



SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FORUM

DRAFT MEETING DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Date	Monday 18 June 2018
Time	9:30am – 1:00pm
Location	Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) Level 14, Dumas House, 2 Havelock St, WEST PERTH
Members	Michelle Scott (Chair), Helen Creed (Deputy Chair), Pip Brennan, Suzi Cowcher, Chris Dawson APM, Michelle Andrews (on behalf of Darren Foster), Neil Guard, Timothy Marney, Dan Minchin, Tricia Murray, Vicki O'Donnell, Maria Osman, Carol Pettersen JP, Grahame Searle, Julie Waylen, Ross Wortham, Debra Zanella, Jennie Gray (on behalf of Louise Giolitto).
DPC	Avril Hughes, Lisa Brink, Kim Lazenby, Peter McGlynn, Emily Roper, Sarah Woods, Sarah Norton.
Apologies	Kate George, Jonathan Ford, Louise Giolitto, Sharyn O'Neill, David Russell-Weisz, Adam Tomison, Darren Foster.

MEETING START 9:35am

1. INTRODUCTORY TOPICS

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

On behalf of the Forum, the Chairperson acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land the Forum meets on, the Whadjuk people. The Chairperson acknowledged their continuing culture and contribution to the life of this Region and the strength and resilience of the Noongar people in this land.

1.2 Welcome, opening remarks and apologies

The Chairperson:

- welcomed Debra Zanella and Dan Minchin attending for the first time and the Members and Secretariat introduced themselves;

- noted apologies from Darren Foster, Louise Giolitto, Kate George, David Russell-Weisz and Sharyn O'Neill; and
- advised that Emily Roper from DPC, Kate Ingham and Steven Hill from Department of Finance and Jennie Gray (representing Louise Giolitto as co-chair of the Outcomes Framework Working Group) will attend for specific agenda items.

1.3 Confirmation of the meeting notes from the 18 March 2018 Forum meeting

The meeting notes for 19 March 2018 meeting were approved subject to including Vicki O'Donnell's name in the attendee list.

Action:

1. **DPC to amend meeting notes for 19 March meeting to note that Vicki O'Donnell was present.**

1.4 Actions from the meeting on 19 March 2018

The Chairperson noted that actions be discussed by exception.

All actions are completed except for 4.3.6 Working Group Project Plans for discussion at this meeting and 6.1.9 Code of Conduct.

Action

2. **Members are asked to return their signed copies of the Code of Conduct to Secretariat as soon as possible if they haven't already done so.**
3. **Secretariat to circulate a copy of the Chairperson's letter to the Premier advising of the Forum's work plan to Members**

1.5 Conflict of interest declarations

Pip Brennan declared a conflict of interest to be recorded for noting.

Action:

4. **DPC to update the Conflict of Interests Register.**

2. STRATEGIC POLICY AND REFORM

2.1 Public Sector Reforms within the Department of Communities

Grahame Searle, in his capacity as Director General of the Department of Communities, presented on the changes underway within the new Department in response to the Machinery of Government reforms. The presentation addressed the new departmental structure, its purpose – "collaborating to create pathways that enable individual, family and community wellbeing" – the need to adopt person-centred, locally driven and outcomes focused ways of working (People, Place and Home) and the challenges involved in implementation.

The Department's aspiration is that it will be a policy and values driven organisation which puts people, families and communities at the centre of its activities. The new structure amalgamates the Departments of Child Protection and Family Support and Housing, with Disability Services Commission, Regional Services Reform Unit, the communities component of Department of Local Government and Communities and the regional coordination role of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The new executive structure for the Department of Communities will be implemented from 1 July which will see a single Locality Manager responsible for managing integrated services in each region. Specialist roles will be retained. From 1 July the new departmental structure will be in place in the Kimberley Region, from 1 March 2019 in the Great Southern and the remaining regions anticipated by 1 September 2019.

During the question and answer session, the following broad topics were covered:

- the importance of professional development for staff, particularly around cultural competency and procurement;
- the role of District Leadership Groups which will be more inclusive in their membership and activities;
- the risks associated with such significant change in structure and service delivery such as need to retain safeguards (Languages Services Policy for example) to ensure that people with specific cultural and other needs are still able to access specialist programs, services and funding; and,
- the need for the Department to improve service commissioning in ways that are outcome focused and ensure that the fabric of communities is not adversely affected by changes in areas such as accessible communities and service contracting with the not-for-profit sector.

The Chairperson noted that the Forum will continue the dialogue regarding the changes at Department of Communities and seek opportunities to collaborate.

PowerPoints from Grahame Searle's presentation are at **Attachment 1**.

ACTIONS:

- 5. Secretariat to circulate presentation slides and upload to the Forum webpage.**

2.2 Public Sector Reforms Update

Emily Roper, Director Public Sector Reform at Department of the Premier and Cabinet, provided a brief update on work underway.

The Public Sector Reform team has analysed the themes emerging from a range of review activities including the Machinery on Government Taskforce, CEO Working Groups, the Service Priority Review Final Report, the Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects and the Interim Report of the Sustainable Health Review.

Emily's team is working to align the recommendations of these reports and develop initial recommendations for discrete programs of work. An important aspect of this is to ensure that this work is consistent with the principles developed by the Service Priority Review relating to community, systems and structures, governance and accountability, workforce and leadership.

Agencies are now scoping about 20 initiatives to be considered by the State Government in the near future. Possible priority areas may be initiatives to reduce red tape and data sharing and linkage. Further information on these initiatives and the lead agencies will be available in the coming months.

During the question and answer session the following broad topics were discussed:

- alignment of the reforms within the broader reform agenda itself and in terms of the impacts on the community sector;
- the need for a coordination mechanism in addition to the work of the Public Sector reform team; and

- public sector reform will have positive impacts on the community services sector. For example, there will be flow through impacts from work on measures to foster talent management.

PowerPoints from Emily Roper's presentation are at **Attachment 2**.

Actions:

- 6. Secretariat to circulate presentation slides and upload to the Forum's webpage.**

Morning Tea

2.3 Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy

The Chairperson noted that Minister McGurk has asked the Forum to provide her with comments on the draft Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy (DCSPP) which has been undergoing review.

Tim Marney and Vicki O'Donnell led the discussion as co-chairs of the Procurement Working Group. The Working group met on 7 June to consider the draft policy.

Kate Ingham, Director Strategic Advisory Services Department of Finance (Finance) presented an overview of the review of the DCSPP with the assistance of Steven Hill, Assistant Director Funding and Contracting Services within the Department.

The key points from the presentation were:

- the review commenced in October 2017 and has involved extensive consultation with both government and not-for-profit stakeholders. Following consideration by Government, it's anticipated that the Policy will be implemented from September 2018;
- the purpose of the review is to ensure that it aligns with the Supporting Communities Policy commitments and incorporates changes in community services procurement practice that have emerged since the DCSPP was launched in 2011;
- feedback on the Policy has been generally positive but there are opportunities for improvements in the application of the Policy in relation to consistent application of the policy, improved governance and accountability, the need to incorporate outcome development and measurement, greater involvement of stakeholders including consumers, and better procurement planning in service design, delivery and review.
- specific changes made to the draft DCSPP are:
 - strengthened partnership principles and behaviours;
 - greater emphasis on planning in partnership;
 - increased involvement of service users in planning and co-design;
 - the importance of cultural needs and preferences and service integration opportunities are highlighted;
 - the sustainability of service delivery is an important focus;
 - a streamlined preferred service provider process is outlined;
 - a longer initial service agreement term is highlighted; and
 - a formalised minimum three-month notice period is outlined.
- Finance will support implementation with updated procurement policy guidelines, policies, templates and training and Capacity Building Grants will continue; and
- Finance will also work with the Government Community Services Procurement Leaders Council to reinforce policy direction with public authorities which have responsibility for Policy implementation and to strengthen relationships with the not-for-profit sector.

Tim Marney outlined the feedback provided by the Procurement Working Group. These points and the feedback from Forum Members during the discussion following the presentation were:

- Lack of consistency with regard to the implementation of the Policy across the public sector;
- co-design should be a requirement of agencies, not a suggestion and this intent should be reflected in the Policy document as a direction to agencies;
- clarification of the application of the Policy to public authorities and the reasons for this;
- the partnership principles should be amended to include "... health and well-being";
- increased consultation with the not-for-profit sector in planning of procurement processes, including use of collaborative tendering approaches;
- the importance of having measures in place to protect intellectual property belonging to not-for-profit organisations participating in procurement processes, including co-design;
- the need to have an inclusive 'lessons learned' process to promote improvements in procurement and to reinforce cultural change within agencies, accompanied by training procurement staff to support the Policy intent;
- the need to ensure that the draft Policy is more closely aligned with the Service Priority Review policy directions, specifically the need to clarify the policy application to government agencies versus public authorities and also to ensure that it aligns with the need to reduce red tape and reflects measurable outcomes in procurement processes.
- there is a need for the draft Policy to support and take account of individualised funding approaches and the not-for-profit sector has a lot of expertise to assist Finance to address this;
- the minimum notice period of three months is too short and nine months would be more appropriate;
- a cultural competency orientation is needed to ensure that individuals and groups with particular cultural needs are supported in procurement processes and in service planning, implementation and review;
- cross references to key government policies to be added such as the Aboriginal Procurement Policy and the Buy Local Policy;
- concern that the State Government Aboriginal Businesses Register is not vetted, which allows non Aboriginal owned and operated businesses that have registered to be awarded tenders;
- steps are needed to ensure there is greater consistency across government regarding implementation of the Policy generally including in matters such as the information provided to the sector in briefings for procurement tenders;
- the section headed 'Relationship Based Service Agreement Management' should be modified to highlight opportunities for ongoing review and evaluation in a collaborative partnership based approach, which is more appropriate than the current wording of the draft Policy which indicates that review should occur annually, if not more frequently;
- the description of individualised funding managed by individuals in the section headed 'Other Flexible Arrangements' suggests that this is an income supplement. A wording change is required;
- Specific wording changes proposed are:
 - Page 4 – the wording under the heading "Scope of Application" suggests that the Policy applies to Commonwealth funding and it does not. This wording should be removed;

- Page 8 – the flowchart reference refers to Community Outcomes, however, there is no reference to broader Government priorities or outcomes. The chart should be amended to include this; and
- Page 18 – the language regarding “service agreements should be structured with minimum five year terms” should be amended because Departments must comply with Treasurer’s Instructions and new funding is allocated for a maximum three years and bound by Sunset Clauses that require an evaluation of the program’s outcomes before further funding is considered. The wording should be changed to read “ ... where possible, service agreements should be structured with five year initial terms.”

PowerPoints from Kate Ingham’s presentation are at **Attachment 3**.

Actions:

- 7. Kate Ingham and Deputy Director General to discuss alignment of the DCSP with the Service Priority Review directions out of session**
- 8. Department of Finance to amend the Policy to reflect the points raised during the discussion.**
- 9. DPC to circulate copies of the PowerPoint slides to Forum members and upload to the Forum’s webpage.**
- 10. DPC to circulate the Forum’s comments on the Policy to the Co-Chairs of the Procurement Working group, and the amended Policy for final comment.**
- 11. DPC to prepare collated summary of the Forum’s comments, including from the Procurement Working Group discussion, and a cover letter from the Chairperson to Minister McGurk.**

3. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

3.1 Working Group Updates

The Working Group Co-Chairs spoke about the progress of their respective Working Groups on finalising membership, drafting project plans and also discussed key challenges for their projects. Draft project plans were circulated to members ahead of the meeting, except for the Collaboration Working Group meeting which was provided on the day, and the Procurement Working Group project plan which is still in development.

Jennie Gray (Deputy CEO at the Western Australian Council of Social Service - WACOSS) attended this part of the meeting to provide an update on behalf of the Outcomes Framework Working Group.

Homelessness Working Group

The Working Group has met once and developed a high-level draft project plan. This plan will be further developed during a full-day planning session on 29 June 2018.

This is a complex policy space with work already underway by the Ending Homelessness Alliance, within the Department of Communities and with the Forum sponsored Working Group also having a role. The Working Group has tried to ensure that these groups and their networks are represented and will also focus on the ways in which all parties collaborate.

The Working Group considered that its work may provide models of how procurement can be done differently, with possible application in regions such as the Kimberley.

Outcomes Framework Working Group

The Working Group will give strategic oversight and guidance to the work being carried out by WACOSS and DPC to develop an outcomes measurement framework for the State.

As background, the first stage in developing the outcomes framework is desktop research on approaches used in other jurisdictions such as New South Wales and Victoria, and the work of the Partnership Forum. Following this, the project will develop prototype measures that can be tested with the community services sector. The Working Group will also ensure that consistent language is used across outcome related work currently occurring in WA.

Data Sharing and Linkage Working Group

The Working Group has met once. A key focus of its project at this stage will be to provide comments on the Government's discussion paper on the proposed data sharing legislation.

The Working Group will also develop case studies outlining the difficulties the public experience due to the various barriers that prevent access to data. It will hold a workshop late in 2018 which will address best practice examples in data sharing and linkage.

The project plan will be updated to strengthen the references to the data sharing legislation project.

Our Communities Report Working Group

The Working Group has developed a project plan, but it is yet to resolve how the report will communicate important issues to government from the community and vice versa. While the Working Group will work to set up the intent and parameters for the Report, it does not currently see that it will be responsible for developing the Report for Government.

The Working Group is aware that its work overlaps with other consultation with the community, including work done to inform the Outcomes Framework project. Scheduling should also be considered between these two projects, to leverage the most benefit from both. It will liaise accordingly to ensure that work is not duplicated and consultation with stakeholders occurs in a planned manner.

Communication about the Forum Working Group

The Working Group's preliminary project plan focuses on preparing a communication plan to inform the Community about the work of the Forum, but not implementing the work itself.

The Group is currently looking at the current informing and consulting mechanisms across the regions in WA, including the Regional Engagement Group.

Collaboration Working Group

The Working Group's project plan and discussions are in the preliminary stages. The project plan focusses on debunking some of the myths about collaboration and addressing questions such as:

- What does collaboration mean in practice?
- How does consumer participation occur?
- What can we learn from the failures of collaboration?
- What are some of the barriers that hinder collaboration or prevent it completely?

There was a discussion on the levers used by Government to influence collaboration, for example culture, leadership, systems and policy.

Procurement Working Group

At the Working Group's meeting on 7 June it considered the draft Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy.

There are four main themes for the Group to focus on which will be outlined in its project plan. These are:

1. co-design in the context of procurement policy and practice – how do we do this in practical terms;
2. practice review, which could include best practice commissioning, including accountability issues;
3. outcome based commissioning; and
4. consolidation opportunities – collaborative procurement where there are multiple government agencies contracting the same organisation for similar services.

Actions:

- 12. Working Groups to finalise and begin to implement their project plans with DPC to facilitate linkages across working groups.**

3.2 Working Group Coordination

General discussion occurred about how best to coordinate the activities of the Working Groups to ensure that all Members have the opportunity to participate and to avoid duplication.

DPC will consider ways in which Members can be updated efficiently about new developments relevant to the Forum and the working groups. A Microsoft Teams news page may assist.

DPC will map the project plans with attention to duplication and overlaps, timing of meetings, consultation processes, clear objectives, realistic timeframes and reporting.

Action:

- 13. DPC to set up a Forum Working Group news page with notifications to Members; and**
- 14. DPC to undertake a mapping exercise focusing on all project plans.**

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 Additional Topics for Discussion

The Chairperson noted that she had emailed Members requesting suggestions for additional topics for discussion at the Forum meetings in September and December. The agenda paper highlights the suggestions received.

The following topics were scheduled for discussion in September and December:

- cultural competency – September – led by Kate George and Maria Osman
- the discussion paper on data sharing legislation – led by the Darren Foster and Pip Brennan
- The Sustainable Health Review Report – December - presentation by Robyn Kruk

There was also discussion about the suitability of the following topics:

- individualised approaches and funding noting the State Government's commitment to individualised approaches in the Supporting Communities Policy led by Julie Waylen
- Presentation by Compassionate Communities.

Action:

15. DPC to arrange the above agenda topics.

4.2 Community Resource Centres

Some members expressed concern about reduced funding to Community Resource Centres and the impact this may have on some communities.

The Director General, Department of Communities indicated he would be open to the Department working with these communities to assist in identifying other options.

While members noted the comments made the majority of members expressed the view that advocacy of specific issues such as this was outside the remit for the terms of Reference for the Forum.

4.3 Any Other Business

Discussion about the use of ten minutes of prior to the close of each meeting to review the meeting and the agenda.

Action:

16. DPC to add this item to the agenda for September and for subsequent meetings.

Meeting closed at 1.00 pm