

## Blueprint for Youth Justice Taskforce

### Meeting – 1 December 2017

The Blueprint for Youth Justice Taskforce (the Taskforce) held their fourth meeting on 1 December 2017 to progress the refresh of the ACT Government's 10-year *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22*.

Co-chairs Mark Collis, Executive Director, Children, Youth and Families, Community Services Directorate, and Jodie Griffiths-Cook, ACT Public Advocate and Children and Young People Commissioner led the meeting.

Organisations represented at the meeting were: the ACT Human Rights Commission, the Community Services Directorate (CSD), Aboriginal Legal Services, Legal Aid ACT, PCYC, Anglicare, Woden Community Services, ACT Policing, the Youth Coalition and the Education Directorate.

The draft *Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012-22: Progress Report 2012-17* was presented to the Taskforce for feedback and discussion. The Progress Report provides a snapshot of youth justice in the ACT between 2011-12 and 2016-17 and a summary of progress against key measures. The Progress Report is anticipated to be released in December 2017.

Members further discussed the key areas identified for action and agreed that Restorative Practice is a cross-cutting concept and that the Blueprint should be considered through a Restorative Practice lens, including by embedding this approach in youth justice practice and exploring how this supports progress toward the ACT being a restorative city.

The over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the youth justice system will be raised as part of the ACT Policing general forum with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to be held this month. Feedback will provide guidance for a youth-focused Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander forum to be held in early 2018.

Dr Collis led discussion on key recommendations relevant to the ACT made by the *Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory*, released on 17 November 2017. Members observed that increasing the age of criminal responsibility and the importance of bail support services were key recommendations relevant to the ACT youth justice system. Further work will be undertaken to analyse the 226 recommendations made by the NT Royal Commission, as members recognised that ACT practice already aligns with many of the recommendations.

Members discussed the key areas of work identified in a motion in the ACT Legislative Assembly in October 2017 on recidivism measures in the ACT, committing to consider the issues raised in the motion as part of the Taskforce's work.

# Communiqué



As part of this commitment, CSD representatives spoke to members about information sharing in the context of work currently underway to enhance data analysis and information sharing across the justice system in the ACT and between jurisdictions.

Members also considered research opportunities to better understand the issues faced by young people experiencing homelessness in the ACT, acknowledging that this research will be of benefit to ongoing reform that may mitigate against young people coming into contact with the youth justice system.

The next meeting of the Taskforce is scheduled for February 2018.

For more information, contact the Community Services Directorate on 133 427 or [OCYFS@act.gov.au](mailto:OCYFS@act.gov.au).

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