

## **Managers Network Meeting**

**Friday 30 April 2010.**

**9.30am – 12.00**

**Sector Connect, 351 Welling Drive, Mount Annan.**

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Kerri Hill	Housing NSW
Greg Duffy	Community Links Wollondilly
Derek Natrass	Housing NSW
Eileen Huxtable	Camden Connections
Noelene Rudolph	Camden Council
Gay Hardwick	Wollondilly Shire Council
Kylie Richardson	Macarthur Ozanam Centre
Mark Populin	Interchange Wingecarribee
Judith Taylor	MDSI
Helen Byfield-Fleming	Macarthur Sustainable Living
Elaine Turner	Prime Learning

### **APOLOGIES:**

Gloria Bates	MTC
Mathew Ferguson	KTS Coordinator (will be at next meeting)
Margaret McKay	Area Manager, Argyle Community Housing
Sharon Mestem	Odyssey House
Regina Nagy	Traxside
Debbie Roberts	Youth Solutions
Linda Campbell	Camden Council
Trish Fogarty	Junction Works
Mark Pepping	Wingecarribee Council

### **Acknowledgement to Country:**

Jane acknowledged the traditional owners of the land before the meeting began.

### **Welcome & Apologies**

Managers Network now has a rotating chair but there were no volunteers for the April meeting. Jane covered chairing for this meeting. Have volunteers for the rest of the year except December. Volunteer required.

### **Prime Learning:**

Jane welcomed Elaine Turner from Prime Learning who will give a short talk later in meeting on specialised training services.

## **Current opportunities/Information share:**

### **Election Campaign:**

Jane handed out a copy of 'Voting for Fairness' NCOSS Election Platform 2010 – 2011 developed by NCOSS in consultation with the state and regional peaks as the state election campaign. Sector Connect will be reviewing the document in the coming to select a few key issues relevant to the local region to campaign on. The idea is to work with current and potential candidates to influence party policy and use particular "weeks" e.g. youth week to raise issues publicly and through the media. Sector Connect is keen to get feedback from the Managers Network on some key issues to push through this campaign. Jane to circulate the full document to the network for feedback at the next meeting

### **Local Jobs Australia seminars 18-5-10:**

Sector Connect organised seminar with Jobs Australia for Campbelltown to present the changes to the Award with the new Fair Work Act. It is important that if you are a Manager and are not clear about the changes that you attend a seminar as changes have begun and will be implemented through to July 2011. It would be helpful if Management Committee members also attended if they make decisions relating to staff and Awards.

### **ABFS Socialworks Workshops – HR/Recruitment.**

This is a branch of Barnardo's – they do all jobs from admin all the way through. Keen to do some HR & Recruitment workshops to fill some knowledge gaps. Jane asked if any managers were interested – agreed that 'Free' is important. It was agreed that smaller community organisations may benefit as advertising in general (even in local paper) is expensive and that this may help by also saving time – time is money. Maybe smaller NGOS - Management committee would be interested in their services.

### **ASU Petition:**

ASU campaign / equal wage case has become more important with the new Fair Work Act which decreases some of the Award hourly pay rates in July 2011 through changes to the classifications (some grades losing up to \$3 per hour).

ASU petition to increase NSW SACS Award equal to the increases awarded in Queensland handed around the room for those that wished to sign it. Jane will then do letter and send off. Cards also passed out to all to post to Julia Gillard direct.

It was suggested that funding/comparing wage against what we do is a problem. Also waiting on the release of the Henry Law Review with a number of rumours going around this could mean further changes to the salary situation e.g. removal of salary sacrificing. Sector Connect has been trying to follow up some of these issues. Due to the strong response from the sector ACOSS and NCOSS suggested it was unlikely salary sacrificing would be affected. Jane will notify the network as soon as there is any definite news. It was suggested that it is up to the individual organisations how they pay their staff but we must watch the outcome of the review.

## **OTHER:**

### **HOUSING:**

Derek Natrass gave a complete update on his department of HNSW "Access & Demand". They have a team of 17 (soon to be 18). They cover Glenfield in the North to Appin in the East, Leppington in the West and Moss Vale in the South. They handle homeless people, private rental market, applications for priority housing, bonds/rental arrears etc.

The new initiative "Housing Pathways" announced and brought into action on 27/4/2010 is a one entry point for both HNSW and community housing.

Issues were raised about availability of HNSW services in Wingecarribee. Since 7/9/2005 housing stock was transferred from Goulburn to Macarthur (300 odd to manage) and two years later transferred to Argyle Community Housing with limited access to the community housing. An agreement with Stafford Cottage was established to help clients with forms that were then sent to Campbelltown to be processed as a way of helping families due to distance. Workload at Stafford Cottage was getting quite large as more and more people finding it difficult to get rental property due to the 'housing crises. Clients will now be referred to Argyle Community Housing as one entry point to all housing providers.

As of 27/4/10 we now have 'Common Access' – copy of new policy procedures was handed out to all in attendance. As community housing is very much the way of the future there will now be one common application form, anyone needing assistance can go to NSW Housing office or one of the 28 Community Providers – The minister has called it 'No wrong door approach'. 'One Access' for all is the biggest change to public housing in NSW. Clients will fill in one application form, one initial interview and notified of their options. This means one visit rather than 3 or 4. All waiting lists have been merged and the points system will no longer apply – there will be a few more changes to come – new system will be managed by Community Housing Sector.

Jane advised of her own experience in private rental market recently and just how difficult it was. It is a fact that more rental properties are needed.

It was advised by attendee that this Common Access would be good for clients who currently need 5 to 10 application forms completed – will take away a lot of the stress.

Derek was asked how they operate in regard to buying land etc. – He advised that this is totally different area and therefore unable to comment.

### **Local Government Integrated Planning & Reporting.**

All local government are moving to this process over a 3 year period which involves longer term planning to increase stability and assets. Councils are able to decide how quickly they wish to move to this system within the 3 year time period and the 4 councils across the region have opted for varying timeframes e.g. Wollondilly are moving over within 2 years.

Community engagement is a vital part of this process and will be happening across the region as the processes are being implemented.

**Elaine Turner – Prime Learning/Australian College of Training & Employment.**

Prime Learning has been working closely with Sector Connect in recent months to provide training to the sector. There are numerous options for both group and individual staff traineeships and free training through government schemes that can be provided through Prime Learning. Elaine provided information on all courses that are on offer.

**Questions by attendees/answers from Elaine;**

1. Is the OH&S course accredited? No – statement of attendance short course
2. Who is eligible? Person working minimum 20 hours a week who has not completed any formal certificates in the past 7 years.
3. What is the process? Nikki and Elaine can go out to the workplace and work through possible courses and check staff's previous education and experience to ensure they are eligible. Very few people have been ineligible to date.
4. Course Free? Pay up front (instalments possible) and claim from government at the completion of the course. If the staff member leaves before the course is complete then the organisation may be liable for the payment. Internal agreements can be set up internally to avoid this.
5. If a staff member is currently studying but has not completed the course can they still apply? Elaine will get back on this answer.
6. If a worker wanted to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) what evidence is required to get this? The trainee would be required to demonstrate each unit through the skills they use in the workplace. It can often be harder to do RPL then complete the assessments.

One of the attendees advised the following: Blanket course – 10 graduates – structured so we would make \$ out of it. By the end of year 2 it won't have cost us anything – it's a matter of juggling and can work for the organisation if placed correctly.

**Collaborative Planning & Work Practices at a Local Level**

**Network Contribution;**

Jane explained that she had not had time to do all follow up from last meeting due to house moving etc. Jane advised that the number of tasks between meetings need to be reduced or an increase in network support. The network would rather slow the process down due to their busy schedules.

Tasks still pending from February meeting:

1. Contact local paper to develop a regular community service section
2. Follow up new members (Feb mins)
3. Z. Card/business card
5. Group Supervision (monthly) – meeting planned

**Suggestions from attendees;**

IT person from bigger organisation to work on Z cards / UWS / TAFE

Is the card a priority? – Jane felt easier than flyer but can wait.

Agreed the network is owned by the members who do need to take more responsibility for tasks when appropriate.

**CONNECTING CAMPBELLTOWN:**

HNSW initiative that is looking at collaborative work models for Campbelltown. A model has been developed. The network to consider how we work alongside initiatives such as these

**SECTOR CONNECT'S WEBSITE:** Jane advised that the website contract was signed and the design is currently being developed. It will incorporate all functions of Sector Connect in one place. Estimated launch date is early August. The website is based on software called Siteflex that means it is live and interactive at all times and will link with other sites such as Yahoo and Google and will be able to use FSS feeds for up to date news. Sector Connect will be doing an open day to launch the website and all brands. Once the website is officially launched there will be sections that will only be available to financial members only. This will include categorised emails.

**Keep Them Safe Feedback:**

Keep Them Safe provides an important platform for the development of the NGO sector. The initiative went live on 27 January 2010 but only the government structure has been looked at to date. There are also only 3 intake and referral services running as pilots across the state. Additional consultations have been held by KMPG through demand from the sector. Sector Connect has been involved in these consultations and has ensured the information coming from the region and the networks has been heard. It was agreed that the sector did not feel it was getting enough information at this point.

Jane advised that the Premier's Dept. has 2 coordinators – One being Mathew Ferguson. Mathew was to have been at this meeting but was unable to attend but will attend all future Managers Network meetings. It is important that the network raises the profile of regional planning to get recognition in this process. Jane will meet with Premiers & Cabinet on a one to one basis in approx. a week to voice all concerns including the collaboration of the Sector and how we work.

It was noted by attendee – Local government have been totally left out e.g. Campbelltown, Penrith – don't have connection such as 'Peaks'. Jane advised that Mathew's main focus is the NGO and local government sector for this reason and will be meeting with as many people as possible over the coming months. Sector Connect also now meets quarterly with Premiers where these issues can be raised.

### **State/Federal Initiatives e.g. Homelessness Action Plan:**

Members of the network to report meetings they attend and how we might work collaboratively to share this information to reduce the pressure on the sector.

Jane had followed up with NCOSS the broad initiatives that are currently happening and include:

#### **DISABILITY:**

- NSW: Stronger Together Industry Development Fund
- Federal: Quality Framework Universal Disability Insurance Scheme (Productively Commission)

#### **HACC:**

- NSW: COAG decision – implications
- Federal: COAG decision last week – implications

#### **HOUSING:**

- NSW: Metro Strategy / stock transfer to community housing / stimulus program / NRAS
- Federal: Stimulus program – social housing / NRAS

#### **HOMELESSNESS:**

- NSW: Homelessness Action Plan
- Federal: Homelessness Action Plan

#### **HEALTH:**

- NSW: Review of Health NGOs / Mental Health Action Plan
- Federal: COAG decision on health – implications

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD:**

- NSW: Early Childhood agenda – implementation
- Federal: Early Childhood agenda

#### **CHILD PROTECTION:**

- NSW: Keep Them Safe
- Federal: National Child Protection Framework

#### **UTILITIES:**

- NSW: Customer Hardship Provisions
- Federal: Various subsidies & support

#### **SECTOR:**

- NSW: Keep Them Safe Capacity Building  
ADHC – Industry Development Fund  
Health – NGO Review  
Sector indexation / pay equity  
Associations Incorporations Legislation  
Funding / contracting policy
- Federal: PC Report on sector / Pay Equity case

Jane is involved in some of these and will include this information in the feedback at the next meeting.

It was noted by attendee that there is limited work for the CALD community with funding being reduced at a federal level under a 5 year strategy. Questions whether the state is picking this up. Jane is willing to take this issue to Premiers when more information is provided.

Jane asks all attendees to advise what meetings they were on re Collaborative Planning – so we can see if gaps or duplications.

**Monthly Group Supervision:**

Jane has spoken to Leslie Robinson who is willing to do group supervision – approx. \$20 - \$40 per hour depending on the size.

Appropriate structures, protocols and agreements would be established at the first session as with individual supervision.

All attendees agreed good idea.

Question from attendee: Would there be any conflict?

Jane's reply: No conflict as groups would be set up correctly and she would not attend sessions.

Groups can be set up in lots of different ways to cater for the needs of both formal and informal structures. An example of professional supervision was shared for those unsure of the process.

**Member Information:**

Member information templates circulated and discussed to increase peer collaborative work. Members to complete and bring to next meeting for further discussion and how we can best use this information.

**Resource sharing across the network**

It would be helpful to have a new managers group as well as group supervision. Jane to explore this when setting up group supervision.

**Next Meeting:**

Friday 2 July 2010

9.30am – 12noon

Sector Connect

351 Welling Drive, Mount Annan

**Please note:**

This meeting has been moved back a week due to the Keep Them Safe Peak Forum being held on 25 June 2010

**All other meeting dates for 2010 remain unchanged**