

Western Australian Council on Homelessness

MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday 1 October 2014

Department for Child Protection
189 Royal Street, East Perth
Meeting commenced at 9:00am

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed the Hon Helen Morton, MLC, Minister for Child Protection, Ms Emma White, Director General, Department for Child Protection and Family Support and members to the meeting.

Present

Mr Stanley Jeyaraj	Independent Chair
Ms Genevieve Errey	Department of Housing
Mr Steve Glew	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Ms Kathleen Gregory	Foundation Housing
Ms Helen Grinbergs	Department of Social Services
Dr Robyn Martin	Curtin University
Mr Daniel Morrison	Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Services
Mr Don Tunnicliffe	Swan Emergency Accommodation
Ms Julie Yusop	Albany Youth Support Association

In attendance

Ms Andrea Martin	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Ms Sandra Flanagan	Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Apologies

Ms Ricky Burges	Western Australian Local Government Association
Mr Eric Dillon	Mental Health Commission
Ms Anne Moore	The Lucy Saw Centre/ Women's Council for Family and Domestic Violence Services

Acknowledgement to Country made by the Chair.

2. Guest Speakers

Members were formally introduced to the Minister and the following items were discussed:

- The significant value of the advice and support provided by the Council to the Minister.
- The establishment of roundtable events with the sector, covering the range of issues pertinent to the sector and the means of providing this advice back to the Minister.
- The future of NPAH funding, including the consequences of cessation of funding and the work of the Minister and the Department in communicating the concerns and viable options to the Commonwealth.
- The lack of exit point housing in Western Australia.
- Alternative options for affordable housing, such as accessing under utilised homes with comprehensive safety plans for both people and possessions. On-going consideration options outside the box and mechanisms for de-stigmatising homelessness.

- The White Paper on the Reform of the Federation and the Housing and Homelessness Issues Paper.
- Scenario Planning covering a range of potential options for future funding arrangements.
- Review the schemes providing host families/accommodation to youth/migrants and establish if this would be an option for broader homelessness. Identify the range of issues such as ensuring people do not lose their position on public housing wait lists while in a host home.
- Newly emerging cohort of older single women.
- Government incentives and changes to legislation that may alleviate homelessness such as tax incentives for affordable rental; changes to legislation enabling granny flats to be built and rented to non-family members; transportable homes that can be moved if required.
- Possible role for the Council in modelling, service design and mapping of young people's needs to determine the viability of developing youth supported accommodation in Wooroloo.
- Coordination of services in the regions. Concern regarding Aboriginal people leaving the regions for medical care in the city and becoming stranded, separated from their family and support structures. The communication between services they are utilising requires better coordination, integration and communication.
- The recent health care initiatives in the regions. Information on these new initiatives to be provided to members.

The Chair thanked the Minister for attending the meeting and engaging in open discussion with members.

Action:

- CPFS to provide feedback on the scenario planning process of the broader Partnership Forum, once it has occurred.
- WACH Scenario Planning working group to meet out of session. Agreed members are Ms Gregory (Chair), Ms Yusop, Ms Martin and the Chair.
- Research/information into the Commonwealth scheme regarding new arrivals to Australia to be identified
- Circulate information on health care changes in the regions.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 September 2014

The minutes from the Western Australian Council on Homelessness meeting held on 3 September 2014 were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

4. Business Arising

Statistical profile to be presented at the November meeting.

5. WACH Priority Areas

5.1 State and Regional Plans

Deferred to next meeting.

5.2 Sector Consultation

Deferred to next meeting.

5.3 Policy advice to the minister.

Deferred to next meeting.

6. General Business

6.1 National Homelessness Conference

Mr Glew advised that there was a large Western Australian contingent at the Conference, however the overall attendance was less than in previous years. There was very little discussion on NPAH and NAHA. Internal presenters were looking to Australia to provide guidance for their homelessness issues, as Australia was seen as leading in terms of innovation and the range of successful programs.

6.2 Affordable Housing Strategy

Ms Errey provided an update on the progress of the Affordable Housing Strategy including the following:

- Now at the midpoint of the term of the Strategy. Looking at a range of different options, adding value to move forward with improved outcomes.
- 16,000 housing options have now been delivered.
- An update on the Strategy, including the way forward, will be presented at the Ministerial Roundtable on 22 November 2014.
- Consideration of a shift in focus to:
 - Tax incentives
 - Better uses for land
 - Lazy housing
 - Housing diversity and innovation
 - Increased focus on disadvantage, disability (NDIS) and the aging population.

6.3 Social Housing

Ms Errey provided an update on social housing including the following points:

- The Department of Housing is currently working to identify what can be done better, with no guarantee of new funding.
- Identifying the desired outcomes and who is best placed to deliver them.
- Approximately 20,000 currently on the wait list, 3,000 are priority listed. These lists require redevelopment and improved, more appropriate eligibility criteria.
- The importance of not entrenching people into public housing, the security of tenure can work against an individual's capacity to work and reengage.
- Working towards establishing a flat 25% rent to income ratio.

6.4 White paper on the Reform of the Federation – Housing and Homelessness Issues paper

Deferred to the next meeting

6.5 Other Business

Nil

7. Next Meeting

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 10:35am. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5 November, 2014 at 9am.