

Status of Women Advisory Group Meeting Record 19 November 2020



Location:	Zoom Meeting
Date:	19 November 2020
Time	Started at: 2.02pm Closed at: 3.43pm
Chair	Glenn Cannard, Unit Manager Community Partnerships
File Ref	F2017/00176

Present

Sharryn Brownlee, Margot Castles, Sally Jope (left 2.59pm), Sharon Walsh, Glenn Cannard – Unit Manager Community Partnerships (on behalf of Julie Vaughan – Director Connected Communities (joined 3.10pm))

Guests present:

Joe Coyte – The Glen (left 2.38pm)

Council Staff present:

Kerrie Forest – Section Manager Community Planning and Services, Belinda McRobie – Section Manager Community and Cultural Development, Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies

Apologies received: Danielle Habib, Belinda Kimpton, Monique Tovo

Glenn Cannard (Unit Manager Community Partnerships) welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

The Advisory Group acknowledged the absence of the Councillor members given the recent suspension order and passed on their thoughts. Frustrations were noted regarding the lack of a Council representative.

Item 2 Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures were received.

Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record

Item deferred to follow Item 4.

The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 8 September 2020.

The Advisory Group reviewed the Action Log. It was noted there are a few actions to follow up with the Mayor's Office, which may remain pending given the current suspension order.

Item 4 Presentation from Joe Coyte – The Glen

Item moved forward to follow Item 2. Followed by Item 3.

Joe Coyte (Chief Executive Officer, The Glen) provided a presentation on The Glen for Women, which will be the first women specific Aboriginal residential rehabilitation centre in NSW.

The following key points were noted:

- The Glen was established by Ngaimpe Aboriginal Corporation in 1994 to offer residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation for men. Service now being extended with establishment of The Glen for Women.
- Campaign for new centre started in 2015 with celebration of results of The Glen and identified need for women's centre. Growing bed numbers and maintaining quality of program is key focus.
- The Glen has strong family connections and uses a holistic approach (cultural, spiritual, physical, mental) to deliver tailored rehabilitation programs.
- Noted that effective case management relies heavily on having good counsellors (skilled clinical team) and establishing trust with clients.
- Federal funding agreement signed early 2020 to establish first women specific centre for drug and alcohol rehabilitation. DA has since been approved for 20 bed centre. Tender process now underway – building expected to commence March 2021 with goal to open early 2022.
- Over 400 women were involved in Advisory Committee which met monthly to help drive action for The Glen for Women. Process continues to be advised by smaller Operational Committee.
- The Glen for Women will be staffed by women and program will be developed based on existing format at The Glen, but tailored specifically for women.
- There is no current capacity for women with dependent children at the new centre, but this may be opportunity for expansion in future.
- Implications of COVID were considered in proposal and will continue to be addressed in development.
- Good news story that The Glen successfully continued to operate during pandemic and used opportunity to modify some programs.

Item 5 Update on Love Bites Program

Kerrie Forest (Section Manager Community Planning and Services) provided a presentation on the Love Bites Program.

The following key points were noted:

- Love Bites is a national respectful relationship program for young people aged 11-17 years old created by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN).
- Program has been operational in Australia since 2004, and since 2008 in Central Coast high schools.
- Coast Shelter is lead agency responsible for delivery of Love Bites in Central Coast schools, supported by Steering Committee of relevant agencies (e.g. NSW Health, NSW Police, Council).
- Noted that domestic violence is a prevalent issue on Central Coast and education plays important role in mitigating this.

- Program is based on best practice standards for education and is delivered by trained facilitators from local organisations. There are four scaffolded workshops which build on each other as they are delivered each year from Year 7 to Year 10.
- Community impact in 2019/20: program delivered in 15 schools, 1,570 students reached, 54 days of learning, 69 facilitators from 23 partner organisations involved.
- Digital education and support available here: <https://www.lovebitescc.com.au/> and also through mobile app 'Love Bites Central Coast'.
- Program wasn't delivered during COVID but has recently started up again in local high schools. Not currently offered in primary schools, but staff will enquire if this is a possibility.
- Noted that regular training sessions are held for facilitators and those interested should email Love Bites Central Coast (facilitators must be employed by organisation).
- Program also helps with professional development of teachers, who can embed learning in their daily classroom and support students.

Action: Kerrie Forest to check if Love Bites program will potentially be offered in primary schools and report back to Advisory Group.

Item 6 Revisit Priorities and Action Plan for 2020/21

Advisory Group members shared concerns about how things will proceed given Council's current financial position and suspension of the Councillors. Staff confirmed Advisory Groups will continue to meet and provide advice to staff on related matters, and Meeting Records will still be reported to Council.

It was requested that an informal planning meeting be held prior to Christmas (ideally within 2 weeks) to discuss International Women's Day and related actions. Acknowledged that implications of COVID may impact what is achievable, but happy to proceed with planning.

Noted the 16 Days of Activism commences 25 November 2020. Council will be running a series of educational campaigns to highlight awareness of gender-based violence. More info here: <https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/council/news/step-and-speak-out-against-domestic-violence>

There are a few other areas the Advisory Group would like to remain informed about including the Positive Ageing Strategy and Social Inclusion Charter. Suggested it may be worthwhile to have more collaboration between Advisory Groups with similar focus (i.e. Social Inclusion Advisory Committee)

Action: Social Inclusion Charter to be brought to first meeting in 2021 for Advisory Group member information.

Action: Update on Positive Ageing Strategy to come back to Advisory Group when applicable (expected early 2021).

Item 7 Updates from Advisory Group Members

Each Advisory Group member was given the opportunity to share any updates or thoughts they have with the group.

The below key points were noted:

- Members continue to advocate in their various organisations and attend forums about women’s affairs and domestic violence.
- There is still level of anxiety in community and people not continuing with their usual activities due to COVID. Concerns about the impact this has on people’s mental health.
- Noted there have been some recent changes in Department of Education documents. The Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) advised preferred wording is “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” rather than “Indigenous” – this is now written into legal documents.
- Members commended staff for recent interactions at community centres. Noted 2020 has been tough year for all but everyone is committed to moving forward and continuing to achieve positive outcomes.

Item 8 General Business and Close

No general business was discussed.

The meeting closed at 3.43pm.

Next Meeting: **IWD Planning Workshop (informal)**
Thursday 3 December 2020
1pm – 2.30pm
Zoom Meeting

Ordinary Meeting
February 2021 (TBC)