



## **Stronger Families Alliance: Terms of Reference**

June, 2012

### **Main Group**

The Main Group is the SFA's largest group. The Main Group aims to achieve multi-stakeholder representation of all organisations and networks in the Blue Mountains who impact on child development. The Main Group's primary focus is implementation of the Child and Family Plan through the cultivation of synergies, relationships and innovation across the Alliance network. The Main Group is the place where major developments, decisions and directions concerning the Alliance's direction are approved.

#### Membership:

- Main Group members include service managers and community leaders.

#### Role of the Main Group:

- The purpose of the Main Group is to facilitate the implementation of the Child and Family Plan by providing a space where synergies, learning and resources across the Alliance network can be brought together. Specifically this will occur in the Main Group through processes designed to:
  - (i) Maintain shared vision & strategic line of sight
  - (ii) Facilitate cross implementation group synergies, opportunities, learning and innovation;
  - (iii) Provide direction to the 3 implementation groups when needed
  - (iv) Collectively respond to evaluation information
  - (v) Identifying initiatives to support the implementation groups
- The Main Group supports implementation of the Child and Family Plan by (i) empowering, learning, adjusting in response to implementation experiences and experimenting (ii) creating structures to support success (iii) collecting and promoting stories of success (iv) maintaining an affirmative culture.

#### Relationship to Other SFA Groups:

- The Main Group has two-way links to the three SFA Implementation Groups (Neighbourhood Service Networks, Moving Children Beyond Vulnerability & Child Friendly Community), each linked to the three parts of the Plan.

### Decision-making:

- Decision-making about implementation of the Child and Family is a two-way process between the Main Group and Implementation Groups. Within this the Main Group sets or approves major directions of each Implementation Group.
- The Main Group can develop and forward projects for the implementation of the Child and Family Plan to each of the Implementation Groups.
- The Main Group decides on all future directions about the direction of the SFA with the exception of areas of delegated authority to the SFA Executive in the areas of (i) external partnerships and (ii) management of the political interface & delegated authority to the SFA Backbone in the areas of (iii) facilitation process and (iv) communication.
- The Main Group receives recommendations from the SFA Executive about the development of the SFA network. These recommendations are discussed, amended as necessary and ratified by the Main Group.

### **SFA Executive**

The Executive is a sub-group within the Alliance network, with delegated limited decision-making authority.

### Membership:

- Designated members of the SFA are (i) the SFA Collaboration Convener (ii) Senior delegates from BMCC, NSW Dept of Health and NSW Dept of Education. (iii) Delegate for community and non-profit sector – Mountains Community Resource Network (iv) SFA Implementation Group convenors (vi) Other organisations the Main Group has designated as neutral.
- Neutrals are selected by the Main Group and are currently Rotary.

### Roles:

- Determine the best long-term future for the SFA, develop goals and implement strategies to achieve the goals through its own work and the SFA network.
- Keep the SFA Implementation Groups strategically on track.
- Manage the political interface of the SFA.
- Link to the Backbone Organisations.
- Source and manage external partnerships.
- Determine funding directions.
- Develop and sign off on the SFA Evaluation plan.

### Responsibilities:

- Maintain the vision of the SFA.
- Lead the SFA using the collaborative leadership approach outlined in the Child and Family Plan
- Trouble shoot any problems in terms of (i) proactively bringing them to the table (ii) taking personal responsibility in the SFA network for their resolution
- Maintain a conflict of interest process.

#### Decision-making power:

- Major decisions arising from the Executive's work are still made at the Main Group with the exception of sourcing and managing external partnerships and managing the political inter-face.
- Decisions that go back to the Main Group will be presented to the group with the majority of the research, relationship development and thinking having been done within the Executive group.

### **SFA Implementation Groups**

The three Implementation Groups of the SFA direct the implementation of the Child and Family Plan. For further information on the role of the Implementation Groups see the *Role of Implementation Groups in the SFA*.

#### Role:

- The Implementation Groups develop initiatives to implement the Child and Family Plan.
- The SFA Implementation Groups hold strategic line of sight for its members between the Child and Family Plan's outcomes, objectives and initiatives.

#### Membership:

- Implementation group initiatives include service managers, service workers and community members.

#### Decision-making:

- Decision-making about implementation of the Child and Family is a two-way process between the Main Group and Implementation Groups. Within this the Implementation Groups receive projects from the Main Group and make recommendations to the Main Group about projects they want to pursue.
- *The process of direction setting within the Implementation Groups:* Direction setting can also occur within the Implementation Groups. Historically the SFA has learnt that when direction setting occurs through the process of experiential learning through project development, excellent SFA wide strategic level directions can be generated. However to ensure the whole Alliance networks buys into these directions, major decisions about how to implement the Child and Family Plan that originate in the implementation groups will be brought back to the main group for approval. This process will ensure the SFA continues to build shared vision and understanding across sectors, and are able to leverage implementation synergies across the sub groups.

## The SFA Collaboration Back-bone

\*This term 'collaboration back-bone' has been drawn directly from the Collective Impact framework which describes this role in similar terms to the role Council has historically played in the Alliance. The SFA has taken up many of the recommendations made in the Collective Impact article about how to structure the Collaboration Back-bone to best enable the SFA's success. Going forward from 2012 Mountains Community Resource Network will formally join the Council in playing this role.

### Membership:

- The structure of the Collaboration Backbone enables any organisation in the Alliance to temporarily (or permanently) join the Backbone Organisation to facilitate collaboration building initiatives.

### Role:

- The Back-bone Organisation (i) facilitates the collaborative network (ii) manages internal (sector and SFA) communication processes (iii) designs and implements an SFA evaluation plan with the SFA Executive (iv) contributes to the professional development necessary to deliver the Child and Family Plan (v) convenes the SFA Executive.

### Decision-making

- The Collaboration Backbone makes decisions about the facilitation of the Alliance collaboration network and internal communication within the SFA.



