



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of
Children and
Family
Development
Vancouver Island
Region

BACKGROUND

January 2009

Vancouver Island Regional Council

Terms of Reference

Introduction:

The *Vancouver Island Regional Advisory Council* is a volunteer group of community members who hold the well-being of children, youth and families at the centre of their work. The members have no other vested interests. The Council represents the diverse geographic communities of Vancouver Island, and brings a range of professional and personal experience to their work. The Council was brought together at the invitation of the Vancouver Island Region of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), and represents a Ministry commitment to strengthening working relationships with the community. MCFD is transforming its approach to planning and delivering services, from one organized primarily by centralized processes internal to the ministry, to one that is driven by community need through shared responsibility and collaborative processes. The Council plays a key role in guiding and supporting this transformative process in the Vancouver Island Region.

Vision:

We envision a climate of mutual trust and collaboration that promotes positive change and supports all children, youth and their families on their quest for optimal development

Mission:

We liaise between the community and MCFD to develop recommendations that reflect community issues with respect to the safety and well being of children, youth and their families on Vancouver Island.

Purpose:

1. *Supporting Organizational Change*

To serve as a resource to both MCFD and community to help facilitate the transformation by modeling, lobbying for, and celebrating collaborative working relationships and initiatives.

2. *Policy/Program Critique and/or Support*

To provide guidance and critique to support service planning, delivery and evaluation. We foster accountability within MCFD to the community by providing recommendations based on community needs and values. We strengthen the voice of the Regional Executive Director at the Provincial Executive table in representing the perspectives of communities in the region.

3. *Conduit for Communication Between MCFD and Community*

To provide a critical communication link between MCFD on Vancouver Island and the communities it serves. We are a conduit for information sharing providing a strong voice for

children, youth and their families, as well as informing community members about valuable MCFD services, resources and collaborative opportunities.

Objectives:

1. *Supporting Organizational Change*

- ✓ Understand what constitutes the 'community ideal' for supporting children, youth and their families, and participate in the collaborative planning necessary to make it happen
- ✓ Help define the role of community members in 'raising' the children of Vancouver Island
- ✓ Learn about the strengths and weaknesses of programs and services in the community
- ✓ Advocate for MCFD funded programs and services in the community that support innovative change
- ✓ Identify gaps in programs and services to address identified needs in the community, and areas where research is needed

2. *Policy/Program Critique and/or Support*

- ✓ Provide feedback to MCFD on developing regional policies and programs
- ✓ Bring local context/knowledge to regional planning and services delivery
- ✓ Offer recommendations based on what is currently successful in the community
- ✓ Identify challenges for communities in the implementation of policies, programs and services
- ✓ Model transparency in the consultation processes between Regional MCFD leadership, the Regional Executive Council and the communities of Vancouver Island

3. *Conduit for Communication Between MCFD and Community*

- ✓ Increase community understanding of MCFD plans and the services that are available
- ✓ Act as a conduit between community and MCFD to share plans and current activities
- ✓ Provide a vehicle for those with limited ability and/or opportunity to express their perspectives, concerns and experiences

4. *Accountability*

- ✓ Review and evaluate the Regional Advisory Council process and progress on a regular schedule

Governance:

1. *Membership*

- ✓ The Council will endeavour to reflect the geographic make-up of the region and actively seek out the range of perspectives needed to inform and guide various aspects of the Council's work. Guests will be invited to supplement group discussion. The membership will be capped at 15 members at any one time.
- ✓ Membership also includes the MCFD Regional Executive Director and Manager of Regional Planning for Vancouver Island.

2. *Term*

- ✓ The Council will be appointed for two years and will make recommendations on its composition, terms of reference, and process/criteria for selecting new members prior to the expiry of its first term. Some continuity will be encouraged.

3. *Resources*

- ✓ Access to resources such as staff support, equipment, materials, meeting space, travel expenses, day care to be provided by MCFD. Council acknowledges that resources are limited and need to be managed prudently.

4. *Decision-Making Processes*

- ✓ 2/3's of current membership is required to achieve a quorum
- ✓ All members may vote – unless circumstances dictate otherwise
- ✓ The Council will work toward achieving consensus
- ✓ Recommendations will be evidence-based

Meeting Management:

1. *Meeting Frequency*

- ✓ The Council will meet a minimum of five times per year, supplemented by SharePoint, internet, tele-conferences and ad hoc sub-committee meetings, as necessary.
- ✓ Meetings will be held on Saturdays, to accommodate work schedules, unless otherwise agreed upon by the group.

2. *Facilitation*

- ✓ Meetings will be chaired by a designated Council Chair and facilitated in partnership with the MCFD Manager of Regional Planning
- ✓ Council members will propose agenda items prior to each meeting. MCFD Manager of Regional Planning will post the proposed agenda items and supporting documents on the Council SharePoint site in advance of the meetings. Council will review, accept, reject and prioritize suggested agenda items at the beginning of each meeting. Standing agenda items will be established as the need is identified. This arrangement may be revisited as necessary.

3. *Minutes*

- ✓ Minutes of the meeting, consisting of decisions and action points be prepared by MCFD and posted on the SharePoint site for approval by the Council and then for posting on the MCFD intra/internet pages.

For more information about the Vancouver Island Regional Council, please visit the ministry's web site: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/vi/council.htm