

Children's Services Reference Group

Meeting Date: Monday, 16 October, 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 - 2 May 2017.....1

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Reports

CS17.12 Planning Session Report.....5

CS17.13 Revised Terms of Reference.....17

5. General Business

Membership

Clr Gartner - Chairperson
All Councillors
Mr Col Waller
Ms Leisa King
Ms Kimberlie Johnson
Ms Kim Stouse-Lee
Ms Belinda Hibbert
Ms Tara Leslie
Ms Pamela Arnold
Mr Ian Patrick
Ms Melissa Wicks
Ms Clarita Ferreira
Ms Julie Parkinson
Ms Linda Windley
Ms Cathy Ryman
Ms Carmen Carter
Ms Stacey Plim
Ms Alison Grills
Ms Michelle Wozatka
Ms Amelia Harrison
The Basin Preschool

Quorum – Five (5)

Purpose

The Children's Services Reference Group (Group) advises Council on issues relating to the education and care of children aged 0 – 12 years. It acts as a channel to advise Council on new issues and developments affecting these children. The Group also shares information on issues affecting children, families and their communities, advocates for inclusive environments and practices for all children and families in the Shoalhaven. The Group develops and implements a collaborative child friendly cities plan for the Shoalhaven.

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES REFERENCE GROUP

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 2 May 2017
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.06pm

The following members were present:

Clr Nina Cheyne – Chairperson
Cathy Ryman – Family Day Care
Leisa King – Noah's
Kim Stouse-Lee – Shoalhaven Preschool
Melissa Wicks – Illawarra Area Child Care
Michelle Wozatka - Anglicare
Linda Windley – Community Representative
Tara Leslie – Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child & Family Centre
Nicole Dyball – South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation
Ian Patrick - South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation

Others Present:

Helen Waterhouse – Community Development Officer
Melissa Andrews – Community Development Officer

Apologies / Leave of Absence

An apology was received from Clr Alldrick, Clr White, Clr Findley, Bernadette Pullen, and Alison Grills.

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Cathy Ryman / Linda Windley)

That the Minutes of the Children's Services Reference Group held on Tuesday 07 February 2017 be confirmed.

CARRIED

REPORTS

CS17.6 Resignation - St Georges Basin Public School

HPERM Ref:
D17/100243

The Committee discussed the replacement of this membership.

Action – Staff to contact DEC Network Specialist Facilitator Robyn Dowling – Melissa Andrews

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

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

RESOLVED (Clr Cheyne / Linda Windley)

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.

CARRIED

CS17.10 Additional Item - Membership Audit – Children's Services Reference Group

The Committee discussed various positions that may be open to other organisations that would like to attend the meetings. It was agreed that an audit of membership take place in order to open the membership up to other areas.

It was noted that Bernadette Pullen has resigned from Noahs therefore her position on the Committee would be open to another person from Noahs.

The Committee were advised that Melinda Wren is no longer representing The Basin Preschool and that her name needs to be removed from the membership.

Action – Investigate if the Membership on this Committee is Organisations or if its nominated persons. – Governance

RESOLVED (By consent)

That:

1. An audit of the membership take place and any vacancies that arise, expressions of interest be called through the Community Development Networks
2. A letter be sent to Bernadette Pullen, thanking her for her contribution to the Committee
3. Melinda Wren be removed from the membership and call for a new representative from the Basin Preschool

CARRIED

CS17.7 Children's Week Celebrations**HPERM Ref:
D17/125010**

Helen advised that Council in conjunction with other services are trying to organise an event to Hatch the Paint Shoalhaven REaD Black & Yellow Reading (PSRBY) Egg.

The event will be on Thursday 26 October at the Showground and the Navy may have an input into the event.

Council is calling for services in the area to contribute to the event to provide activities which will coincide with Children's Week Celebrations and the PSRBY egg hatching event.

Council is looking to collaborate and combine the 2 events with support from the community and services. The event would be similar to the Women's Wellness event.

Services may wish to host different activities such as reading tent, gardening tent, activity tent etc and host a picnic day.

The aim is to focus on early years and early childhood.

Action – Send out a save the date and discuss with PSRBY Committee (Including Elders). – Helen Waterhouse

Action – Send out an EOI to Service providers to invite them to have their Children's Week Events promoted in Council's Calendar of Activities. – Helen support the PSRBY Committee to hold an National Children's Week Event

Recommended (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

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

RESOLVED (By consent)

That:

1. The CSRG collaborate with our existing networks to participate in National Children's Week Event (21-29 October 2017).
2. The CSRG support Council's Calendar of activities by hosting Children's Week activities and promoting.

CARRIED

Note: As advised the Paint Shoalhaven REaD, Black and Yellow won't be hatched during NAIDOC week, at the advice of Aboriginal Elders.

CS17.8 Changes to Australian Government Funding**HPERM Ref:
D17/124976**

It was noted that many families won't pass the work and study test, which means that many of the families and children will be affected.

Note: Cathy Ryman left the meeting at 4.51pm

Recommended (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.

RESOLVED (By consent)

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.

CARRIED

Action – Staff to follow up with ECA for other advocacy opportunities. – Melissa Andrews

CS17.9 Governance Training - Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre**HPERM Ref:**
D17/128408

As stated in the report, Cullunghutti are hosting a Cert 4 in Governance Training (12 weeks), which is Nationally accredited.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Shoalhaven City Council receive this for information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the report regarding Governance Training – Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre be received for information.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS**CS17.11 Additional Items**

The following matters were raised as additional Items for information.

Helen – Council has received an invitation to the South Coast Child Wellbeing Network Conference at the Kiama Pavilion on Tuesday 29 August 2017. Tabled the invitation for information.

Helen – Telethon Kids Institute plan to conduct a research project with 4 year olds in the Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands the week of 5 June being 1 in Nowra and 1 in Bowral. It was suggested to the organisation that they also conduct a session in Ulladulla. Seeking advice on suggested venues.

It was suggested that Family Day Care would be an appropriate location.

Note: Melissa Wicks left the meeting at 5.16pm

Kim – NDIS is holding an inclusion information session at Noahs (Mundamia) at 4.00pm on Monday 8 May 2017.

Kim – Northcott PDSP inclusion training is being held on Thursday 8 June 2017 at Archer Resort

Helen – Early Childhood Directorate consultation is on 24 May at 9.00am.

Leisa King – Noahs in conjunction with UOW is looking for support about inclusion and services across the Shoalhaven.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.33pm.

Clr Nina Cheyne
CHAIRPERSON

CS17.12 Planning Session Report

HPERM Ref: D17/253134

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

Attachments: 1. Facilitator's Report - Children's Services Reference Group - Planning session - 26 July 2017 [↓](#)
2. Community Strategic Plan Key Priorities Mapped to UN Rights of the Child - Children's Services Reference Group - September 2017 [↓](#)

Purpose / Summary

To inform the Children's Service Reference Group about the outcomes from the group's annual planning session and request that the Group review and complete the mapping document attached to this report.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Children's Services Reference Group:

1. Receive this report for information.
2. Review and complete the mapping document attached to this report.

Background

At the Children's Services Reference meeting on 7 February 2017 the Group recommended following changes to the terms of reference be adopted

- The group to meet four (4) times per year, 1 in each school term, with one (1) being a planning day.
- The planning day to be held in July each year

The planning session was held on July 26, 3pm – 6pm and was facilitated by Katie Fox from Illawarra Forum. Following is an overview of the planning session:

- Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country, overview & Expectations
- Overview of FACS' Targeted Earlier Intervention Programme Reform
- What do you think is the purpose of the Group? Why do you come?
- Review Terms of Reference
- Identify Priority actions for the year
- Agree Action Plan

The facilitators report is attached to this report for your information and for the Children's Services Reference group to work through during the year.

Actions from the planning day are:

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Map the rights of the child to the Council's Community Strategic Plan	Melissa Andrews	Report to CSRG meeting on October 16 (see mapping document attached for discussion)
Promote and highlight the rights of the child as per the communication strategy	All CSRG	Ongoing
Devise actions that address the issues identified in the mapping of the rights of the child to the Council's Community Strategic Plan	All CSRG	CSRG meeting on October 16 and ongoing

The mapping document attached shows how Shoalhaven City Council's Community Strategic Plan relates to many of the articles in the UN Convention on the rights of the Child. As recommended above and at the planning day, the Group will use this document to identify actions and activities that reflect the purposes of the Group.

The Revised Terms of Reference are contained in a separate report.

Community Engagement

The planning workshop conducted on July 26th 2017 provided the community engagement to inform this recommendation.

At the Planning meeting, the Children's Services Reference Group identified the following stakeholders:

Internal

- ☐ All Council Departments
- ☐ General Manager of Council
- ☐ Directors in Council
- ☐ Section Managers in Council
- ☐ Shoalhaven City Councillors

External

- ☐ Broader Community Services
- ☐ Children
- ☐ Families
- ☐ Services
- ☐ Community
- ☐ Defence Staff
- ☐ Older Community Members

They formed an outline for communication as detailed below:

Internal Communication (how information is shared between members and between council and the CSRG)

- ☐ Feedback from meetings through the Council's Community Development Officer
- ☐ Notice of motion or recommendation
- ☐ Invite department heads of council to meetings
- ☐ Reports
- ☐ Agenda Items

External (how the CSRG shares information with the wider community)

- ☐ Utilise council departments

Policy Implications

The outcomes from the planning exercise will assist the Group to ensure that their future actions and objectives are in line with council's Community Strategic Plan and the UN Rights of the Child and have a clear purpose. It is expected that this will inform strong policy decisions into the future.

Planning Session 26/07/2017 Agenda

Present

Cathy Ryman, Belinda Hibbert, Kim Stouse-Lee, Patricia White, Julie Parkinson, Linda Windley, Ian Patrick, Tara Leslie and Pam Arnold, Melissa Andrews

Facilitator: Katie Fox, Illawarra Forum Inc.

Overview of Session

- Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country, overview & Expectations
- Overview of the TEIP Reform
- What do you think is the purpose of the Group? Why do you come?
- Terms of Reference
- Priority actions for the year
- Agree Action Plan

Following the welcome, participants were asked about their expectations of the session. They were as follows:

- Agree goals for the year
- Make links with other people working with children
- Get clarity around the role of the group
- Brainstorm ideas for actions
- Measurable outcomes

Following the overview of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Reform, there was a brief discussion about how services under this reform might be able to link in with the services at the table.

Purpose

Participants were asked, what they believed to be the purpose of this reference group. They stated the following:

- Feed into the Council's Community Strategic Plan
- Highlight best practice
- Promote successful projects
- Share information
- Advocate for children and for children's voices to be heard in council and in the community
- Support council in consulting with children
- Identify how council can support families
- Represent whole of family
- Have a unified voice and be an agent for change

Terms of Reference

It was agreed not to spend a long time on this as the group had reflected on them a couple of months ago. Participants spent 5 minutes in small groups looking over the terms of reference. There were minor changes which are highlighted in Appendix 1.

Priority Actions for the Year

Participants agreed that the purpose of the group could be broken up under the following headings and the group would identify actions under each of the headings. The headings are as follows:

- Communication
- Research
- Representation and Support
- Advocacy

Actions identified are outlined in the table below.

Communication		
Internal		
WHO?	WHAT?	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Council Departments • General Manager of Council • Directors in Council • Section Managers in Council • Shoalhaven City Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and plans • Emerging Issues • Successes, good projects • Best practice • Rights of the Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from meetings through the Council's Community Development Officer • Notice of motion or recommendation • Invite department heads of council to meetings • Reports • Agenda Items
External		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader Community Services • Children • Families • Services • Community • Defence Staff • Older Community Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation re needs and wants • Goals and plans • Education & awareness re children's services, best practice etc. • Rights of the Child as per the UN Convention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise council departments
Research		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and identify 3 successful projects or initiatives that highlight best practice • Promote and highlight successful projects and best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information about successful initiative with each other at meetings • As per the communication strategy
Advocacy		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for the children's directory with council - clarify what it is and what it contains 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the rights of the child as per the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map the rights of the child to the Council's Community Strategic Plan Promote and highlight the rights of the child as per the communication strategy
Support and Representation to Council		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist council in consulting with families Identify how council can support families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise actions that address the issues identified in the mapping of the rights of the child to the Council's Community Strategic Plan

Evaluation of the Session

Participants said that the session met their expectations and for most it was better than expected. All participants said that they were happy to have a clear direction and one person said that it reminded them of why they do what they do. People felt that they have a clearer channels of communication to and from council. Overall people felt that it was a very productive session.

APPENDIX 1



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Email: council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

For more information contact the Corporate & Community Services Group

Children's Services Reference Group - Terms of Reference

Policy Number: POL17/11 • **Adopted:** 28/02/2017 • **Minute Number:** MIN17.150 • **File:** 46176E • **Produced By:** Corporate & Community Services Group • **Review Date:** 1/12/2020

1. PURPOSE

The Children's Services Reference Group (Group) advises Council on issues relating to the education and care of children aged 0 – 12 years. It acts as a channel to advise Council on new issues and developments affecting these children. The Group also shares information on issues affecting children, families and their communities, advocates for inclusive environments and practices for all children and families in the Shoalhaven. The Group develops and implements a collaborative child friendly cities plan for the Shoalhaven.

2. STATEMENT

Council recognises the value of investing in programs and **is committed to** projects that support children and families and embraces a strategic direction that plans for facilities and services to meet the growth and development of children and families in the Shoalhaven.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

3.1 Relationship to Council

The Group is a Section 355 & 377 Committee of Council (Local Government Act 1993). It is a strategic advisory committee to advocate for and inform Council's decision making process related to children and families in the Shoalhaven.

3.2 Membership

Membership of the Group is open to all members of the community with an interest in advocating on behalf of and protecting the rights of children, and families and/or sharing information and advice to promote the development of children in the Shoalhaven. **Every attempt will be made to ensure that there are representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and the CALD community in the group.**

Any individual, representatives of an organisation, service or agency, who agree to work within the purpose of the Group may become a member. Only one representative from any one organisation may vote.

Membership is by application to the Group.

The Group to have a membership consisting of the following:

- A maximum of 20 community members
- All Councillors

3.3 Quorum

The quorum to be 5 (five) members

3.4 Meetings

- Meetings will be held four (4) times each year – one (1) meeting per school term and one (1) of which is to be a planning day.
- The planning day be held in July each year.
- Agendas and Minutes from previous meetings will be circulated to members at least - seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- The Chairperson will be elected annually by the Group at the planning day and is open to all members of the Group.

3.5 Voting

- Voting and Recommendations are made by consensus and all decisions must be stated precisely for the inclusion of the minutes.
- Where a consensus cannot be reached then the majority of 60% of those present can adopt a motion.
- Alternative views are to be minuted.

3.6 Code of Conduct

All members of the Group are to abide by Council's Code of Conduct.

3.7 Communication

- All issues must be clearly communicated including priorities, limitations and benefits to the community.
- Members of the Group are not permitted to speak to the media as representatives of the Group unless approved by the chairperson.
- Where approval has been given by the Chairperson, views and opinions expressed are those of the Group and not of Shoalhaven City Council.
- The Chairperson is the point of contact for communication between Group members and Council staff.
- Where endorsement is required from Shoalhaven City Council, approval must be sought through the formal processes.

3.8 Council Staff Attendance

Shoalhaven City Council will provide administrative staff who are normally required to attend the meetings of the Group to carry out the following tasks:

- Collate and distribute Business Papers.
- Organise meetings.
- Minute taking, storage and distribution of minutes and associated documents.
- Providing administrative support to the relevant Council staff to distribute information between the Group and the Community Development Team.
- Other staff at the relevant Group Directors' discretion or at the Group's request can attend meetings as required. Staff, with the exception of the nominated supervisor of Shoalhaven Family Day Care Services, have no voting privileges.

3.9 Expectation of Children's Reference Group Members

Pecuniary Interest Returns may be required on appointment and annually as required by the Office of Local Government and Council.

3.10 Responsibility of Council

Council at its discretion may review and change the Terms of Reference, role and structure of the Group.

4. REVIEW

After every Council election.

CSP Key Priorities mapped to UN Rights of the Child

CSP key priorities	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (simplified version)	CSRG Actions
1. Resilient, safe and inclusive communities		
1.1 Build inclusive, safe and connected communities	<p>Article 3 - All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.</p> <p>Article 14 - Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide children on these matters.</p> <p>Article 15 - Children have the right to meet with other children and young people and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.</p> <p>Article 22 - Children who come into a country as refugees should have the same rights as children who are born in that country.</p> <p>Article 23 - Children who have any kind of disability should receive special care and support so that they can live a full and independent life.</p> <p>Article 27 - Children have the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs. The government should help families who cannot afford to provide this.</p>	

	<p>Article 34 - Governments should protect children from sexual abuse.</p> <p>Article 39 - Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.</p>	
1.2 Activate communities through arts, culture and events		
1.3 Support active, healthy liveable communities	<p>Article 6 - Children have the right to live a full life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.</p> <p>Article 31 - Children have the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of leisure activities.</p> <p>Article 33 - Governments should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.</p> <p>Article 36 - Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.</p>	
2. Sustainable, liveable environments	Article 24 - Children have the right to good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy. Richer countries should help poorer countries achieve this.	
2.1 Improve and maintain road and transport infrastructure		
2.2 Plan and manage appropriate and sustainable development		
2.3 Protect and showcase the natural environment		
3. Prosperous communities		

3.1 Maintain and grow a robust economy with vibrant towns and villages		
4. Responsible governance	Article 4 - Governments should make these rights available to children.	
4.1 Deliver reliable services	<p>Article 19 - Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.</p> <p>Article 29 - Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, their cultures and other cultures.</p>	
4.2 Provide advocacy and transparent leadership through effective government and administration	<p>Article 5 - Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of families to guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights properly.</p> <p>Article 42 - Governments should make the Convention known to all parents and children.</p>	
4.3 Inform and engage with the community about the decisions that affect their lives	<p>Article 12 - Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account.</p> <p>Article 13 - Children have the right to get and to share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.</p>	

CS17.13 Revised Terms of Reference

HPERM Ref: D17/253148

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

Attachments: 1. Facilitator's Report - Children's Services Reference Group - Planning session - 26 July 2017 [↓](#)
2. Children's Reference Group - Terms of Reference - September 2017 [↓](#)

Purpose / Summary

To request that the group adopt the reviewed terms of reference as decided upon at the planning session on July 26, 2017.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Children's Services Reference Group adopt the Terms of Reference with the proposed amendments.

Options

1. Adopt the recommendation (as shown in track changes in the attached document).
Implications: This will allow the inclusion of changes to make the Children's Services Reference Group appropriate and current.
2. Do not adopt the changes.
Implications: The Terms of Reference remain unchanged and fail to reflect the current intentions of the Children's Services Reference Group.
3. Make other recommendations.
Implications: Unknown.

Background

The current terms of reference were adopted on 28 February 2017 (Policy Number: POL17/11 • Adopted: 28/02/2017 • Minute Number: MIN17.150 • File: 46176E • Produced By: Corporate & Community Services Group • Review Date: 1/12/2020)

At the planning session held on July 26 2017, the Children's Services Reference Group was given the option to review the terms of reference, the facilitators report from this planning session is attached to the report. The Group agreed to review the terms of reference policy and the proposed amendments agreed to by the Children Service Reference Group were minimal, but identified to reflect the revised vision of the group.

The proposed changes are highlighted below and in the attached Policy:

2. STATEMENT

Council recognises the value of investing in programs and **is committed** to projects that support children and families and embraces a strategic direction that plans for facilities and services to meet the growth and development of children and families in the Shoalhaven.

3.2 Membership

Membership of the Group is open to all members of the community with an interest in advocating on behalf of and protecting the rights of children, and families and/or sharing information and advice to promote the development of children in the Shoalhaven. **Every attempt will be made to ensure that there are representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and the CALD community in the group.**

Any individual, representatives of an organisation, service or agency, who agree to work within the purpose of the Group may become a member. Only one representative from any one organisation may vote.

Membership is by application to the Group.

Policy Implications

Review and amendment of the Children's Services Reference Group terms of reference to make them relevant and up to date and in line with the Groups direction.

Financial Implications

No additional financial implications result from reaffirming the Children's Services Reference Group terms of reference.

Planning Session 26/07/2017 Agenda

Present

Cathy Ryman, Belinda Hibbert, Kim Stouse-Lee, Patricia White, Julie Parkinson, Linda Windley, Ian Patrick, Tara Leslie and Pam Arnold, Melissa Andrews

Facilitator: Katie Fox, Illawarra Forum Inc.

Overview of Session

- Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country, overview & Expectations
- Overview of the TEIP Reform
- What do you think is the purpose of the Group? Why do you come?
- Terms of Reference
- Priority actions for the year
- Agree Action Plan

Following the welcome, participants were asked about their expectations of the session. They were as follows:

- Agree goals for the year
- Make links with other people working with children
- Get clarity around the role of the group
- Brainstorm ideas for actions
- Measurable outcomes

Following the overview of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Reform, there was a brief discussion about how services under this reform might be able to link in with the services at the table.

Purpose

Participants were asked, what they believed to be the purpose of this reference group. They stated the following:

- Feed into the Council's Community Strategic Plan
- Highlight best practice
- Promote successful projects
- Share information
- Advocate for children and for children's voices to be heard in council and in the community
- Support council in consulting with children
- Identify how council can support families
- Represent whole of family
- Have a unified voice and be an agent for change

Terms of Reference

It was agreed not to spend a long time on this as the group had reflected on them a couple of months ago. Participants spent 5 minutes in small groups looking over the terms of reference. There were minor changes which are highlighted in Appendix 1.

Priority Actions for the Year

Participants agreed that the purpose of the group could be broken up under the following headings and the group would identify actions under each of the headings. The headings are as follows:

- **Communication**
- **Research**
- **Representation and Support**
- **Advocacy**

Actions identified are outlined in the table below.

Communication		
Internal		
WHO?	WHAT?	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Council Departments General Manager of Council Directors in Council Section Managers in Council Shoalhaven City Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals and plans Emerging Issues Successes, good projects Best practice Rights of the Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from meetings through the Council's Community Development Officer Notice of motion or recommendation Invite department heads of council to meetings Reports Agenda Items
External		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader Community Services Children Families Services Community Defence Staff Older Community Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation re needs and wants Goals and plans Education & awareness re children's services, best practice etc. Rights of the Child as per the UN Convention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise council departments
Research		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and identify 3 successful projects or initiatives that highlight best practice Promote and highlight successful projects and best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing information about successful initiative with each other at meetings As per the communication strategy
Advocacy		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the children's directory with council - clarify what it is and what it contains 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the rights of the child as per the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map the rights of the child to the Council's Community Strategic Plan Promote and highlight the rights of the child as per the communication strategy
Support and Representation to Council		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist council in consulting with families Identify how council can support families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise actions that address the issues identified in the mapping of the rights of the child to the Council's Community Strategic Plan

Evaluation of the Session

Participants said that the session met their expectations and for most it was better than expected. All participants said that they were happy to have a clear direction and one person said that it reminded them of why they do what they do. People felt that they have a clearer channels of communication to and from council. Overall people felt that it was a very productive session.

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Deering Street, Ulladulla - Phone: (02) 4429 8999 – Fax: (02) 4429 8939

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For more information contact the Corporate & Community Services Group

Children's Services Reference Group - Terms of Reference

Policy Number: POL17/11 • **Adopted:** 28/02/2017 • **Minute Number:** MIN17.150 • **File:** 46176E • **Produced By:** Corporate & Community Services Group • **Review Date:** 1/12/2020

1. PURPOSE

The Children's Services Reference Group (Group) advises Council on issues relating to the education and care of children aged 0 – 12 years. It acts as a channel to advise Council on new issues and developments affecting these children. The Group also shares information on issues affecting children, families and their communities, advocates for inclusive environments and practices for all children and families in the Shoalhaven. The Group develops and implements a collaborative child friendly cities plan for the Shoalhaven.

2. STATEMENT

Council recognises the value of investing in programs and **is committed to** projects that support children and families and embraces a strategic direction that plans for facilities and services to meet the growth and development of children and families in the Shoalhaven.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

3.1 Relationship to Council

The Group is a Section 355 & 377 Committee of Council (Local Government Act 1993). It is a strategic advisory committee to advocate for and inform Council's decision making process related to children and families in the Shoalhaven.

3.2 Membership

Membership of the Group is open to all members of the community with an interest in advocating on behalf of and protecting the rights of children, and families and/or sharing information and advice to promote the development of children in the Shoalhaven. **Every attempt will be made to ensure that there are representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and the CALD community in the group.**

Any individual, representatives of an organisation, service or agency, who agree to work within the purpose of the Group may become a member. Only one representative from any one organisation may vote.

Membership is by application to the Group.

The Group to have a membership consisting of the following:

- A maximum of 20 community members
- All Councillors

3.3 Quorum

The quorum to be 5 (five) members

3.4 Meetings

- Meetings will be held four (4) times each year – one (1) meeting per school term and one (1) of which is to be a planning day.
- The planning day be held in July each year.
- Agendas and Minutes from previous meetings will be circulated to members at least - seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
- The Chairperson will be elected annually by the Group at the planning day and is open to all members of the Group.

3.5 Voting

- Voting and Recommendations are made by consensus and all decisions must be stated precisely for the inclusion of the minutes.
- Where a consensus cannot be reached then the majority of 60% of those present can adopt a motion.
- Alternative views are to be minuted.

3.6 Code of Conduct

All members of the Group are to abide by Council's Code of Conduct.

3.7 Communication

- All issues must be clearly communicated including priorities, limitations and benefits to the community.
- Members of the Group are not permitted to speak to the media as representatives of the Group unless approved by the chairperson.
- Where approval has been given by the Chairperson, views and opinions expressed are those of the Group and not of Shoalhaven City Council.
- The Chairperson is the point of contact for communication between Group members and Council staff.
- Where endorsement is required from Shoalhaven City Council, approval must be sought through the formal processes.

3.8 Council Staff Attendance

Shoalhaven City Council will provide administrative staff who are normally required to attend the meetings of the Group to carry out the following tasks:

- Collate and distribute Business Papers.
- Organise meetings.
- Minute taking, storage and distribution of minutes and associated documents.
- Providing administrative support to the relevant Council staff to distribute information between the Group and the Community Development Team.
- Other staff at the relevant Group Directors' discretion or at the Group's request can attend meetings as required. Staff, with the exception of the nominated supervisor of Shoalhaven Family Day Care Services, have no voting privileges.

3.9 Expectation of Children's Reference Group Members

Pecuniary Interest Returns may be required on appointment and annually as required by the Office of Local Government and Council.

3.10 Responsibility of Council

Council at its discretion may review and change the Terms of Reference, role and structure of the Group.

4. REVIEW

After every Council election.



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For more information contact the Finance Corporate & Community Services Group

Children's Services Reference Group - Terms of Reference

Policy Number: POL17/84 • **Adopted:** 28/02/2017 • **Minute Number:** MIN17.150 • **File:** 46176E • **Produced By:** Finance Corporate & Community Services Group • **Review Date:** 1/12/2020

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Shoalhaven City Council – Children's Services Reference Group – Terms of Reference

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