



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

First Nations Reference Group Meeting Minutes



Meeting Date:	Tuesday 31 May 2022
Location:	CIC C/Supt Conference Room, Level 3 Police Headquarters / MS Teams
Time:	10:00am – 11:00am
Attendees:	Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski, Southern Queensland (Chair) Aunty McRose Elu Aunty Boni Robertsn Aunty Kerry Turner Christine Thomas
Secretariat:	Inspector, Strategy and Performance Officer, Southern Queensland

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Deputy's Opening Comments

- There are deliberately no representatives from CCE present at this meeting.
- Apologised for delay in meeting due to competing issues.
- DC Gollschewski inherited CCE in August 2021 after a change in portfolios. A short time after this, it was identified there were systemic issues within the Division and DC Gollschewski requested a review of the area.
- This independent review of CCE has now taken place, and the review will result in major changes to the Division.
- How the FNMAU commenced, and the validity of this unit is questionable, and this includes the reference group.
- Engagement with the communities and being well informed about these issues is imperative.
- We will then action these recommendations – this means we need to look at this group.
- We are resetting with the intention of making things better for all.

Deputy's Concerns

- PLO and TSI PLOs – DC Gollschewski attended their conference last week and they were very open to the struggles which they are having. This included recognition of the work they do within community, a limited understanding the wider QPA has on their roles, the benefits they can provide and the lack of resourcing. We are looking into this, and this is my commitment to them.
- We need to reconnect with everyone involved in this group and from CCE, so we can make this a meaningful group.
- Traditionally as police, we are responsive to issues, so going forward we need to look at changing the way police do business to make it a preventative approach.

Response from the Group

Boni Robertson:

- Thanked the QPS for looking at this. The Group are not taking this opportunity for granted – we need to work together to align with policy and commitments for our communities.
- The Group have been having our own conversations. We saw a real motivation to deliver on what we were doing and how we were originally doing business. We see value in what we are doing.



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DC:

- Who was the key person running this at the beginning?

Christine Thomas:

- Adrian brought us together – interview process, EOI went to the community, shortlisting and interview process, on the reference group and then called to a meeting. We were told there was going to be a change at CCE and we lost partnerships and we lost our way. We raised concerns, tried to re-engage with the Superintendent and were shut down.

DC:

- The Chair will be of sufficient level to make things happen, which for the time will be me, so we can achieve our outcomes.
- Firstly, we need to fix CCE. Ultimately, we have spoken to DATSIP because we haven't done this process quite right. This will ensure that we get the right people in the right place to do the right thing by the community.

Christine Thomas:

- Issues raised with the CoP.
- We want to be part of those discussions and decisions.

DC:

- The TOR aren't right and these need to be redefined so that we have strong governance and systems in place to ensure that we are meeting our commitments. Further to this and the outcomes of the CCE review, we also need to find the right leader for CCE, which has proved difficult in the past, with no suitable nominees for this position.

Christine Thomas:

- Agreed with DC. The current staffing isn't quite right – first nations mixed with capability. We need a balance. How will the unit engage with community and how it manages things? As it has been quite destructive in the community for 8 – 9 months. There has been many changes, a First Nations unit should be staffed by First Nations persons, but understand this has been to balanced.
- I've worked with QPS for 20 years and I have seen the advantages and disadvantages of someone.
- What is the next step?

DC:

- This is valid. For us, you are there for us, and making informed decisions about First Nations for the Community.
- Challenges for our young people is very concerning – what's changing and how do we improve and get it right?

Aunty McRose Elu:

- We are still talking about the same things.

DC:

- CoP has a strategic intent, governance and we need to have feedback to ensure we are achieving what we have set out to do.

Christine Thomas:

- We need deliverable actions that have positive impacts across a range of areas.
- PLO network – touch points within the communities, First Nations officers and the First Nations Reference Group.
- We have various avenues to deliver messages.

DC:



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- What do we want to see out of this group? How does this translate to make a difference? An example of this is how we do more for our PLOS?

Christine Thomas:

- Supt Hawkins had got it right on the Sunshine Coast. We need to look at HR strategies, training for our recruits to increase their knowledge and have consistent engagement with the community.

DC:

- Resources and training – how do we invest to make a difference? But what are they delivering on a day-to-day basis?
- Recruit training – we can't fix it all in the current system, now we are building that into the training, then we will have local community training as well. This is an opportunity for improvements.

Christine Thomas:

- What is the message?

DC:

- As a reference group, we need to be with the people that make the decisions. DC will run this until such time as we can move to then it will be at AC level.

Christine Thomas:

- Commitment to meet with PLOs and CCE to make sure we are all working together. We need a PLO aspect, First Nations police.
- We can include these on the Reference Group.
- Collective mapping to ensure we are getting a touch point on all communities to ensure all the communities are heard – complaints and concerns, from community, addressing issues.

Complaints

Christine Thomas:

- Process from the first nations community and how the QPS handle these better, as the usual structures don't work for these communities. Making complaints against the police in the usual way isn't working – they don't understand.

Aunty/Professor:

- Nyree Wheelan does this very well, we should use her approach as the standard. She is respectful, trustworthy and handles situations in a timely manner. That is what we need.

Christine Thomas:

- Culturally that isn't how we resolve conflict in the community. Our QPS process is very foreign and increases hatred towards police and builds walls. We want to come from a position of engagement, communication and localised perspective. We can address these issues locally, effectively and efficiently and in a cost-effective manner.

DC:

- Challenges when looking at conflict – there are difficulties in ownership of resources and capabilities and this is where we have problems within the QPS. We need specialised people who do these things, they have to have expertise in complaints and complaints management. We need to be able to talk at a local level. It is great to have the relationship with the Reference Group, but we need to build them in the communities at the local level as well. This is what the example with Nyree shows.

Christine Thomas:



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- Cross Cultural Awareness is very important – a better understanding and respect. The people on the ground know their communities and know what is important, so we need to build relationships with the right people and the Group can guide that.

Aunty Kerry Turner:

- Reiterated the comments made by all throughout the meeting.

Final Comments

DC:

- We have to reset first – What does CCE look like, what does our First Nations division look like? Then this will be reflected in the First Nations Reference Group.
- TOR need to be revisited and re-written fit for purpose.
- CCE will be changing.
- We need to execute those changes. We need to get the leadership and skill set right in that area. We need a balance.
- In one month we will meet again with an update and summary of where we are at.
- Requests the Group provide a context on what the First Nations Reference Group look like from a community perspective and how we add value to policing. This needs to be beneficial to both the community and the service.
- A good starting point is to look at what we are actually doing and highlight these projects and successes of these.
- Broader government engagement – we didn't engage with them so we need to do that. Making sure we include all government agencies to ensure we get this right and coordinate across government. We need to work together.

Christine Thomas:

- Implementation plan, overarching strategy, fall down to each of the districts to responsible for what they are doing on their action plans. We need to sit at that level to support the regions.

Action Items

Assigned to community members from the Reference Group:

- What is your proposal for the group?
- What does success of the group look like for you?
- What is the construct of this group?
- Where do we add value?
- What does it look like for us as a consolidated response?

Priorities and construct of the Reference Group to be provided by COB 4 July 2022.

Next Meeting

- 11 July 2022, 12:00pm – 1:00pm
- Venue to be advised.
- Invitation forwarded.

Meeting Close

The meeting was closed at 11:00am.



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