

Launceston Tamar Valley Communities for Children Council

Terms of Reference (1 May 2017)

1. Introduction

The Launceston Tamar Valley 'Communities for Children' site covers the geographical area of Waverley, Ravenswood, St Leonards, Inveresk, Invermay, Mowbray, Beaconsfield, Mayfield, Newnham, Rocherlea, Lilydale, and East Tamar including the small townships through to and including George Town.

The Launceston Tamar Valley Communities for Children initiative is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services under the Families and Communities Program targeting families with children in the 0 – 12 age group.

Established in 2004, Communities for Children aims to engage families who are not well connected with services, offering them opportunities to participate in community life, and support and assistance in their parenting role in ways that are sensitive and appropriate to their needs, circumstances and wishes.

The Families and Communities Program operates within the context of broader Australian Government priorities including the:

- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020
- Australia's Children: Safe and Well
- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children
- National Compact between the government and the non-profit sector
- Social Inclusion Agenda
- Closing the Gap

The program, as outlined in the Service Provider Guidelines, aims to deliver positive and sustainable outcomes for vulnerable children and families in the Launceston Tamar Valley site as follows:

The Families and Communities Program provides early intervention and prevention support to families, children, young people, volunteers, refugees, migrants and other individuals with special circumstances. Priorities include activities to improve financial wellbeing and capability, strengthen

communities, support migrants to transition to life in Australia, and ensure the lifetime wellbeing of families and children.

The Families and Communities Program aims to strengthen relationships, support families, improve children's wellbeing and increase the participation in community life to strengthen family and community functioning, and reduce the costs of family breakdown. The Program provides a range of services, focussed strengthening relationships, and building parenting and financial management skills, providing support for better community connections, as well as services to help newly arrived migrants in their transition to life in Australia.

The Program also aims to provide a foundation for integrated, community led program delivery that understands and meets local needs and promotes innovation and collaboration. This will include the establishment of a platform for continued improvement in the way DSS does its business, clarifying and strengthening Commonwealth and State/Territory government responsibilities and fostering stronger relationships with civil society and partnering with service providers.

The Program will provide a range of services, predominantly focussed on early intervention, prevention, and support, including assistance for relationship breakdown. These services will be provided to families, children, young people, volunteers, multicultural communities, humanitarian entrants, migrants and individuals with special circumstances.

(Adapted from Department of Social Services Families and Communities Program - National Initiative Guidelines Overview – November 2014).

Communities for Children (CfC) funds non-government organisations to develop and facilitate a whole-of-community approach which builds on community strengths and the existing infrastructure of organisations, networks and resources; and makes use of strong evidence of what works in early intervention. It is implemented through a national framework which allows for tailored approaches at the local level and provides communities with the opportunity to develop flexible and innovative approaches that best reflect their individual circumstances.

CfC targets Launceston Tamar Valley and promotes increased collaboration amongst service providers. Where a need is identified, specific strategies focus on particular target groups (for example, Aboriginal Australians or people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds).

The Launceston Tamar Valley site is required to establish and maintain a CfC governance structure from key stakeholders within the site who work in collaboration with Anglicare as the Facilitating Partner to develop, guide and implement the initiative.

Since the program began the governance arrangements have been regularly reviewed to ensure the membership and Terms of Reference reflect the needs of the Launceston Tamar Valley site.

In early 2015, Communities for Children established a network of Community Committees across the site in six local communities to create stronger links and increase the role and influence of people at a local level. The governance arrangements were then modified to reflect this shift and these Terms of Reference have been revised accordingly.

2. Role and Purpose of the Launceston Tamar Valley Communities for Children Council

The Council provides strategic advice to Anglicare Tasmania as the Facilitating Partner. The primary purpose of the Council is to work in collaboration with Anglicare Tasmania to develop, guide and support the implementation of the CfC Program and achievement of outcomes including:

- representing Launceston Tamar Valley communities in the development, implementation and evaluation of the program
- establishing and developing of a trilateral collaboration across all levels of government as well as within the community sector to work together for the betterment of children and families
- establishing and maintaining networks and relationships and facilitating ongoing community involvement in the program
- informing the project regarding issues facing young children and their families especially as they relate to the priority areas of: healthy young families, early learning and care; supporting families and parents; child friendly communities, and family and children's services working collaboratively
- assisting Anglicare Tasmania as Facilitating Partner to develop a Community Strategic Plan and Annual Activity Work Plan
- monitoring progress, review performance and make recommendations in regard to the Strategic and Annual Activity Work Plans
- appointing a Funding Panel to assess applications for funding and advise the Council on proposed activities and initiatives to be recommended to Anglicare Tasmania for funding

- appointing, (where appropriate), a Probity Officer to oversee the probity and/or provide probity advice to the Council in regard to procurement processes
- drawing upon, and contribute to the research of, evidence or good practice in early childhood and community development
- undertaking the work of the Council in accordance with the Guiding Principles as outlined in Attachment 1

3. The Roles and Responsibilities of Anglicare Tasmania

As the contracted Facilitating Partner, Anglicare Tasmania is responsible to the Australian Government Department of Social Services for the overall facilitation and management of the CfC program including:

- Chairing, convening and provision of secretariat services to the CfC Council
- Implementation of the CfC Strategic and Activity Work Plans
- Management of contractual obligations
- Liaising with the Department of Social Services
- Undertaking research and participating in program evaluation
- Working within a community development framework to identify, support and facilitate sustainable initiatives that will advance the program

4. Convener

The Convener will be the Coordinator, Children and Community Programs, Anglicare Tasmania.

5. Secretariat

The Communities for Children team will constitute the program Secretariat.

6. Membership

The Council is a voluntary group of key stakeholders representing community sector, government and community service providers.

The members of the Council shall be:

- 1 representative of Anglicare Tasmania - Facilitating Partner (Convenor)
- At least 1 representative **from each** of the 6 established Communities for Children Community Committees. We especially encourage Aboriginal participants as well as males and culturally and linguistically diverse people to be involved.

- 1 representative from a Child and Family Centre (rotating between the three Centres in the footprint area)
- 1 representative from the Tasmanian Government
- 1 representative from the Australian Government
- 1 representative from the business sector
- 2 representatives from the Local Government sector (Launceston City Council/West Tamar/George Town Councils)
- 1 representative from the professional child health and well-being sector
- 1 representative from the community sector /Northern Early Years Group

The Council have the power to co-opt additional members (and determine their voting status) as and when required. For example, the Council may co-opt a person in a Probity Advisor role as a member of the Council for a specific period or in an ongoing role.

In addition, the following are ex-officio members (non-voting) of the Council:

- Representatives of Anglicare Tasmania as Facilitating Partner
- Australian Government Department of Social Services as the Funding body
- Interested Community Partners and additional members of local Community Committees

The names of the representatives on the Council are provided in Attachment 2.

7. Duration of Council and Membership

The Council will continue to meet over the life of the program. Membership of the Council will be reviewed annually, usually at the time of reviewing the Strategic Plan and developing the Activity Work Plan.

8. Remuneration

Membership of the Council is voluntary however reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred directly by community representatives whilst undertaking Council business may be reimbursed. Community members who are not paid by another agency to attend the meetings will be reimbursed for petrol expenditure (.78c per km) and their time (\$20 per hr). These reimbursements will be handled by the Project Officer who facilitates the Community Committee they represent.

9. Decision Making and Voting Rights

All members as detailed in Section 6 – Membership - have voting rights.

Council meetings will generally be open with a view to ensuring that key stakeholders have the opportunity to participate and contribute to the CfC program discussions and other deliberations. (See also Section 14 regarding closed sessions).

10. Meeting Frequency

The Council will meet at least bimonthly.

11. Quorum

In order for a meeting to formally proceed, the Convenor, plus a minimum of 5 voting members, including at least 2 non-government representatives, must be present. If no quorum is present, any decisions taken are to be ratified at the next meeting.

12. Absences and the Appointment of Proxies

Each voting member of the Council is required to nominate a proxy. In the event that the nominated Council member is unable to attend, his/her proxy representative should attend.

Membership of the Council (voting members only) may be reviewed by the Council when a Council member and their proxy are absent from three or more meetings in a 12 month period.

13. Police Checks and Working with Vulnerable People Cards

All Council members and proxies must have a current National Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Card (requirement of the CfC Funding Agreement).

14. Probity, Conflict of Interest or Grievance

Council meetings will be managed in a transparent and open manner. All meetings will follow a pre-identified and published agenda and minutes recorded and distributed. Copies of minutes will be made available to each member and to stakeholders and documents to reports included as attachments when required. All financial activity is to be audited through the regular processes of Anglicare Tasmania and all such audited statements will be made available to Council members and identified Department of Social Services representatives.

All members of the Council must comply with the CfC Probity Guidelines and declare any known or potential conflicts of interest prior to their involvement in any procurement process leading to the awarding of funding under the CfC initiative.

In the event of serious disagreement or grievance that cannot be resolved by negotiation through the CfC Convenor, should be referred to Anglicare Tasmania's Deputy CEO, who will work with the

parties to resolve any issues of disagreement or grievance.

15. Privacy and Confidentiality:

Members of the Council will adhere to legislated privacy and confidentiality requirements and the Privacy Act.

16. Select Committees

The Council may form time-limited Select Committees for specific purposes (such as the review of funding applications). The authority of each Select Committee is limited to the provision of a report with recommendations for consideration by Anglicare Tasmania and the Council.

All Select Committees will be established by a motion of the Council which shall detail the chairperson and membership.

17. Closed Sessions

The Council, by simple majority, may decide to close a meeting, including any Select Committee meetings, because any of the following matters are to be discussed:

- personnel matters including complaints
- industrial matters relating to a person or entity
- the health or financial position of any person or entity
- information provided to the Council on the condition it is kept confidential
- trade secrets of an entity
- matters relating to actual or possible litigation

The Convener or Chairperson of the meeting shall request that visitors leave the meeting before entering into a closed session.

Documents that relate to closed session may be excluded from the agenda. Minutes of closed meetings will only include the fact that the matter was discussed but no details of the meeting (unless the Council determines otherwise).

Attachment 1:

Launceston Tamar Valley Communities for Children Initiative: Guiding Principles

The additional principles outlined below have been adopted by the Launceston Tamar Valley Communities for Children Council to guide the implementation and operation of local initiatives.

Such principles include:

- engage families who are not well connected with services through offering opportunities for them to participate in community life
- engage families and children that are at risk due to factors including: drug and alcohol abuse mental health issues; domestic violence and social and financial disadvantage
- promote supportive and nurturing environments and communities where all children matter
- ensure that families are supported in their parenting role in a way that is sensitive and appropriate to their needs, circumstances and wishes

Vision

We also seek to contribute to the bigger agenda of Every Child Succeeds across the footprint area, bringing everyone together to make Launceston Tamar Valley a child friendly region. This movement envisions that by adopting a collective action approach and working together, communities and service providers can ensure that all children are **loved and safe**, have **material basics**, be **healthy, participating, learning** and growing up with a **positive sense of culture and identity** by 2035.

Focus

In addition, the site aims to ensure that services are effectively coordinated in order to offer families and children the best opportunity to engage and access services appropriate to their needs in a timely and integrated manner. The site will ensure that service delivery is flexible to meet the changing needs of the community, enabling families to participate fully in both their own immediate and wider community settings.

The program will adopt a holistic view of the child, and:

- employ prevention and early intervention approaches
- work with individuals and families, also influencing the contexts in which they live
- support key changes for babies, toddlers and children from conception to school entry
- recognise, respect and respond to diversity (including Aborigines, people with disabilities and people from diverse cultural backgrounds) and give additional attention to children most in need

Engagement

In recognising that parents and caregivers are key drivers of the program, Launceston Tamar Valley CfC will work in partnership with them and proactively reach out to ensure all voices are genuinely heard by ensuring that:

- communication with the community is open, jargon free, and clear
- participants are not disadvantaged by involvement (e.g. childcare, transport, or other costs)
- a range of informal and formal structures is used, including morning coffee groups, parent groups, child-care groups and search festivals in each local area
- program funds are used in a planned and flexible manner to resource services and goods, build capacity, provide consultation, support Committee and group functioning, and to address any factors that restrict involvement

Approach

The project will derive from and/or contribute to an evidence base validated by the local community. From this evidence base, the community develops local solutions, having regard for mechanisms already in place, and flexibility of responses to changing need. This approach will:

- ensure all activity is based on knowledge of, about and from the community. Where an Evidence Based Program (EBP) comes from outside a community, to ensure first that it fits well and the community's capacity to respond to any identified need is also supported.
- contribute to community capacity through building on strengths and assets
- ensure that results based accountability is a key feature of the program
- operate and respond in a flexible and timely manner and publicly celebrate and promote achievements as they occur

Service Delivery

The program will develop, coordinate and add value to existing local services and build on, but not duplicate, existing structures and mechanisms.

The Launceston Tamar Valley Communities for Children Council will:

- work from the bottom up, be people first in its orientation and learn as it goes
- be committed to action learning (regular reviews and self-assessment)
- have transparent structures and processes that are communicated clearly to the community
- have clearly articulated protocols around membership and conflict of interest

- look to maximise communication opportunities and linkages within the Council
- be goal focused and work towards outcomes that can be measured

Attachment 2:

List of names of Council member representatives:

Name	Role	Proxy member
BRYANT, Claire	Australian Government representative (Social Work Support Manager, Australian Government Dept. of Human Services)	TBA
CHUGG, Amanda	Waverley/St Leonards Community member	TBA
CROSS, Trudi	Child and Family Centre, George Town	TBA
DAVIES, Michael	Community-based strategic design advisor	TBA
DAWSON, Libby	Professional Child Health sector representative (CHaPS Nursing Unit Manager)	TBA
DUTTON, Sharon	Collective Impact Facilitator, Anglicare	Non-voting
FINGLAND, Doug	Coordinator, Anglicare	Non-voting
GLISSON, Cr John	Councillor, George Town Council	TBA
HALE, Nicole	George Town Community member	Rebecca Grimsey
HOUSTON, Jen	Project Officer, Anglicare	Non-voting
Vacant	Child and Family Centre, Beaconsfield	Heather Green
KUPSCH, Donna	Northern Suburbs Community member	Katie Brooks
NICHOLS, Susan	Tasmanian Government Representative (Learning Services Northern Region)	TBA
O' SIGN, David	Community sector representative (Headspace/Cornerstone CEO)	TBA
ROBINSON, Michelle	Project Officer, Anglicare	Non-voting
ROWLEY, Toni	Department of Social Services Contract Manager	Non-voting
Vacant	Beaconsfield Community member	TBA
Vacant	Ravenswood Community member	TBA

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STOJANSEK, Karina	Alderman, City of Launceston	TBA
WILLIS, Steve	Mowbray/Invermay Community member	TBA
WYLLIE-WATSON, Lynn	Child and Family Centre, Ravenswood	TBA

NB: Coloured blocks denote positions on the Council shared between more than one person