**SPSP National Leadership Group Communique – 16 August 2022**

**The Stronger Places, Stronger People (SPSP) National Leadership Group met in Burnie and virtually on 16 August 2022.**

The SPSP National Leadership Group (NLG) met in Burnie, Tasmania, in August for their first SPSP community visit and for their quarterly meeting.

The Group welcomed a new State Special Advisor, Carolyn Atkins, from the Victorian Government and special guest Mellissa Gray, from the Tasmanian Government, to the meeting. The Group also welcomed the SPSP community Backbone team leaders to their first NLG meeting and acknowledged the high calibre of the leaders and their work.

The Group thanked Rodney Greene and Burnie Works for hosting the meeting and community visit. They held a spotlight session on Burnie Works, where Rodney Greene highlighted the extensive progress made in Burnie and next steps in the work and invited members to ask questions on topics of interest regarding the Burnie Works initiative.

The Group held a working session with the Backbone leaders and discussed the current opportunity to align the priorities, focus areas and messaging of the NLG and SPSP communities. The Group discussed future directions of SPSP and ways to evidence impacts of community-led change. The Group noted the significance of using both quantitative and qualitative data and the important role that stories play as evidence of change.

The Group welcomed updates from the Department of Social Services regarding the commencement of the formal SPSP evaluation and ongoing data access work and discussed key issues around these. The Group acknowledged the importance of working with Inside Policy on the Evaluation design and scope and supported strong engagement with the NLG, state and territory partners and other key stakeholders in SPSP.

The strength and importance of the partnerships between the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments in supporting community-led change, a unique feature of the SPSP initiative, were highlighted.

The Group further discussed how they can support the social sector to align to community-led agendas. As proposed and agreed at the May NLG meeting, a working group has been established to progress this as a priority. Their proposal to develop a case study, and the proposed case study outline, were agreed by the Group. The working group will report back at the next NLG meeting.

Following previous Covid-19 related cancellations, the Group were enthusiastic regarding the proposal for the next NLG community visit to be held in Bourke, New South Wales.

End.