

# Community Housing Industry Council

## Communique

### Meeting 17, 6 December 2023

The New South Wales (NSW) Community Housing Industry Council (CHIC) took a decision to cancel its seventeenth meeting, which was scheduled for 6 December 2023.

This decision was made because many of the key areas of work which the CHIC is focussed on were in a transition period and additional key information of interest to members was not available. It was agreed that a written update would be provided to members in lieu of the meeting and published. This update is as follows.

#### **Housing Australia Future Fund and the National Housing Accord**

Housing Australia has been progressing the investment mandate for the Housing Australia Future Fund. It is currently undertaking a consultation process on the draft funding documentation for the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility (HAFFF) and National Housing Accord Facility (NHAFF) programs.

This consultation process is open to potential applicants and other interested parties to provide feedback on the funding documentation. Providing feedback is optional, it is not a prerequisite to participating in the first or any future funding round for the HAFFF and NHAFF program.

This consultation period is open now, until 22 January 2024. The anticipated launch date for the funding round is 15 January 2024. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **Homes NSW**

Homes NSW will officially commence operations on 1 February 2024. It will be a stand-alone division of the Department of Communities and Justice and will bring together the housing teams from DCJ with the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) and the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO). The homelessness functions will remain with DCJ for now and its transition will be considered as part of a stage 2 in mid- 2024. The announcement of the Chief Executive Officer is pending and is expected to be made soon.

#### **CHIC Chair catch-up with Minister Jackson**

The Chair recently met with Minister Jackson to raise the profile of the CHIC, its achievements and the opportunities it presents to government, including consideration of further development of the Community Housing Industry Strategy (CHIS). The meeting went well, and the CHIC is working with the Minister's office to have the Minister attend a CHIC meeting in 2024.

## **CHIC project updates**

### ***Decarbonising social and affordable housing project***

The third working group meeting was held on 22 November 2023. It included presentations about the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Reporting Standard for Australian Community Housing, as well as from the Commonwealth Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. These were helpful in progressing the decarbonising work for the sector and the projects being delivered under the CHIC.

SGS Economics and Planning have been engaged to conduct a mapping exercise of relevant NSW and Australian decarbonising policies and strategies. The project will aim to enhance the capacity of the CHIC to assist CHPs as owners and managers of social and affordable housing in ensuring their current and future property portfolio is able to meet the challenges of climate change.

This work will commence in early 2024.

### ***Climate Change projects (CHIA NSW)***

Following a presentation to the CHIC on 24 August, DCJ has approved the release of the outputs from stage 1 of the climate change project.

The stage 1 outputs – a Community Housing Industry Climate Risk Readiness Report and Decarbonisation Guidelines for Community Housing in NSW – have been approved and CHIA NSW has begun dissemination to members to assist them to better prepare for climate change. The outputs are available to members through CHIA NSW's Member Portal, emails and other communications have been circulated and a launch event is planned for early in 2024.

CHIA NSW is currently engaging a consultant team to deliver stage 2 of the project. This will develop further guidance for CHPs on decarbonising specific property types, including options for the oldest and poorest performing properties. It will also focus on demonstrating the case for government investment and support measures to overcome the delivery and timetable obstacles faced by CHPs. Work on stage 2 will commence in early 2024.

### ***Streamlining CHP Data Collection and Reporting project***

The project inception meeting was held on 9 November 2023. Following planning sessions between CHIA NSW and the consultant, Societel, the project is moving into the initial information collection stage. The steps taken so far are:

- Societel has developed a data collection template for agencies to populate with information that is requested from CHPs by their organisations. Agencies will be asked to provide a system extract of the data fields they request from CHPs. They will also be asked to extract definitions and guidance and copy their organisation's content for that field into the respective cell in the template. The purpose of collecting this information is to be able to compare similar fields and judge specifically how similar they are, in order to assess duplication across various reporting.  
Please note, no actual data will be requested.

- The template has been tested with subject matter experts from the Registrar of Community Housing and DCJ.

Following feedback from the Registrar and DCJ, the template will be circulated to the approximately 12 different organisations identified by the project reference group. A return date of mid-February will be set for responses.

Societal are available to provide individual support and advice on how to complete the template.

### ***Showcasing the Community Housing Industry***

Following a presentation to the CHIC on 24 August 2023, CHIA NSW has revised the project's outputs in response to CHIC's feedback. The outputs now comprise an updated version of CHIA NSW's State of the Industry report and a series of promotional videos showcasing the capability, expertise, and achievements of the community housing sector. Both project outputs are intended to build knowledge and awareness of the sector with key stakeholders, including NSW and Federal Government agencies, local councils, developers, financiers, and investors.

CHIA NSW has engaged a consultant to deliver the State of the Industry report, which is expected to be finalised in early 2024. The report will incorporate various datasets and case studies sourced from member organisations, with an emphasis on the delivery of new housing supply, tenant satisfaction, case study examples of industry best practice and innovation across the scope of CHP operations, and partnership approaches established by leading CHPs to deliver high-quality homes and services.

Request for proposals have been issued for suitably qualified consultants to deliver the promotional videos. It is anticipated that production will commence by early February 2024, for completion by June 2024. CHIA NSW will establish a reference group consisting of representatives from its existing Communications Working Group to provide expert advice on the approach to key messaging, stakeholder engagement, and dissemination.

### ***Capacity Building Plan***

This project will aim to build on and replace the current Community Housing Industry Development Strategy. It will provide a vehicle for the sector and NSW Government to work together to continue developing the industry as needed. The specification is being drafted and a consultant will be engaged early in 2024.

### **Next meeting**

The next CHIC meeting is scheduled for 27 March 2024 but may be bought forward if significant announcements or changes are made prior to the date. It is anticipated that considerable headway in the work of interest to the CHIC will be made prior to the next CHIC meeting in March 2024 which will drive a full agenda and fruitful discussions.