

# Both the Will and the Way to deliver for the community



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Changing the way governments do business is a lot like trying to break a habit – you have to address both the will and the process.

Just as it makes no sense to decide on a low calorie diet but still keep buying fast food, there is no future in government's announcing changes without following through with the administration.

An election commitment of the State Government was to establish a partnership with Local Government so as to better consult and ultimately deliver for the WA community.

To make the commitment to such an agreement, indeed even to sign a partnership agreement, demonstrates the will to make changes and the State Government has done that.

Last year the State Government signed a partnership agreement with the Local Government sector that set out protocols and timelines for consultation on policies, regulation and legislation.

But now too they have demonstrated that they are serious about changing the processes that underpin the way governments and agencies consult with the community.

A significant step in the process has been the formation of a working group of officials to get the work done in implementing the things agreed to under the political processes of the Agreement.

State and Local Government officials recently held the first meeting of the working group and began the implementation of a range of projects and actions to deliver on the Agreement.

These included initiating WALGA's review of the WA Jobs Plan to facilitate the creation of jobs and employment opportunities; modernisation of the planning system to be more efficient, open and understood; and reviewing fees and charges to be relevant, transparent and regularly indexed.

The group also considered the need for improved relationships between Elected Members and staff; a new climate change agreement to address challenges, particularly around coastal erosion; joint procurement efficiencies; refining the State/Local Government Road Funding Agreement; and delivering a clear vision for Local Government in WA.

Actions will now be put in place to give effect to these decisions. The Premier has already launched WALGA's review of the WA Jobs plan aimed at encouraging Local Governments to pursue job creation opportunities both within their communities and with their neighbours.

Both spheres of government also want transparency on fees and charges. Many existing fees and charges are outdated and don't recover costs associated with the services that they are meant to deliver resulting in ratepayers meeting the gap that should be carried by service users.

Also there are discussions well advanced between the sectors on the need to redress how to deal with the impacts of climate change, and in particular coastal erosion.

It all points to a proactive and productive future between State and Local Governments.

Currently in both sectors there is an increasing appetite, politically and within administration, to deliver a better outcome for the community. There is both the will and the way to improve the quality of life for all West Australians which should be the primary ambition of all sectors of government.



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