including of regional organisations, disability sector organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) was recognised as a strength.

**Actions:**

- **Members to advise the Supporting Communities Forum Secretariat if they would like to nominate as a member or Co-Chair of the CSO Working Group, or if they have recommendations regarding co-opted community or government member nominations.**

### 2.3. Carer's Recognition Act 2004 in WA

Members noted an update from the Department of Communities (Communities) on the implementation of the [Carers Recognition Act 2004](#) (Act) in Western Australia, which establishes the [Western Australian Carers Charter](#) (Charter). The Charter states that:

- Carers must be treated with respect and dignity;
- The role of carers must be recognised by including carers in the assessment, planning, delivery, and review of services that impact on them and the role of carers;
- The views and needs of carers must be considered along with the views, needs and best interests of people receiving care when decisions are made that impact on carers and their role; and
- Complaints made by carers in relation to services that impact on them and the role of carers must be given due attention and consideration.

Communities is an accredited Carer Friendly Employer under the Act, and have fostered community awareness of the Act and Charter through educational campaigns, engaging in advocacy across government and providing secretariat support to the [Carers Advisory Council](#).

Members discussed the organisational benefits of recognising and supporting carers and agreed to establish a Carers Recognition Act Working Group, for which the Department of Communities will provide secretariat support. Members were encouraged to contact the Forum Secretariat should they wish to be involved with this group.

**Actions:**

- **Members to advise the Supporting Communities Forum Secretariat if they would like to nominate as a member or Co-Chair of the working group; or if they have recommendations regarding co-opted community or government member nominations.**

### 2.4. State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services

The Department of Finance presented on the [State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services](#) (Strategy) and its [Implementation Plan 2022-2024](#). Members noted the primary goal of the Strategy is to drive a more holistic and sustainable community services system through a proactive and strategic approach to commissioning.

To date, the Forum has provided valued advice and input on the Strategy and its [Implementation Plan 2022-2024](#), with development and implementation led by the Department of Finance (as project lead) working collaboratively with the Departments of the Premier and Cabinet, and Treasury. The current Implementation Plan concludes in August 2024, and work is underway to update actions under each of the eight priority areas to deliver a 2024 - 2026 Implementation Plan in collaboration with key stakeholders. Acknowledging the Strategy's pre-existing governance and oversight mechanisms, members discussed possible approaches to support actions and current Forum member participation to ensure effective implementation of the Strategy.

**Actions:**

- **Members to advise the Forum Secretariat if they would like to nominate for the State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services priority.**

## 2.5. Quarterly Meetings, Next Steps and Other Business

Members confirmed they received calendar invites for all eight quarterly meetings of the Forum over 2024 and 2025. All meetings will be at Dumas House, level 4 - Yonga meeting room – 2:00 – 4:00pm, unless advised otherwise. Members noted the next meeting of the Forum is on Wednesday, 19 June 2024.

Members agreed to maintain an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA and the Ministerial Multicultural Advisory Council, and to invite the Councils to participate in future Forum quarterly meetings, due to important linkages in work being undertaken by each council group. Members noted that the Forum Co-Chairs will approach both Councils inviting them to nominate a representative to participate in future Forum meetings and discussions, and/ or if they wish to nominate to work on a priority of the Forum.

Members noted that as per the Minister's Statement of Expectations, the Forum is required to provide the Minister with a Work Plan by July 2024 on how members intend to progress work and deliver on the priorities. Further discussions on the work plan will take place at the 19 June meeting of the Forum.

**Actions:**

- **Forum Co-Chairs to reach out to the Co-Chairs of the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA and Ministerial Multicultural Advisory Council.**

## 3. THANK YOU AND CLOSING

The Forum Co-Chairs thanked members for attending the meeting and for positive discussions; and look forward to working with members over the Forum's 2024 – 2025 term.