

Western Australian Council on Homelessness

MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday 5 June 2013

Room 8, Level 2
Department for Child Protection
189 Royal Street, East Perth
Meeting commenced at 9:00am

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting:

Present

Mr Stanley Jeyaraj	Independent Chair
Mr Richard Aspinall	FaHCSIA
Ms Genevieve Errey	Department of Housing
Mr Steve Glew	Department for Child Protection
Mr James Hunter	Drug and Alcohol Office
Ms Astrid Kalders	Department of Corrective Services
Mr Ross Kyrwood	YMCA
Mr Tony Pietropiccolo	Centrecare
Ms Nanette Williams	Pilbara Community Legal Service

In attendance

Ms Trina Whitton	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Ms Maureen Flynn	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Ms Sandra Flanagan	Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Apologies

Dr Paul Flatau	University of Western Australia
Ms Kathleen Gregory	Foundation Housing
Ms Kedy Kristal	Pat Giles Centre
Ms Judi Morris	Mental Health Commission

2. Minutes of meeting held on 1 May 2013

The minutes of the WA Council on Homelessness meeting held on 3 April 2013 were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

3. WACH Priority Areas

3.1 State Plans

Ms Whitton advised that work is progressing on the State Plan. At present, the format will remain the same, with the addition of recent reforms and highlighting the way forward. Ms Whitton is meeting with relevant government departments to discuss their input/partnerships in relation to homelessness for incorporation into the Plan. There will be a focus on emerging issues. Given the possibility of significant change occurring after June 2014, members expressed caution over exerting too much time and effort over a plan that may require substantial alterations after June 2014.

3.2 Regional Plans

Ms Whitton reported that three common key priorities identified and undertaken in the 2011/12 regional plans were:

- Directory of services
- One-stop shop
- Community connect events

The process for the development of the next regional homelessness plans has begun. The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS) District Directors have been asked to reconvene their homelessness forums/meetings to review the 2011/12 regional plan by the end of July 2013. Workshops will be scheduled for each region in September/October 2013 to develop the new plan.

It was noted that many regions homelessness forums have continued to meet regularly since their inception.

Ms Whitton has been invited to speak at the next Regional District Directors forum about the regional plans and planning process. Ms Whitton asked members to email her feedback regarding the key messages for the meeting with the District Directors. The forum is scheduled in August 2013.

Members discussed the need to identify the impact of the regional plans on clients and the importance of utilising natural leaders in each region in developing the plans.

Action: Members to email comments to Ms Whitton regarding key messages to address/promote the regional plans.

3.3 Sector Consultation

The Chair and Mr Pietropiccolo agreed to meet outside of this meeting to explore options with regard to engaging and consulting the sector as part of WACH's priority area.

Action: Ms Flanagan to schedule a meeting with the Chair and Mr Pietropiccolo.

3.4 Policy, advice to the Minister, dissemination of information

This item was covered under 5.2 and 5.3.

4. Business Arising

4.1 Regional plan progress reports

Covered under 3.2

5. General Business

5.1 Inner City review

Ms Miskell provided members who were absent at the previous meeting with a copy of the report *Boxes in the Jungle* and provided a brief overview of the ten recommendations from the report identified as strategic (ie requiring large capital input and/or recommendations that are the responsibility of government agencies other than CPFS). The ten recommendations discussed with the view to further consideration are:

Recommendation 1. That DCP investigate options for increasing accommodation for homeless women. This additional provision should not be part of domestic and family violence services, but have a homeless specific focus and provide additional support services. Options to consider include:

- Supporting Wilf Sargent House with its redevelopment proposal and options to move to a mixed target group
- Identifying any other services that may consider changing their target group

- Funding a new homeless women's service – this could be used to increase the capacity in both the homeless and domestic violence sectors as it would inevitably house some women whose homelessness included experiences of violence, and enable refuges to focus on domestic and family violence.

Recommendation 10. That partnerships be developed for the provision of a winter shelter style service with private sector support.

Recommendation 16. That DCP continue to support specialist homeless health services like the Mobile GP and Street Doctor, including supporting any moves to increase the capacity of these services.

Recommendation 18. That collaboration with other government departments and agencies in the sector be sought to establish a specialist homeless employment service that would be able to offer a visiting support service within homeless agencies. This could be done through either:

- Tasking a single JSA in the metropolitan area with this role
- Establishing a specialist team along similar lines as DHS Centrelink's community engagement team
- Seeking employment and training sector funding to establish a specialist service.

Recommendation 20. That DCP support a project to signpost community activities and groups that can connect homeless people back to family, friends and community, particularly on an individual basis.

Recommendation 29. That DoH use DHS Centrelink's community engagement model to develop a service that provides outreach to homeless people.

Recommendation 31. That an action research project be undertaken to coordinate existing outreach services to people in parks in Perth that involves:

- A suitable lead agency
- Regular and consistent outreach sessions
- Engagement style outreach that does not require participation in a program
- Provision of brokerage funding to ensure flexible and immediate responses
- Liaison with local government, particularly rangers and other staff who have regular contact with people in parks
- Documenting gaps in the outreach provision
- Development of protocols and joint ways of working.

Recommendation 32. That City of Perth fund the Nyoongar Patrol to deliver services in parks in its area, along the lines of City of Vincent and City of Fremantle provision.

Recommendation 33. That City of Perth and City of Fremantle review their public facilities to ensure there is access to basics like drinking fountains, toilets and bins.

Recommendation 35. That DCP continue to explore options around night shelter provision, Aboriginal hostels provision and visitors centres to meet the accommodation needs of people in parks.

Discussion ensued and members agreed to categorise the recommendations into three key groups:

- Identification of areas requiring significant reform.
- Reform that can be undertaken immediately, with no additional funding/staffing required.

- Identification of gaps/cohorts that may not be currently catered for by the service system and identifying the reform required to alleviate this.

Members agreed that a Working group be formed to meet out of session and report back to WACH at the next meeting. Ross Kyrwood (Chair), Genevieve Errey, and Richard Aspinall agreed to work with Helen Miskell on this issue and where appropriate identify recommendations that may be forwarded to the Minister.

The Chair thanked Ms Miskell for her work on this review.

Ms Kalders offered to prepare a paper for WACH on homelessness issues as they pertain to people leaving Corrective Services. This will be provided to members and discussed at a future meeting.

Actions: Working group to meet prior to the next WACH meeting. Ms Kalders to provide the paper for circulation prior to the agreed meeting for discussion.

5.2 Summary of recent homelessness data

Ms Cvetkoska provided a paper *Homelessness Data Summary – ABS Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2011*. This was briefly discussed including the challenges regarding the interpretations of the definitions. Members expressed an interest in receiving data analysis making appropriate links to statistically establish the impact of intervention. Members also discussed the importance of receiving this type of information to ensure WACH is able to provide well informed advice to the Minister on all issues pertaining to homelessness. It was noted that the Minister is thoroughly briefed on all reports received by CPFS.

5.3 Chairperson: meeting with the Minister

The Chair advised that he met with the Minister last week. The following issues were discussed:

- The Minister indicated she would like the Council to continue working with the Department on the priority areas as identified by members.
- The Minister is planning to attend the 4 September 2013 meeting of the WACH.
- The Minister expressed an interest in providing some input into the development of the State and Regional Plans.
- The Minister welcomed the opportunity to attend sector consultations where possible and would like feedback on the outcomes from the consultations.
- As well as welcoming policy advice or/recommendations from WACH, the Minister also expressed an interest in receiving feedback on certain issues which she may specifically request from WACH from time to time.
- It was agreed that she may raise issues for discussion at WACH meetings to receive feedback on those issues.
- It was noted at the meeting that the member's appointment terms on the Council will expire at the end of the year. The Minister indicated that she will give due consideration to the future membership of Council prior to the end of the term.

5.4 NPAH

Mr Glew advised that the one year NPAH agreement has been signed and the NPAH evaluation has now been released. Members received this via email this morning.

6. Next Meeting

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 10:40am. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 3 July, 2013 at 9am.