



Meeting Notes and Actions

Supporting Communities Forum

Meeting #2

Location	Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street, West Perth – Level 14, Yonga Meeting Room (MS Teams Option)		
Date	Wednesday, 19 June 2024	Time:	2:00 – 4:00pm
Members	Lanie Chopping (Government Co-Chair), Dan Minchin (Community Sector Co-Chair), Sandy McKiernan (Deputy Chair), Shirley Bowen, Jodi Cant, James Christian, Justine Colyer, Matt Fulton, Louise Giolitto, Mark Glasson, Tim Grey-Smith, Emma Jarvis, 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, Colin Smith, Vicki-Tree Stephens		
Secretariat	Community Policy Unit - Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) SCF@dpc.wa.gov.au		
Invited Guests	Judith King (Education), Lara Connor and Steven Hill (Department of Finance), Sash Tomson (Department of Health, proxy for Dr. Shirley Bowen), Sarah Charbonneau (DPC) and Julie Armstrong (Minister Winton's office)		
Apologies	Mike Rowe, Sharyn O'Neill, Dr. Shirley Bowen, Mark Glasson and Dr. Pauline Roberts		

AGENDA ITEMS

1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country, Welcome and Apologies

Co-Chair Lanie Chopping opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed members to the second meeting of the Supporting Communities Forum (SCF).

1.2 Conflict of Interest Declarations

No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.3. Confirm the Meeting Notes from 23 April 2024

Forum members endorsed the minutes, noting all actions as complete except one action for the Forum Co-Chairs to reach out to the Co-Chairs of the Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (AACWA) once the new iteration of AACWA is to be appointed in August of 2024.

2. PRIORITIES – WORKING GROUP REPORT

2.1 SCF Work Plan

Forum Co-Chairs provided an update on the Forum's Work Plan, which is currently under development and will outline the Forum's three priority areas, key objectives and deliverables. Membership details of the Carers Working Group, Child Safe Organisations Working Group, and the Delivering Community Services in

Partnership (DCSP) Working Group including discussions at the April and June meetings of the Forum; and priority actions and key deliverables will be provided to the Honourable Sabine Winton, Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and Community Services at the end of July for approval.

Members noted that a copy of the Work Plan will be shared following the meeting with Minister Winton and may be uploaded to the Forum's webpage. Members also endorsed a one-page SCF membership document to be made available on the Forum's webpage.

2.2 Future SCF Agendas

Members noted an update from the Forum's Co-Chairs regarding the structure of future meetings. Consistent with previous agendas, the first half of future meetings will focus on report backs from working groups on the three priorities of the Forum. The second half of future meeting agendas will offer the opportunity for one-off topics to be presented and discussed, including examples of best practice, effective partnerships, and shared learnings. Focus topics can be proposed and presented by both Government and community sector members, within the context of the Forum's Terms of Reference and broader Government reform priorities.

Forum members discussed the types of focus topics which might be raised, within the context of the Forum's purpose and objectives. The importance of sharing insights, successes and opportunities which may be applicable to other areas of work was also discussed.

2.3 Child Safe Organisations Working Group

The Forum Co-Chairs thanked members for their nominations for Co-Chairs, working group members or co-opted members to Priority Working Groups. The Secretariat has worked with lead agencies to establish working groups to deliver on the Forum priorities.

Forum members discussed and noted an update from the Child Safe Organisation Working Group (CSO WG), which is co-chaired by Sandy McKiernan and Dr. Shirley Bowen. The CSO WG, re-established in May 2024, will build on achievements of the previous CSO WG and held its first meeting on 11 June 2024.

Working Group members reviewed existing resources to support organisations to implement the National Principles and identified key themes relating to their implementation across organisations and sectors, such as resourcing, raising awareness and oversight. Building on achievements in 2023, the CSO WG identified three broad priorities for its 2024-25 term:

1. Raising awareness of the National Principles and incoming oversight;
2. Determining readiness for oversight and developing an approach to supporting implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations; and
3. Developing tools and resources to build the capacity and capability of organisations to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Particular areas of focus will also include continued development of the Child Safe Organisations Knowledge Hub, engaging in training and awareness raising activities oriented towards diverse communities, and spotlighting the National Principles during WA Children's Week. The priorities identified will be used to inform development of the Working Group's Project Plan, which will outline tangible activities and outcomes for achievement in 2024-25. Activities will support Western Australian organisations prepare for compliance through cultural and operational change and are likely to include targeting CEOs and Boards of organisations, identifying effective and culturally safe means to disseminate messaging, and creating tools/resources to support an agreed approach for organisational engagement. Forum members noted the robust and diverse membership of the CSO WG. The next meeting of the CSO WG will be held in early August 2024.



2.4 Carers Working Group

Members noted an update from the Co-Chairs of the Carers Working Group (Carers WG), Jo Sadler, CEO of Wanslea, and Maureen Lewis, Commissioner, Mental Health Commission. Following its re-establishment at the direction of the Forum, the Carers WG has been formed to support the application of the [Carer's Recognition Act 2004](#) (Act) in Western Australia.

The Carers WG first met on 12 June 2024 with discussions focusing on the application of the [Carers Recognition Act 2004](#) (Act), current issues relating to the recognition of carers in WA, and the purpose and objectives of the Carers WG in 2024-25.

Forum members were provided with a list of Carers WG members and three revised objectives for the Carers Priority Terms of Reference which included:

1. To provide advice to the Minister for Community Services regarding strategies to increase the recognition of carers in WA, including raising awareness of the *Carers Recognition Act 2004*;
2. To provide an overarching framework to support implementation, build awareness and support compliance related to the Carers Charter as outlined within the Act; and
3. To advise on strategic direction, priorities, actions and timeframes for implementation.

The above Terms of Reference will be considered further and are expected to be endorsed at the second Carers Working Group meeting.

Forum members discussed the importance of raising the profile of the Carers Act across both Government and the community services sector.

2.5 Delivering Community Services in Partnership (DCSP) Working Group

The Department of Finance provided an update on the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Working Group (DCSP WG), an existing cross-sector group responsible for guiding implementation of the Delivering Community Services in Partnership (DCSP) Policy and the [State Commissioning Strategy for Community Services \(SCS\)](#). The DCSP WG is co-chaired by Forum member **Tim Grey-Smith** and **Lara Connor** from the Department of Finance and a non-SCF member. Forum members noted that the Terms of Reference and membership of the DCSP WG are under review, with the current focus on finalising the SCS Implementation Plan 2024-26 for release in August 2024.

Members also noted that the Department of Finance is developing a discrete piece of work to deliver under the SCS Implementation Plan 2022 - 2024 "Priority Two, 'Improve and increase contracting with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations', in collaboration with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and the Council of Aboriginal Services Western Australia (CASWA).

Forum members discussed the role of the DCSP WG in supporting sustainable approaches to commissioning, as well as the need for continual reinforcement of commissioning best practices to ensure implementation is effective and consistent.

3. STRATEGIC POLICY AND REFORM – FOCUS TOPICS

3.1 Whole of Government Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy

James Christion, CEO, CASWA, and Tracey Ninyette, Executive Director, Aboriginal Engagement, DPC, presented to the Forum on the whole-of-government Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy (ACCO Strategy). The ACCO Strategy sets out how WA Government agencies can work collaboratively with ACCOs to deliver effective, place-based, community-led and culturally appropriate community services, and



provides the opportunity to develop genuine partnerships which will improve long-term outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities.

The ACCO Strategy is underpinned by four key focus areas:

1. Relationships between agencies and the sector throughout the commissioning cycle;
2. Service planning and design at the start of the commissioning cycle;
3. Strategic procurement and contracting within the commissioning cycle; and
4. Capability and capacity in both service delivery and commissioning.

Forum members noted that the Commissioning for Outcomes Deputies Group will be the main governance body overseeing implementation of the ACCO Strategy, and that implementation and reporting will form part of arrangements under the State Commissioning Strategy and National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

CASWA will also play a central role in supporting implementation of the ACCO Strategy, with a focus on identifying commissioning opportunities; engaging with ACCOs to identify gaps; highlighting ACCO strengths and opportunities for development; and ensuring ACCOs are appropriately resourced to deliver community services. The need for ongoing effort by all parties to enliven all priority reforms of the National Agreement was highlighted.

Forum members discussed the need for effective and collaborative engagement with ACCOs in order to maximise outcomes, as well as the importance of genuine sector and agency engagement with CASWA to ensure effective implementation of the ACCO Strategy key objectives. Members explored how duplication of efforts should be avoided within the context of concurrent work being undertaken by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. Effective approaches to change management and communication; the importance of coordination, trust and a united focus, including the need to learn from and share best practice examples, was discussed.

3.2 Student Health and Wellbeing Taskforce

Forum members noted an update from the Department of Education on the Student Wellbeing and Care Taskforce (Taskforce), originally launched in response to schools seeking support with the increased mental health and wellbeing challenges among students and the expectations of schools to continually do more to support students experiencing ill mental health. The Student Wellbeing and Care Strategy (Strategy), aims to set clear expectations and embed effective approaches to student wellbeing across the WA school system.

The recently launched Student Wellbeing and Care – Future Directions outlines the role of schools in supporting students experiencing ill mental health. The strategy provides guidance and supports to schools in implementing effective whole-school approaches to student wellbeing, including effective case management processes, evidence-based social emotional learning programs, the role of staff with student services responsibilities, the scope of practice for the School Psychology service, policy change and the development of approaches to the measurement of student wellbeing.

Forum members discussed the importance of connecting with external service providers, the role of effective case management in connecting with those services, and the need to concurrently support staff wellbeing. Interconnections between student wellbeing and abuse and the importance of accurate wellbeing measurement were also raised.

4. CLOSING

The meeting closed at 4:03.

