

Children's Services Reference Group

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 02 May, 2017
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

Please note: Council's Code of Meeting Practice permits the electronic recording and broadcast of the proceedings of meetings of the Council which are open to the public. Your attendance at this meeting is taken as consent to the possibility that your image and/or voice may be recorded and broadcast to the public.

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Confirmation of Minutes**
 - Children's Services Reference Group - 7 February 2017 1
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Reports**
 - CS17.6 Resignation - St Georges Basin Public School 6
 - CS17.7 Children's Week Celebrations 8
 - CS17.8 Changes to Australian Government Funding 10
 - CS17.9 Governance Training - Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre 11
5. **General Business**

Membership

Clr Gartner - Chairperson
All Councillors
Ms Cathy Ryman
Ms Pamela Arnold
Ms Carmen Carter
Ms Amelia Collins
Ms Julie Flanagan
Ms Alison Grills
Ms Belinda Hibbert
Ms Kimberlie Johnson
Ms Leisa King
Ms Tara Leslie
Ms Stacey Plim
Ms Bernadette Pullen
Ms Kim Stouse-Lee
Ms Kim Thompson
Ms Melissa Wicks
Ms Michelle Wozatka
Ms Melinda Wren
Ms Linda Windley
Ms Tanya McGeachie

Quorum – Five (5)

Purpose

To progress the future planning of facilities and services to meet the growth and development needs of the Shoalhaven:

- Advise Council on issues relating to the education and care of children aged 0 – 12 years.
- Act as a channel to advise Council on new issues and developments affecting children 0 – 12 years.
- Share information on issues affecting children, families and their communities.
- Develop and progress new and innovative ideas which enhance all children's health and wellbeing.
- Advocate for inclusive environments and practices for all children and families in the Shoalhaven.
- Develop and implement a collaborative Child Friendly Cities Plan for the Shoalhaven.

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES REFERENCE GROUP

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 7 February 2017
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4:10pm

The following members were present:

Clr Patricia White
Clr John Levett
Clr Nina Cheyne
Ms Cathy Ryman
Ms Belinda Hibbert
Ms Kim Stouse-Lee
Ms Linda Windley

Others Present:

Amanda Doyle – South Coast Medical Services Aboriginal Corporation
Melissa Andrews – Community Development Officer
Sara McMahon – Governance Unit Business Manager
Jane Lewis – Section Manager, Recreation Community and Culture

Apologies / Leave of Absence

An apology was received from Clr Findley, Ms Kim Thompson, Ms Michelle Woszatka, Ms Tanya McGeachie, Ms Melissa Wicks, Clr Gartner

Election of Chairperson

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Clr White be appointed as the Acting Chairperson for Children's Services Reference Group.

CARRIED

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Reference Group held on Wednesday 11 May 2016 be confirmed.

CARRIED

It was noted that the inclusive play space, Livvi's Place at Mollymook, has been fully funded and construction will begin in the near future.

The Chairperson welcomed everyone and the members introduced themselves.

Declarations of Interest

Cathy Ryman – CS17.3 – Pecuniary interest declaration – Is an employee of Shoalhaven Family Day Care – remained in the room but did not take part in discussion or vote.

PRESENTATION

Sara McMahon, Governance Unit Business Manager provided a presentation on Council's Code of Conduct and Meeting Procedure.

REPORTS

CS17.1 Revised Terms of Reference

HPERM Ref:
D17/21402

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Children's Services Reference Group accept the revised Terms of Reference.
2. Council endorse the revised Terms of Reference of the Children's Services Reference Group

The Committee discussed the revised Terms of Reference and determined that the following changes/additions be made:

Item 3.4 Meetings

- Meetings will be held 4 times each year (one (1) meeting per school term, one (1) of which is to be a planning day)
- The planning day to be held in July each year

Item 3.8 Council Staff Attendance

- Providing administrative support to the relevant Council staff to distribute information between the Committee and the Community Development Team.
- Other staff at the relevant Group Directors' discretion or at the Committee's request can attend meetings as required. Staff, with the exception of the nominated supervisor of Family Day Care Services, have no voting privileges.

Election of Chairperson

- The Chairperson will be elected annually by the Committee at the planning day.

Communication

The chair of the Children's Services Reference Group is the point of contact for communication between Children's Services Reference Group members and Council staff.

Recommendation (Belinda Hibbert / Linda Windley)

That:

1. The Children's Services Reference Group incorporate the changes to the revised Terms of Reference.
2. Council endorse the revised Terms of Reference of the Children's Services Reference Group.

OTHER BUSINESS

CS17.2 Additional Item - Member Attendance at Meetings

The Committee considered the number of members who attended the meeting and agreed that all members should be contacted to confirm their intention to attend future meetings.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Council write to all members:

- Requesting confirmation of their intention to attend future meetings.
- If the current nominated representative is not able to attend future meetings, the organisation to nominate a new representative.
- A copy of the revised Terms of Reference to be provided with the letter.

. CARRIED

CS17.3 Additional Item - Shoalhaven Family Day Care

Jane Lewis provided an update on the recent resolution by Council regarding Shoalhaven Family Day Care and advised that there is no formal decision at this point in time. Staff are currently liaising with Ann Sudmalis MP and consideration is being given to options and opportunities regarding funding. Once all information has been collated, a report will be provided to Council for consideration.

Members discussed the issue and voiced their support for continuation of the Family Day Care service. It was noted that positive feedback about the service continues to be received.

Note: Cathy Ryman declared a conflict of interests – she is employee of Shoalhaven Family Day Care – remained in the room but did not take part in discussion or vote.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Council take into consideration that the Children's Services Reference Group fully supports Council's continuation of Family Day Care Service as a service provider for this well respected service for the community..

CARRIED

CS17.4 Additional Item - Children's Services Directory

The Committee discussed the Children's Services Directory information on Council's website and agreed that, while there is a link to the community directory, it can be difficult to find information such as location of child care centres.

It was noted that the link to "Starting Blocks", a useful website that provides information about child care for parents/carers, should be added to the Community Services "landing page". The Committee discussed the information on Council's website and the possibility of using promotional videos, similar to the one for the promotion of Council's Disability Inclusion Plan.

It was noted that Boori Preschool has vacancies and enquires can be directed to 02 44480200.

RESOLVED (Linda Windley / Kim Stouse-Lee)

That Council:

- No longer print a paper version of the Children's Services Directory and all information be contained on Council's website in a user friendly way.
- Add a link from its Community Services "landing page" on the website to the "Starting Blocks" website and include wording to clearly show that "Starting Blocks" will assist parents/carers to locate child care.
- Re-prioritise the related links on the Community Services "Children" page

CARRIED

CS17.5 Additional Item - Childhood Immunisation Service, Access to Swimming Lessons, Early Links Support ServiceClosure of Council's Free Childhood Immunisation Service

The Committee discussed this issue and Cllr White provided an update to members regarding the closure of the free childhood immunisation service after the December 2016 clinics.

It was noted that the South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation bulk bill clients. The contact phone number for the Nowra clinic is 02 44480200. Cllr Cheyne noted that immunisation is one of the priority areas identified by Coordinare Primary Health, more information can be found on the website <http://www.coordinare.org.au/>.

Nowra Family Support Service - Access to Swimming Lessons

Cllr Cheyne advised that, at its meeting on 31 January 2017, Council resolved to support the Nowra Family Support Services fundraising campaign by donating \$4,000 to assist in providing learn to swim classes for family members.

Beach accessible wheelchairs

Cllr Cheyne advised the Committee that Council recently secured grant funding to purchase beach wheelchairs for adults and children with disabilities. Beach wheelchairs are free to hire at the following locations:

- Holiday Haven Parks at Huskisson Beach, Moona – Moona Creek and Lake Tabourie
- Culburra Beach Surf Club
- Mollymook Beach Surf Club
- Shoalhaven Heads Beach Surf Club
- Sussex Inlet Beach Surf Club
- Palm Beach Greville's Corner Store

More information can be found at <http://shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/My-Community/Community-services/Disability/Beach-Wheelchairs>

Early Links Inclusion Support Service

It was noted that this program is an early intervention support service supporting children, from birth to 8, with a developmental delay or disability. Parents/carers with children who have an undiagnosed or recently diagnosed developmental delay or disability are encouraged to contact Amanda on 02 44480200 with enquiries regarding the service.

It was noted that Early Links is delivered by the South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation for Aboriginal children from birth to 8 years. Ability Links, for age 9 to 64 years, works closely with people with a disability, their family and carers. More information can be found on the website <http://www.abilitylinksnsw.org.au/index.html> and enquiries can be directed to linkers@sothcoastams.org.au or phone 02 4448 0200.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.27pm.

Clr White
ACTING CHAIRPERSON

CS17.6 Resignation - St Georges Basin Public School

HPERM Ref: D17/100243

Group: Finance Corporate & Community Services Group
Section: Human Resources, Governance & Customer Service

Purpose / Summary

To advise of the resignation of the Local Primary School representative Mrs Kathy Rembisz and alternative representative Ms Shannon Chessher (St Georges Basin Primary School).

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Accept the resignation of Kathy Rembisz and Shannon Chessher (St Georges Basin Public School representatives)
2. Write to Kathy Rembisz and Shannon Chessher and thank them for their contribution to the Committee.
3. Contact all Primary Schools in the Shoalhaven to seek interest in filling the vacancy

Options

1. As recommended

Implications: To replace the membership from St Georges Basin Public School with representatives of another primary school in the Shoalhaven.

2. An alternative recommendation to identify other members who may fill the now vacant positions.

Implications: Unknown until an alternate recommendation identified

Background

In March 2015 the Children's Services Reference Group held a planning day. At this meeting it was also recommended that invitations for membership of the group be extended to include up to four (4) representatives from Shoalhaven Primary Schools.

A letter dated 13 May 2015 was sent to all Primary Schools in the Shoalhaven seeking expressions of interest (Eoi) for representatives of the schools. There were only one (1) response was received from St Georges Basin Public School.

It was resolved at Council Ordinary Meeting, Tuesday 23 June 2015 interalia:

"a) Increase the membership of the Children's Services Reference Group to include representatives from:

- *Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health Services*
- *Local Primary Schools*
- *Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups*
- *University of Wollongong, Shoalhaven Campus"*

Council received a written notice of resignation dated Tuesday 14 March 2017 from the Local Primary School representative Mrs Kathy Rembisz and alternative representative Ms Shannon Chessher (St Georges Basin Primary School). The resignation is due to time constraints, conflict with community responsibilities and work responsibilities. The representatives thanked the Committee and Council for the support and wished the very best of luck in the future. No alternative representation from St Georges Basin Public School was provided.

Given the low levels of response to this Eol in the past it is suggested that all Primary Schools in the Shoalhaven are contacted to provide information on this opportunity, explain what membership of the Children's Services Reference Group entails and seek their interest in filling the vacancy.

Community Engagement

The Children's Services Reference Group may decide to seek interest of an alternative school in the Shoalhaven to fill the vacancy through an Eol process.

CS17.7 Children's Week Celebrations

HPERM Ref: D17/125010

Group: Finance Corporate & Community Services Group
Section: Recreation Community & Culture

Purpose / Summary

To seek assistance and input from the Children's Services Reference Group regarding National Children's Week Celebrations 21 – 29 October 2017 for an event to be held at Nowra Showground Thursday 26 October 2017.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That The Children's Services Reference Group collaborate to participate in National Children's Week Event during the week 21 – 29 October.

Options

1. The group collaborates to run a National Children's Week Event.

Implications: With the collaborative effort we can run a holistic event that educates the community about services available to children and families and celebrates children, literacy and the rights of the child.

2. The Group does not conduct a National Children's Week Event.

Implications: A missed opportunity to educate the community about resources available to them and opportunity to celebrate children.

Background

Children's Week is an annual event celebrated in Australia held around the fourth Wednesday in October. In 1996 it was decided to adopt a permanent theme: "A Caring World Shares" as a reflection of Children's Week aims while at the same time acknowledging the designated year on national posters and other printed materials.

A diverse range of events and activities are organised at National, State and Local levels. These focus the attention of the wider community on children, their needs and achievements.

Children's Week celebrates the right of children to enjoy childhood. It is also a time for children to demonstrate their talents, skills and abilities.

Thousands of children and their families around the country are involved in activities and events during "The Week" through the participation of schools, playgroups, childcare, kindergartens, cultural groups, libraries, departments and community groups.

Designated by the nations of the world, Universal Children's Day calls society to a greater response to the plight of many millions of children around the world who are denied the basic

necessities of a happy childhood and the education to develop their capacities. It also calls us in Australia to consider those conditions in society which affect the lives and future of our own children.

The mission of the Children's Week Council of Australia is to encourage, support, guide coordinate and monitor the widest possible participation of all States and Territories in Children's Week, ensuring that programs and activities are open to all children regardless of race, colour, sex, ability, religion, nationality or social origin.

Community Development staff have tentatively booked Nowra Showground on Thursday 26th October 2017 to hold a Children's week event. Council is seeking the committee endorsement of this date and ideas for functions within the event. Alternatively the committee may recommend an alternative location for the celebrations.

The Paint the Town Read Black and Yellow (PTTRBY) Committee have discussed using the event to "hatch" the reading egg as the second stage of the PTTRBY campaign.

Other sections of Council: Swim and Fitness, Library Services, Family Day Care, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre and Environmental Services will be encouraged to participate in the celebrations. Community Development would be the lead team in facilitating the event and look to develop a calendar of events in consultation with sections of Council.

Community Engagement

Promotion of the event through Website, social media and assistance to produce promotional material. Promote any opportunities/programs through Arts, Libraries, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre and Swim and Fitness

Financial Implications

Some funding will be procured from within the existing Community Development budget to help facilitate an event in conjunction with Paint the Town Read. Further funding may be sought externally. This is to be discussed by the Group. The Community Development team would facilitate the event with activities and information stalls provided by internal and external stakeholders.

Risk Implications

Missed opportunity to engage children and to foster community connections.

CS17.8 Changes to Australian Government Funding

HPERM Ref: D17/124976

Submitted by: Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Shoalhaven City Council support communication between Early Childhood Services that have families affected by any changes to funding as they relate to the Work and Study Test which may result in a major reduction in access to Child Care Benefit.

Details

The 'Community Child Care Funding' changes are currently being debated by the Australian Government. Many families that do not pass the Work and Study Test at Centrelink may be unable to access Child Care Benefit for more than 1 day per week. All children benefit from attending high quality Early Childhood Education and Care for two or more per week.

Research proves that those children with additional needs or those that live in traumatic circumstances need more than two days per week high Quality Early Education and Care.

Shoalhaven City Council could assist local Early Childhood Educators to assess the impact of these proposed changes and develop a submission or communicate to government to support funding Early Education that supports all Shoalhaven Children and maintains the Rights of the Child as agreed by the Australian Government in the Covenant.

CS17.9 Governance Training - Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre

HPERM Ref: D17/128408

Select: Cullunghutti Aboriginal Chil and Family Centre

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Shoalhaven City Council receive this for information.

Details

Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre Board of Directors expressed an interest in gaining Qualifications in Governance. Investigations led us to ITeC who were very keen to provide funding and the training. Collaboration with other Aboriginal Community Organisations in the Shoalhaven lead to Board members from the Aboriginal Medical Service, Oolong House and Ulladulla Land Council joining Board Members from Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre. Cullunghutti has been hosting this learning and it is anticipated that on June 2nd these Directors of Boards will receive Nationally Accredited Qualifications in Governance with a focus upon the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Tolres Strait Islander Act (CATSI Act) 2006.

CS17.9