

Western Australian Council on Homelessness

MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday 4 November 2015

Western Australian Local Government Association
170 Railway Parade, West Leederville
Meeting commenced at 11:00am

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Present

Mr Stanley Jeyaraj	Independent Chair
Ms Ricky Burges	Western Australian Local Government Association
Ms Anne Moore	The Lucy Saw Centre/ Women's Council for Family and Domestic Violence Services
Mr Daniel Morrison	Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Services
Mr Don Tunnicliffe	Swan Emergency Accommodation
Ms Julie Yusop	Albany Youth Support Association
Mr Adrian Warner	Housing Authority

In attendance

Mr Steve Glew	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Ms Andrea Martin	Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Ms Liz Brown	Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Apologies

Ms Kathleen Gregory	Foundation Housing
Ms Maureen Lewis	Mental Health Commission
Ms Robyn Martin	Curtin University
Ms Helen Grinbergs	Department of Social Services

Acknowledgement to Country made by the Chair.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 October 2015

The minutes from the Western Australian Council on Homelessness meeting held on 7 October 2015 were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

3. Business Arising

The Chair recommended that business arising from the October meeting be deferred to the next meeting. The recommendation was supported as this would enable discussion about key policy and operational points that were raised by agencies at the Homelessness Networking Forum that was held prior to the Council meeting. As previously agreed, key issues arising from the forum would be presented to the Minister at the December meeting.

Ms Martin informed members that she is currently working through the process of identifying meeting dates and times for the Regional Human Services Manager Forum meetings in order for Council members to attend if possible. She asked for direction on this matter.

Action: Ms Martin to email the group proposed dates for upcoming Regional Human Service Manager Forum meetings. Ms Martin to coordinate attendance by WACH representatives at the meetings to gather feedback on local homelessness trends and issues.

4. Discussion resulting from Homelessness Networking Forum

Growth and emerging issues:

- Family and domestic violence continues to be the main reason for seeking assistance for nearly a third of clients who access specialist homelessness services. There continues to be overrepresentation of Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness.
- There is a shift around the number of older women and families seeking assistance.
- The complexity of clients experiencing homelessness. A combination of alcohol, drugs, and mental health issues is also impacting on the delivery of services and costs associated with managing safety and risk issues including staff training and building design.

Systemic issues:

- Impact of short term funding arrangements. Given the lack of increases in funding, the need to redirect / reprioritise current available funds to areas of most need.
- The sector managing the increasing costs related to complexity of clients and delivery of services. The sector cannot continue to absorb these costs.
- Housing Authority Three Strikes Policy .
- Need for increased government inter-agency collaboration, co-design and development of services with the sector, consideration to place based initiatives and a focus on early intervention / prevention services.

5. Items for discussion with the Minister at the December WACH meeting

- Emerging trends relating to couples, single women, families.
- Continued overrepresentation of Aboriginal People.
- Increased complexity of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and subsequent increase in risks and costs to services.
- Greater need for across government collaboration and funding to support the sector to meet the demand.

Action: Out of session Mr Jeyaraj to meet with Department for Child Protection and Family Support representatives from WACH to finalise items to be discussed with Minister and circulate to members.

6. Next Meeting

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 11:35am. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 December, 2015 at 9am.