

Western Australian Council on Homelessness

MINUTES OF MEETING

Friday 13 May 2011

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 the members to the meeting:

Present

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| Hon Kay Hallahan AO | Independent Chair |
| Mr Richard Aspinall | FaHCSIA |
| Dr Paul Flatau (arrived 9:50) | University of Western Australia |
| Mr Steve Glew | Department for Child Protection |
| Ms Kathleen Gregory | Foundation Housing |
| Mr James Hunter | Drug and Alcohol Office |
| Mr Ross Kyrwood | Mission Australia |
| Ms Judi Morris | Mental Health Commission |
| Ms Leanne Strommen (proxy) | Centrecare |
| Ms Julie Waylen | Department for Child Protection |
| Ms Nanette Williams | Pilbara Community Legal Service |

In attendance

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| Ms Hilary MacWilliam | Department for Child Protection |
| Ms Sandra Flanagan | Department for Child Protection |

Apologies

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| Mr Greg Cash | Department of Housing |
| Ms Heather Harker | Department for Corrective Services |
| Mr Tony Pietropiccolo | Centrecare |

2. Minutes of meeting held 8 April 2011

The minutes of the WA Council on Homelessness meeting held on 8 April 2011 were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Specialist Homelessness Services Collection - update

Ms Waylen advised that training is well underway for more than three hundred staff members in specialist homelessness services across the state. The training will be completed by the end of June.

Two trainers from the non-government sector and five departmental staff members are delivering the training. It is critical that all homelessness services participate in this training and be ready for the change to the new system in July 2011. Data

migration is an important issue and all specialist homelessness services need to transfer open cases to the new system.

The WA Specialist Homelessness Services Information Group, which includes 26 specialist homelessness service representatives, is working to ensure timelines are met. The new system will enable the collection of additional data, particularly about children, and provide more timely data analysis. Both NAHA and NPA services will move to this new system. Some issues are likely to arise as this National IT system goes live. It is a developmental process and staff have been well informed and are confident to progress with the system.

All states are working well to the required timelines. WA has joined with the Northern Territory, with the trainers working together, especially in regards to remote locations.

3.2 National Quality Framework - update

Ms Waylen discussed the importance of a submission by WACH regarding the National Quality Framework. The due date for submissions has been extended to 31 May, 2011.

Members discussed the following:

- Possibility of one option being full accreditation.
- Accreditation is time intensive and doesn't necessarily result in better quality services.
- Do not want services time diverted away from delivery.
- Concern that many do not understand the full extent of the requirements and workload of full accreditation.
- Larger organisations may have the ability, experience and capacity to undertake full accreditation and it is these organisations that have the biggest voice in decision making.
- Concern regarding the potential impact given the diversity and distances in Western Australia.
- Concern that there is a false assumption that capacity results from this process.
- Important that better outcomes for clients result from this process, rather than diverting resources away from clients.
- Quality based on achieving outcomes for clients is required.

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| Action: Ms Flanagan to finalise the submission by WACH regarding the NQF. |
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3.3 Senior Officers Group - update

Ms Waylen advised that the Senior Officers Group works towards integration across Departments. An example of an initiative overseen by SOG is the *Street to Home* project. This is a highly successful initiative involving across government integration.

The Street to Home Program is comprised of three integrated components:

1. Assertive Outreach Workers.
2. A Mobile Clinical Outreach Team.
3. Housing Support Workers.

At total of eight non-government service providers provide assertive outreach and housing support to rough sleepers across the metropolitan area. The Mobile Clinical

Outreach Team is delivered through the South Metropolitan Area Health Service – Mental Health.

The Senior Officers Group meets regularly and ensures on-going momentum and progress for across government initiatives.

4. Update from the Department of Housing

Deferred due to absence of the Department of Housing representative.

Members requested that the recently released *Affordable Housing Strategy 2010-2020: Opening Doors for Affordable Housing* be placed on the June agenda.

Brief discussion took place in which the following points were raised:

- The Strategy provides a strong commitment to supporting social housing with capacity to support people with high needs.
- Early intervention is addressed within the Strategy.
- The Strategy discusses the establishment of an improved Information and Referral service.
- Good principles of engagement and collaboration.
- Concern that detail is limited regarding the principles.
- Continuum Model - assumption that the continuum exists in the market place—what happens if it doesn't work?
- Seems to rely upon other unstated but implied resources.

Members requested that a letter be sent to the Minister indicating that there are concerns regarding the *Affordable Housing Strategy 2010-2020: Opening Doors for Affordable Housing* and request that the Minister contact the Minister for Housing, making a special request for him to speak to this and the *Three Strikes Policy* when he attends the WACH meeting. In the event that the Minister for Housing is not able to attend the WACH meeting that the Director General of the Department of Housing be asked to attend a WACH meeting at his earliest convenience.

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| Action: Letter to the Minister as above. |
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5. Development of Regional Plans to reduce homelessness

Ms Waylen advised that the development of the regional plan discussion papers is progressing well. All draft papers should be completed by the end of June 2011. Discussion papers will be forwarded to members once completed.

6. Future Agenda Items

- Impact of the Modern Award, Federal Equal Pay process
- Tenancy Rights.
- Government departments - homelessness programs.
- Housing issues re Mining Companies.
- Accommodation design for homeless people/families.
- Impact of the change from Job Network to Job Services Australia.
- Guest speaker from EAC Homelessness Task Group.
- Links between specialist homelessness services and health services.

7. General business

7.1 Future Forums

Members discussed possible future forums to be hosted by the Council. It was suggested that the next forum be held in, or near, April 2012 with a focus around best practice. Consideration to be given to including accommodation services.

7.2 Other business

7.2.1 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)

Comprehensive planning is taking place, in partnership with all relevant government and non-government agencies to minimise the impact on people sleeping rough who may be impacted by CHOGM. Safe, alternate accommodation arrangements are being finalised and a clear communication strategy developed.

Services will be looking at the longer term, wherever possible clients will be linked into the Street to Home service providers as the primary response to people sleeping rough.

7.2.2 2011 Budget

Mr Aspinall provided some detail regarding the 2011 Federal Budget and the sector briefing, prepared by Homelessness Australia, will be forwarded to Ms Flanagan for circulation to members after the meeting.

Action: Mr Aspinall to provide the Sector Briefing on the 2011 Federal Budget for circulation to members following the meeting.

7.2.3 Kalgoorlie-Boulder Camp

Mr Aspinall advised that the camps in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder region are currently undergoing a significant clean-up, particularly the *Boulder Camp* and *Silver City*. This is occurring via an agreement between the Local Shire, Bega and Red Cross and a number of CDEP providers. These agencies are working with the residents and local services with a focus on health and well being and providing safe and secure accommodation. Safety issues are being examined and waste disposal mechanisms are being established. A transport strategy is being developed to transport residents to and from health care facilities and, if requested, back to their community.

7.2.4 Coalition of Australian Governments (COAG)

Ms Waylen advised that there is a teleconference later today to discuss the review of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, looking at the performance indicators, due to be completed by August. This is the start of the review processes and mechanisms. Next will be the review of the National Affordable Housing Agreement.

8. Next Meeting

The Chair thanked members for their attendance. The meeting closed at 10:10am.

The next meeting will be held on June 10, 2011 at 9am.