

Meeting of the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce

Brisbane – 14 November 2019

COMMUNIQUE'

The Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Taskforce (the Taskforce) held its 6th meeting for the year in Brisbane, where members reflected on the work that the Taskforce has undertaken during the year.

Reflecting on the 1st anniversary of the National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

Taskforce members reflected on the first year since the National Apology and the changes to practice, policy and legislation that has occurred within this first year. Members acknowledged the anniversary in a small lunch with the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Honourable Di Farmer, at Queensland Parliament House.

Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Grants Program

Taskforce members were provided with a brief on the five organisations successful in obtaining a grant to work alongside people with lived experience of institutional child abuse in events, programs, initiatives and memorials. A total of \$45,000 in grant funding is being provided to:

- Hillbrook Anglican School
- Micah Projects (Lotus Place)
- Link-Up Queensland
- Cape York/Gulf Remote Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care Advisory Association
- Friends of the Aged.

Forum with Dr Marie Wilson, former Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and Mr Bob Atkinson, on their learnings on institutional child abuse

The Taskforce hosted a forum during Child Protection Week at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane. The purpose of the forum was to hear from Dr Marie Wilson, former Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and Bob Atkinson, chair of the Taskforce and former Commissioner of the Royal Commission, on their learnings on institutional child abuse. The event was attended by many government, non-government and people with lived experience, and provided many thought provoking questions to consider.

People with lived experience contact with the Taskforce

People with lived experience of institutional child sexual abuse are contacting the Taskforce to share their experiences and their views on changing policy and practice, to ensure the issues of the past do not occur in the future. The Taskforce is open to hearing from people with lived experience through any forms of means including face to face, email, telephone and letters.

National Redress Scheme

Taskforce members are passionate in ensuring the National Redress Scheme operated by the Commonwealth Government, is operating in a manner that best meets the needs of people with lived experience of institutional child sexual abuse. The Taskforce is provided at each meeting updates by staff at the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women from the Redress Coordination Unit.

Children's Rights and Voices Project, *Review of the Child Protection Act 1999*

Members were provided with an update of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women consultation regarding the review of the *Child Protection Act 1999*, and given information regarding themes and considerations stemming from the consultation period.

Update on the Sexual Violence Prevention Framework

Staff from the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women attended the latest Taskforce meeting to provide members with an update on the implementation of the *Prevent. Support. Believe.* Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence.

Priorities of the Taskforce for 2020

The final meeting of the year for the Taskforce acknowledged the amount of work achieved in 2019 and allowed for an opportunity for members to come together and discuss the priorities of the Taskforce for 2020. The Taskforce is committed to continuing to hear from people with lived experience of institutional child sexual abuse and looks forward to hosting a series of community forums across Queensland in 2020 to hear from services, supports and people directly impacted by institutional child sexual abuse.

Wrap up from the Taskforce Chair, Mr Bob Atkinson

The 5th meeting of the Taskforce highlights the commitment of the members to undertaking the work set out in our Terms of Reference. Members are dedicated to ensuring that the best advice possible is provided to the Queensland Government. We hope the work of the Taskforce provides people with hope. Hope that they have been believed and heard. Hope that the painful past of what happened in institutions is never experienced again by children and young people.