

## Closing the Gap Working Group Report November 2021

### **1. Meeting of members of the Closing the Gap Working Group**

The CTG working group held its second meeting on 13 October 2021.

The meeting had a focus on the NSW CTG Implementation Process and several priority proposals developed by ALS as part of this process for submission to the NSW Government 2022-23 budget.

Dominic Moore provided the meeting with a very useful update on the CTG Implementation Process and noted the Officer Level Working Groups within CTG were all working to strict deadlines to get funding proposals into the next budget cycle. However, given the current economic pressures in NSW, there was no guarantee particular funding proposals would get funded.

The top four funding proposals developed by ALS for this budget cycle were: (1) Justice Partnership Framework (2) Bail Advocacy and Support Service (3) Throughcare Package (4) Review and Design of Alternatives for Children aged 10 to 14.

The alternatives proposal was discussed in some length at this meeting, and the group noted the ACT Government had recently completed a similar process as part of their commitment to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14, which could serve as a model.

The working group discussed updating its TOR to reflect what the group has identified as the way in which it can best add value: namely, to aid the ALS in their work with DCJ and the NSW Government on justice targets. The group agreed to seek amendment to its TOR through the NLAF Executive.

The group reiterated previous commitments to providing assistance to the ALS as needed, including by holding special sessions of the Working Group.

### **2. Special session of the Closing the Gap Working Group**

The CTG working group met on 11 November 2021 as a special session, on request of the ALS, after five of their priority budget proposals were selected to advance for further development. These were the four listed above, in addition to: (5) ALS Child & Family Advocacy & Support Service. The group provided feedback to ALS on each of the proposals, noting the NSW Treasury deadline for a detailed business case in support of each proposal on 22 November 2021.

A key focus of this session was the updated Justice Partnership Framework, which includes an Aboriginal Justice Agreement, Sector Strengthening Plan and Justice Sector Cultural Capability Framework. The Framework will provide a model for *how* the change is to be achieved under the CTG Implementation Process and will aim to ensure community ownership over priority proposals, while working to ensure a strong ACCO sector and culturally safe Government agency experiences.

### **3. Next steps**

The Working Group is aiming to meet in Quarter 1 of 2022. We will continue to provide ad hoc feedback and assistance to the ALS as required.

**Jonathon Hunyor, CEO Public Interest Advocacy Centre  
Chair**

23 November 2021