

## **NSW Joint Council on Closing the Gap Joint Communique – 20 September 2021**

The NSW Joint Council on Closing the Gap met on 20 September 2021. The Minister co-chaired the meeting with NSW CAPO Councilor Charles Lynch. Attendees included the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, senior government representatives from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Aboriginal Affairs NSW and NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisation members. Key discussion items and outcomes are detailed below.

### **National Joint Council 6 August**

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon. Don Harwin presented the NSW Implementation Plan to the National Closing the Gap Joint Council meeting on 6 August 2021.

### **Indigenous Expenditure Review**

NSW Treasury provided an overview of the development and findings of the Interim NSW Indigenous Expenditure Report. The Joint Council endorsed a prioritisation framework that balances standard Budgetary requirements with non-financial information, such as First Nations cultural value, self-determination and economic and capability development. This work will support the Closing the Gap reforms into the future, including for the next NSW Implementation Plan.

### **Officer Level Working Groups (OLWG)**

OLWGs have been established and are meeting regularly. In August, OLWGs provided NSW CAPO with community engagement questions. The OLWGs are now focussed on developing new initiatives for the next Budget and Implementation Plan. Initiatives prioritised by OLWGs will be considered at a Partnership Workshop in late October. The workshop will decide on prioritised initiatives for inclusion in the 2022 budget and the 2022-24 NSW Implementation Plan and identify financial investment required, initiatives requiring policy changes of government, strategy formation or further foundational work.

### **Revised Community Engagement and Promotions Approach**

The NSW Joint Council endorsed a revised Community Engagement Strategy. The updated strategy considers the impact of COVID-19 on community priorities, timeframes and engagement methodologies. Engagements will take place online over October– November and focus on promotion and information sharing. NSW CAPO will also undertake a review and analysis of previous consultation information to inform work in the Closing the Gap area. Face to face engagements will take place early 2022.

### **Reporting Framework**

NSW Joint Council members endorsed a Reporting Framework to monitor progress of the NSW Implementation Plan. Regular reporting will allow for quarterly updates on activities and changes against the reform priorities and targets.

### **NSW Government approach to National Joint Fund on Sector Strengthening**

The NSW Joint Council discussed an approach to disseminating NSW's \$7.4 million contribution to the National Joint Fund for Sector Strengthening. The Joint Secretariat will work together with relevant community stakeholders and NSW Government policy experts to determine NSW priorities.

### **Aboriginal Business Roundtable**

NSW Joint Council members noted the approach to hosting six-monthly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business Roundtables. The focus of the Roundtables will be to identify what Aboriginal Businesses in NSW need to establish, diversify, and grow. The first Roundtable will be hosted on 8 October 2021.