THE LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA JUSTICE PROJECT –
ESTABLISHMENT OF A LAW SOCIETY JUSTICE PROJECT
WORKING GROUP

Senior Officer: Mary Woodford, General Manager Advocacy

Committee: Access to Justice Committee; Convenor – Gary Mack; Policy Lawyer – Priya Pillay; Council Rep – Greg McIntyre SC

Strategic Plan 2017/2020 – Strategic Priority – Strong Advocacy
 Communications Strategy:
☐ Website ☐ Friday Facts ☐ President’s Update email
☐ Media Release ☐ YLC eNews ☐ Letter to: __________________
☐ Brief article ☐ Special Alert ☐ Other: __________________

RECOMMENDATION:
Council:
  a) Endorses the work undertaken in the Law Council of Australia Justice Project Final Report;
  b) Notes a Justice Project Working Group will be established from relevant committees to prepare draft terms of reference, review the Report’s findings and make recommendations with a focus on Western Australian related issues; and
  c) Requests that the Executive, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager Advocacy consider the draft report and recommendations from the Working Group when finalised, and prepare a Directions Paper for approval by Council with respect to actions realistically able to be resourced and undertaken by the Law Society of Western Australia.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:
About the Justice Project
The Justice Project is a comprehensive, national review into the state of access to justice in Australia. The Project focuses on justice barriers facing those with significant social and economic disadvantage, as well as identifying what is working to reduce those barriers. The Justice Project, which began in early 2017, was overseen by an expert Steering Committee of eminent lawyers, jurists and academics, and chaired by former High Court Chief Justice, the Hon. Robert French AC.

The Law Council wants to understand how our most vulnerable people experience access to justice issues, and what needs to be done to deliver a fairer, more just system which delivers access to justice in Australia.

The Final Report details constructive and informed recommendations which provide a roadmap for future action, building the case for new, whole-of-government justice strategies secured by appropriate funding. It includes 59 recommendations and consists of 22 chapters totalling over 1400 pages. It also includes dedicated chapters for each of the 13 groups identified in the terms of reference as facing significant economic and social disadvantage.

The release of the Final Report has followed an extensive literature review and wide-ranging consultation process.

Law Society action
The Law Society has circulated the Final Report to all committees for comment, with a view to preparing a draft action plan for the Law Society to implement focused on Western Australian issues. The Access to Justice Committee recommends that the Council endorse the Final Report.

It is recommended that the Law Society establish a Justice Project Working Group constituted by two
members from each relevant committee (including Access to Justice, Elder Law and Succession, Indigenous Legal Issues, and Administrative, Constitutional and Migration Law). The Working Group will prepare terms of reference and undertake a review of the Report’s findings and prepare a draft implementation strategy to progress those recommendations relevant to Western Australia.

It is recommended that the Council:
   a) Endorses the work undertaken in the Law Council of Australia Justice Project Final Report;
   b) Notes a Justice Project Working Group will be established from relevant committees to prepare draft terms of reference, review the Report’s findings and make recommendations with a focus on Western Australian related issues; and
   c) Requests that the Executive, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager Advocacy consider the draft report and recommendations from the Working Group when finalised, and prepare a Directions Paper for approval by Council with respect to actions realistically able to be resourced and undertaken by the Law Society of Western Australia.

**ATTACHMENTS:**
- The Justice Project Recommendations and Priorities
- The Justice Project Overarching Themes