

TERMS OF REFERENCE

VICTORIAN CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES ADVISORY GROUP

INTRODUCTION

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative¹ (CFCI) was launched in 1996 to act on the resolution passed during the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to make cities liveable places for all; in UNICEF terms, for "children first." The Conference declared that the well-being of children is the ultimate indicator of a healthy habitat, a democratic society and of good governance.

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

A Child Friendly City and Community is one that:

- Enacts the rights of all children and young people;
- Ensures the best interests of children and young people are a primary consideration;
- Actively engages with children and young people in all matters that affect them; and
- Enables children's participation.²

A number of local governments have taken action to make their communities more child friendly. This has included; consulting with children for community plans, establishing forums to encourage community organisations to actively engage with children, mapping child outcomes, facilitating child participation in community events and documenting policies that recognise child rights.

A working partnership between interested local governments, community agencies, interested organisations and the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) was endorsed in June 2012, which resulted in the establishment of the Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Advisory Group ('the Group').

The role of the VLGA is to work in partnership with local governments, community agencies and interested organisations, to advance the interests of Child Friendly Cities and Communities.

The role of the Group is to work in partnership with the VLGA and provide advice, operational support and practical resourcing to support and grow the Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities network.

¹ The Child Friendly Cities website fact sheet says that, quote: "the concept was initially developed for cities, referring to municipalities of different sizes. However, it is now clear that the concept may also include other communities of different types, which are promoting a CFC approach. It is therefore more accurate to speak of "child friendly cities and communities".

² This definition is taken from UNICEF-foundations of building a child friendly city

OBJECTIVE

The Group, along with the VLGA, will:

- Strengthen local governments' and communities' capacity to deliver child friendly initiatives;
- Develop practical policy and tools to assist local governments to involve children and young people in planning and decision making;
- Advocate for the Victorian Government to take a 'whole of government' approach to establishing child friendly cities and communities in Victoria;
- Influence policy and behavioural change to ensure that the rights of children are reflected in community planning and building; and
- Seek funding for research and special projects that directly relate to child friendly cities and communities.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The VLGA will, in partnership with members of the Group:

- Attend meetings of the Group;
- Undertake initiatives that support and grow commitment to Child Friendly Cities and Communities (CFCC);
- Promote CFCC initiatives, such as the CFCC Charter, to the local government sector and the community;
- Promote and support network meetings; and
- Act as a clearinghouse for CFCC resources and store CFCC Group documents.

Members of the Group will:

- Plan, convene and chair Group and network meetings;
- Develop an annual work plan and deliverables;
- Undertake planning and review tasks to support and grow commitment to Child Friendly Cities and Communities, as per the annual work plan; and
- Develop, in consultation with the VLGA, any correspondence, promotional materials etc.

SHARED PRINCIPLES

Group members will be guided by the following principles:

- Respect for other Group members;
- Confidentiality;
- An understanding of the limitations of local government;
- Shared workload;
- Collaboration;
- Evidence-informed practice; and
- Commitment to attend and participate in regular meetings.



MEMBERSHIP

Formal expressions of interest, to participate in the Group, are sought annually.

Up to a maximum of 12 members are appointed to the Group each calendar year.

Changes to the membership of the Group can only be made following a formal expression of interest process and at the approval of the Group.

Membership of the Group will be reviewed on an annual basis subject to discussion with the CFCC Victoria Network.

CHAIRPERSON

The Group will elect a chairperson to chair meetings and liaise with the VLGA. The VLGA President or CEO will act as public and media spokesperson for the CFCC network.

COMMITMENT AND MEETING TIMEFRAMES

Group meetings will be held on a quarterly basis with planning and development tasks distributed amongst Group members.

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