# Collaborative Planning Committee

## 1 May 2019

### In attendance

**Present**

Sam Porter – Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), Serina McDuff – Federation of Community Legal Centres (FCLC), Stuart Webb – Law Institute of Victoria (LIV), Lynne Haultain – Victoria Law Foundation (VLF), Louise Glanville – Victoria Legal Aid (VLA), Justin Hannebery SC – Victorian Bar

Peter Noble (VLA) (Observer), Amy Schwebel (VLA) (Secretariat)

**Apologies**

Anna Faithfull (DJCS)

## Meeting summary

The Collaborative Planning Committee convened for the first time on 1 May 2019 following the introduction of the Access to Justice reforms. The committee membership includes representatives from the Department of Justice and Community Safety, Federation of Community Legal Centres, Law Institute of Victoria, Victoria Law Foundation, Victoria Legal Aid, the Victorian Bar, and three additional members on the recommendation of the Committee to the VLA Board.

The committee considered draft Terms of Reference for its work informed by the committee’s enabling legislation. The purpose of the committee is to provide evidence-based advice and recommendations to the VLA Board in relation to:

* the legal and related needs of the community;
* the provision of legal aid
* VLA’s functions relating to the coordination, and undertaking of strategic planning for, the provision of legal and legal assistance information.

This may include, for example, advice and recommendations on legal assistance sector reform and innovation, sector planning including the enhanced use of data to inform planning decisions, client-centred design and responsiveness to consumer feedback, specific collaborative service delivery models, funding allocations, and the impact of law reform proposals and newly emerging legal issues on demand for legal assistance.

With respect to the additional members of the committee, the committee will invite representatives from specialist Aboriginal legal services to participate on the committee to ensure that the legal needs of the Victorian Aboriginal community are considered and that mainstream legal assistance providers deliver culturally appropriate services. The committee would then return to the question of additional members once the committee had settled its priority issues and areas of work for the coming twelve months. This will ensure the committee had regard to the experience and expertise relevant to its forward workplan.

With VLA’s enhanced coordination and collaboration role in the legal assistance sector following the Access to Justice Review, there was a shared understanding that the committee would provide important advice to the VLA Board as VLA took up this enhanced function.

The committee recognised the opportunity for each organisation to bring knowledge about the experience of ‘users’ to its preparation of advice to the VLA Board.

There was a shared understanding that clarity on the way forward and how to ensure the work of the committee is meaningful would take time to bed down, but that there was collective good will to maximise the opportunity presented by the committee’s establishment to achieve better outcomes together for Victorians needing legal assistance by developing a shared understanding of the challenges and explore perspectives in a constructive manner.

The committee agreed to meet four times a year and produce a summary following each meeting to communicate about its work to the sector.