



# Western Downs Regional Council Futures Progress Group meeting 17 October 2023

## Summary of Meeting – key insights

On 17th October 2023, the Western Downs Futures Progress Team held their third meeting, at the Chinchilla RSL club, it was attended by 25 participants. The workshop followed a similar approach to previous workshops with continued learning about the skills and capabilities needed for place-based change and practical group work.

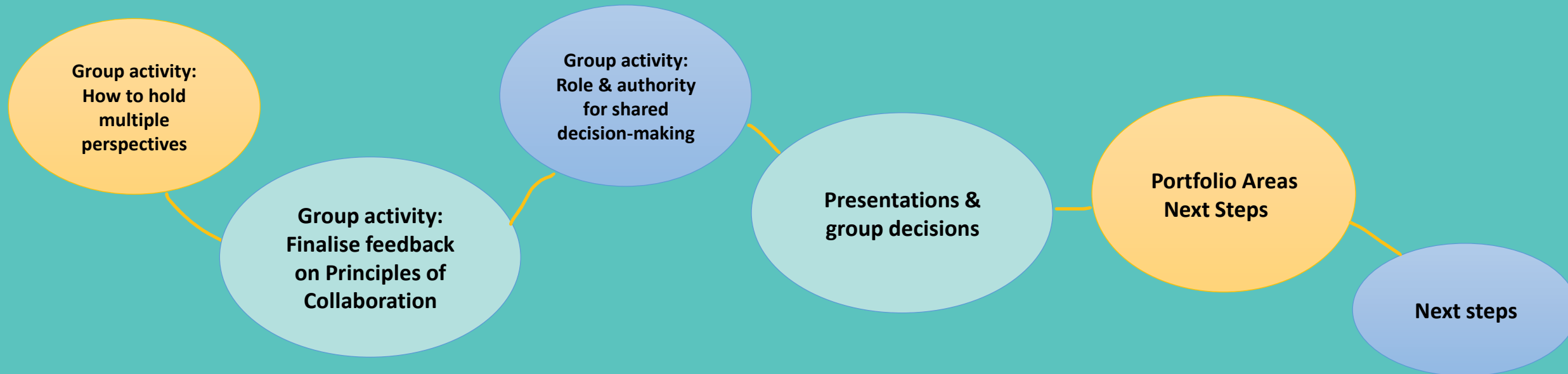
This meeting aimed to:

- continue to deepen understanding about what is needed for genuine collaboration
- create a shared understanding and language on how to hold multiple perspectives in shared decision-making, role and authority
- finalise input on principles – carried forward from previous meeting.

This approach to the meeting aimed to achieve the following **objectives**:

1. To finalise principles.
2. Opportunity for the group to reflect on skills needed for shared decision-making
3. Develop a shared understanding of role and authority within the current group
4. Listen to presentations and take decisions
5. Progress discussion on Portfolio areas.

## Flow of the day



# Learning and key insights

The group kicked off the workshop with a check-in activity focused on creating a shared language and understanding, of how to bring in many perspectives so that they can make informed decisions.

## The first snowball fight in Chinchilla ever!

Group activity:  
How to hold  
multiple  
perspectives



In collaborative practice it is essential that the voices of those who are not in the room are not forgotten. The group talked about how they listen and seek out diverse views to understand the experiences of others and why that is important to inform decision-making.

It is normal in collaborative work for the numbers of collaborators to increase and decrease over the course of the work. This session had 25 participants whereas the Summit had 100. It means that we must always be mindful that those in the room on the day only represent a part of the system and that we must seek to bring in the views and speak for those who are not present.

Communications must be strong in collaboration to ensure that what happens in the room is shared and people can have time to provide feedback.

## WESTERN DOWNS FUTURES RECENT QUICK WINS

### SKILLING QUEENSLANDERS FOR WORK

After the Summit in May, DESBT met with Tara Shire State College with a proposal to apply for funding in the SQW program.

Western Downs Regional Council in partnership with Tara Shire State College and Tara Neighbourhood Centre were successful in their funding application with DESBT to provide 10 traineeship and upskilling opportunities for jobseekers in Tara.

Interviews have been conducted and having success securing trainees in this project.

### SUPPORT FINDER LAUNCH

Premiers made us aware of this wonderful project and connected us to Denny Edwards. In partnership, Western Downs Regional Council, Queensland Police Service, and Darling Downs Health joined forces to launch an online support directory for Western Downs residents in need: [SupportFinder.org.au](https://SupportFinder.org.au)

### HEALTH WORKERS

10 new GP's to the region!

## Learning and key insights

Group activity:  
Finalise  
feedback on  
Principles of  
Collaboration

Final feedback and input was provided on the Principles of collaboration which the Working Group did online back in July. The edits will be typed up and circulated and are considered finalized now. The Western Downs Futures Team will now prepare the draft governance manual which will contain the Terms of Reference, vision, principles and governance structure. This will be circulated and available in hard copy at the ongoing progress team meetings.

**We are *aligned* on vision and values**

**We openly *share* information and knowledge**

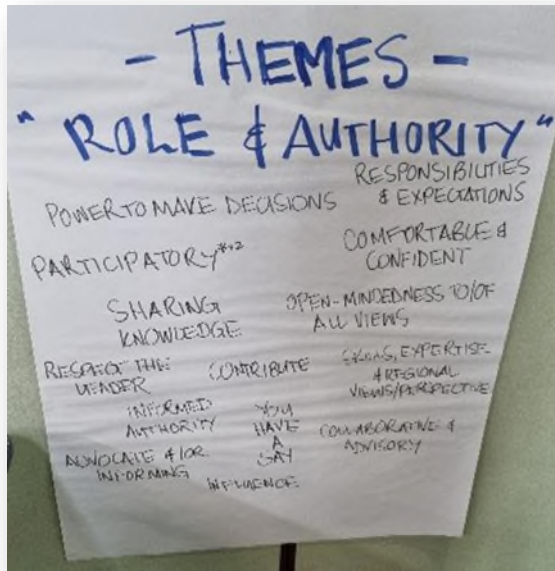
**We *explore* what's possible**

**We are *dedicated* and committed to the ongoing cause**

**We take a *long term* vision and approach**

One of the ways to put the principles into practice is through shared decision-making, which requires an awareness of the authority we have. The group revisited the agreed decision-making process. Collaborations need authority to work so the group reflected and discussed what authority looks like in this collaboration.

Group activity:  
Role & authority  
for shared  
decision-making



Participants discussed the difference between role and authority (linked to job title / linked to personal authority) and when to flex one's authority and the implication that can have on decision-making. The work of collaboration is not easy. The group will be tackling some of the most complex challenges. Life is difficult and sometimes people may pull rank and assert their authority. How the group responds through the principles is crucial. The aim of the discussion was to raise awareness of everyone's own role and authority and discuss how the group will respond when they notice when the assertion of authority is blocking or inhibiting the work.



Presentations  
& group  
decisions

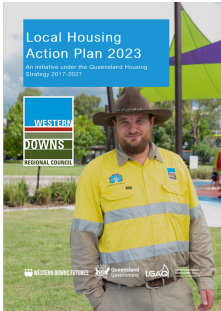
## Local Housing Action Plan

Lidewij Koene and Todd Summerville presented the updated Local Housing Action draft plan for 2023 to invite feedback from the Futures Group. Lidewij talked to the data and then passed out the key activity areas for review and feedback. The team are seeking support from the Futures Group ahead of the upcoming Council meeting where the plan will be presented on 27 October.

Initial feedback and considerations:

- First Nations Housing contact – Goolburi Housing.
- Increasing trades in the region is essential to deliver on the outcomes.
- Cost prohibitive (i.e. phases & stages – sub-divisions vs building vs planning vs permits)
- Land release vs permit process.

**Action:** The Western Downs Futures Team will organise an online information session with Todd Summerville. The draft LHAP will be circulated but is not for wider distribution at this stage. Everyone is encouraged to join the online session to provide feedback.



## Western Downs Aboriginal Corporation (WDAC)

Ken Riddiford presented an update on behalf of the Western Downs Aboriginal Corporation. The founding members came together in 2021 concerned about the major gap in services supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents living in Miles, Chinchilla and Tara and the districts. The members have been working to establish the constitution and are preparing to register the organisation with the Office of Registration for Indigenous Corporation (ORIC) this year. They are currently working with support from the Chinchilla Community Center.

The key objectives of the organisation is:

- To support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents of Miles, Chinchilla and Tara, and districts.
- To ensure we have strong supported families with access to the supports they need in all areas of their lives including welfare, health, education, employment, housing and aging
- To hold a space for the sharing and learning of culture in our communities.
- To represent diverse views in our community fairly
- To operate and maintain a gift fund to be known as 'The Western Downs Aboriginal Corporation Gift Fund' in accordance with the requirements of the Income Tax Assessment 1997.

Ken explained that the principles and work of the Western Downs Futures Group is very much in alignment with the objectives of the WDAC and that they would be happy to engage with WDF on the Community & Business Connector Team and Working Groups as required. The organisation once formally established would be happy to offer additional structural support to the initiative through the potential role of backbone organisation and auspice for the project. Ken holds no formal role with WDAC and is supporting and advocating for the organisation.

# Western Downs Futures – Funding Opportunities

Presentations  
& group  
decisions

Renee King presented on two funding opportunities that have been identified that could potentially align with the Western Downs Futures.

1. Advance QLD Funding – [Regional Futures Collaborative Projects](#).
2. Workforce Australia Funding – [Local Jobs National Priorities](#)

The Regional Futures Collaborative Projects submission is **due on 31 October 2023**. It was acknowledged that the timeline was extremely tight but also that it is a good opportunity and one not to be missed.

2 key components needed collective agreement, (a) a combined cash contribution committed by the applicant and partner organization/s, and (b) a project plan with tangible benefits to the region.

When the group began to discuss potential project opportunities Jayden Frame spoke about the Attract, Connect, Stay initiative and offered insight about the initiative and how they are planning to apply for additional funding for a position of Health Workforce Recruiter.

*Attract Connect Stay is an innovative, community-led solution for addressing the wicked problem of rural health workforce shortages—that WORKS. The Attract Connect Stay solution originates from Marathon, Ontario, Canada and that community's response to its critical health workforce shortages which was the establishment of a community-funded and managed Health Workforce Recruiter Connector position. The Attract Connect Stay program has benefited regions in Australia including Shepperton in rural Victoria.*

The group discussed the possibility of aligning with the Attract Connect Stay initiative, but it was decided and **agreed by consensus**, that the WDF group should design a project that would (i) draw in more of the portfolio areas and (ii) be focused on the whole of region.

**Action:** A Project Planning Working Group would convene to work with Renee King to develop up a project based on the outlined parameters to share back with the group for agreement. Renee would also continue to prepare all the necessary documentation for the submission. Progress Team members were requested to send a letter of support detailing their financial contribution to the project towards the funding submission as well.

The **Workforce Australia Funding** application is due at the **end of November 2023** and Renee will be reading more into the key criteria to prepare a submission to share back with the group for feedback.

Please see the attached PDF Western Downs Futures Funding Opportunities for all the details.

# Learning and key insights



Opportunity to share a case study from Mackay Youth Outloud 1000 and how they collected 1000 voices through surveying youth. The case study was aimed to provide some ideas about how the group may choose to seek to bring in the voices of those with the lived experience and who the group is there on behalf of.

The brief video highlighted a process that could be used in the Western Downs on multiple aspects of the work, including measuring and evaluation.

Portfolio  
Areas  
Next Steps

Following the presentations and group discussions the final decision point of the day was regarding continuing work on the top two priority areas.

Given the momentum and work that is happening with the Local Housing Action Plan and the Employment funding opportunity and recent Skilling QLD funding win, the Futures group were asked:

Do you agree that we focus our attention on Housing and Employment as our first two major priority areas to progress.

The **group unanimously agreed**, on the provision that, should a different source of funding for a different priority area present, then the group could refocus the attention on another priority.



## Next Steps

ACTION	WHO	BY WHEN
1. Update feedback on Principles and prepare the complete Terms of Reference to be circulated	Renee	Friday 3 November
2. Set up an online session with Todd Summerville to walk through the Local Housing Action Plan and invite feedback. <b>(25 October 2023, 8.00am – 9.00am)</b>	Renee	Scheduled for 25 October
3. Project Plan Working Group – to prepare the project input for the funding submission.	Renee	Meeting held on 20 October
3. Send out letters for co-contribution for the funding application.	Giordann & Jackie	Sent on 18 October
4. Prepare and finalise the Regional Futures Collaborative Projects funding request.	Renee	Due 31 October