

Western Australian Council on Homelessness

MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday 5 December 2012

Large Executive Conference Room, Level 2
Department for Child Protection
189 Royal Street, East Perth
Meeting commenced at 9:00am

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting:

Present

Mr Stanley Jeyaraj	Independent Chair
Mr Richard Aspinall	FaHCSIA
Professor Paul Flatau	University of Western Australia
Mr Steve Glew	Department for Child Protection
Ms Kathleen Gregory	Foundation Housing
Mr James Hunter	Drug and Alcohol Office
Ms Kedy Kristal	Pat Giles Centre
Ms Judi Morris	Mental Health Commission
Ms Nanette Williams	Pilbara Community Legal Service

In attendance

Ms Hilary MacWilliam	Department of Housing
Ms Maureen Flynn	Department for Child Protection
Ms Sandra Flanagan	Department for Child Protection

Apologies

Ms Genevieve Errey	Department of Housing
Mr Tony Pietropiccolo	Centrecare
Mr Ross Kyrwood	YMCA
Mr Ian Giles	Department of Corrective Services

2. Minutes of meeting held on 7 November 2012

The minutes of the WA Council on Homelessness meeting held on 7 November 2012 were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Parity

Ms Flynn advised that the WA edition of Parity has been completed. This edition has received significant support from the sector and provides a good overview of the homelessness service system in Western Australia. This edition includes an article by Ms Helen Miskell, Department for Child Protection and Ms Genevieve Errey, Department of Housing, providing a comprehensive analysis of the Homelessness system since the early 1980's to the present. The Minister will officiate the launch of the edition on December 12, 2012 at Curtin University. All Council members have been invited.

3.2 Future NPAH arrangements

Mr Glew advised that Minister O'Connor announced that the Council of Australian Governments Select Council on Housing and Homelessness have agreed that, subject to their Cabinet processes, they would enter into negotiations for a new NPAH. While that agreement is being negotiated, a one year transitional partnership agreement for 2013-14 will be established. There is a meeting scheduled with FaCHSIA today to work through some of the details for the transitional period. This will provide some certainty for services. It is understood that the Commonwealth would like to secure the transitional agreement with Western Australia before the State enters Caretaker mode.

4. General Business

4.1 Role of the Council on Homelessness

The Chair advised that the Working Group met to fine tune the Work Plan and the following items were flagged as areas for focus in 2013:

- Progress report on the State Plan 2012-2013
- Planning and development of the next State Plan and Regional Plans
- Future NPAH funding directions
- Identifying emerging issues and trends
- Identifying gaps in service delivery
- Hosting Roundtable sessions with key NGOs to discuss challenges, trends, gaps
- Invite key agencies (not members of the Council) to attend a meeting to discuss issues pertaining to homelessness and how they are/can integrate/engage with the homelessness sector, eg Department of Human Services, Department of Health and Ageing; Local Government Authorities.
- Invite Minister to the Council meetings

The Chair informed members that he met with the Minister recently to discuss these focus areas with her. The members were advised that the Minister welcomed the initiatives. It was agreed that these items would form a major part of the Council's work.

He advised that the Minister has indicated she would like the Council to be more proactive and she would like to receive more information from the Council regarding homelessness. To initiate this, the Minister has agreed to meet with the Chair more often and with the Council twice a year.

Members talked about a key role the Council could pick up by providing a co-ordinated picture of homelessness as there is no peak homelessness body in Western Australia.

They also discussed the possibilities of the Council providing strategic advice to the Minister which adds further to advice she is already receiving from other sources.

Mr Glew will speak to the DCP DG on ways by which the Council may connect with Senior Officers Groups on homelessness. Members were reminded that the Government representatives report to their Director Generals, thus ensuring a flow through of information. Members suggested that government representatives ensure that homelessness is on the agendas for these Senior Officer meetings. It was noted that these Senior Officer meetings are very focused on solving interagency issues, thus the Council would need to be very clear about what we want them to do, and provide possible solutions and potential actions. The Council would need a clear understanding of the terms of reference before requesting agenda items for those groups.

Mr Aspinall advised that his Department is preparing reports consisting of trends analysis based on demographic information. This would be useful information for the Council to consider in terms of emerging trends and potential future gaps in service delivery. Mr

Aspinall agreed to share these reports with the Council. It was suggested that the Council sponsor a more comprehensive look at where the stressors are sitting and how they link to homelessness.

Members generally agreed that the future direction ought to focus on 'big issues' or higher level policy areas with service delivery taking up a lesser role in future Council activities

The Chair asked for a final working group meeting to be held in January to identify actions and desired outcomes for the Council focused on four or five key areas. The Chair asked for nominations to attend this working group meeting. Mr Hunter, Ms MacWilliam, Mr Aspinall and Ms Gregory agreed to attend the meeting.

Mr Glew advised that a part-time FTE may be commencing in February 2013. This person will be tasked with the review of the 2010-2013 State Plan and the development of the next State Plan. Members welcomed this possibility.

It was suggested that a more formal mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of Regional plans be established. Hosting a forum with CEOs and the Department with a focus on the State and Regional plans was identified as an effective mechanism. Members discussed the development of a discussion paper on the progress of the State Plan that could be utilised as a tool for the consultations. Mr Glew suggested that this may be a starting point for the new FTE, the Council would be the Steering Group for the development of the paper and subsequent work on the development of the new State Plan.

<p>Action: Mr Hunter, Ms MacWilliam, Mr Aspinall and Ms Gregory to attend the final working group meeting on the Workplan for the Council – to be held between 15 and 18 January 2013.</p>

4.2 Report from the WACH Future Directions

Discussion on this item was included in the discussion on item 4.1.

4.3 Outcome of the Chairs meeting with the Minister

Discussion on this item was included in the discussion on item 4.1.

4.4 Caretaker Convention

Mr Glew advised that the Department will go into Caretaker mode once the election is called. This will mean only informal information and feedback can be provided during this time. It is unclear at present if the Council will be able to meet during Caretaker mode. The Department, through the Public Sector Commission and Department of Premier and Cabinet, is currently seeking formal advice on this matter. Members will be notified of the decision once it has been received.

4.5 Meeting Dates for 2013

The meeting dates for 2013 have been sent via outlook to everyone's diaries.

<p>Action: Members to ensure meeting dates for 2013 have been inserted accurately into diaries.</p>
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4.6 Other Business

4.6.1 Big Builds

Dr Flatau advised that the *Big Builds* project is progressing. The agencies involved have had several meetings to develop project scope and have met with Lotterywest to discuss funding options. The focus of the research is on the impact the builds have on the internal and external communities, including exit housing, and the difference it makes to people's lives. The learnings will be used for future developments.

5. Next Meeting

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 10:20am. The next meeting date to be advised.