

# State and Local Government Partnership Agreement

AUGUST 2017





# AN AGREEMENT TO GUIDE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The State Government and the Local Government sector are fully committed to working together in partnership to improve the quality of life for citizens and communities throughout Western Australia. Improved quality of life relies on workforce participation, social inclusion, a healthy environment, a growing economy, improving productivity and vibrant communities.

Working together, the two spheres of government are more equipped to confront the major challenges facing Western Australia as well as everyday issues affecting local communities. The State Government, with its leadership and ability to set policy and implement programs for all of Western Australia, and the Local Government sector, with a presence in all Western Australian communities, have complementary strengths that can be combined to benefit Western Australia.

In a large and diverse State, working together is necessary to address challenges and to use government resources efficiently. In this way, a partnership approach improves public sector efficiency and can ensure our communities remain inclusive and vibrant. A robust partnership, built on trust and mutual respect, ensures good governance and better decision-making across both spheres of government. By combining resources, shared objectives to develop local and regional economies, improve communities and ensure a healthy environment can be achieved.

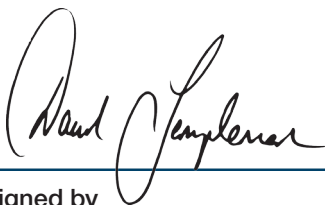
State and Local Government political and administrative leaders are encouraged to work with their public sector colleagues across both spheres of government in a collegiate spirit, based on trust and mutual respect, to achieve outcomes for the benefit of all Western Australians.



Signed by  
Hon Mark McGowan MLA  
Premier of Western Australia



Signed by  
Councillor Lynne Craigie  
President of the Western Australian  
Local Government Association



Signed by  
Hon David Templeman MLA  
Minister for Local Government



Signed by  
Mr Jonathan Throssell  
President of the Local Government  
Professionals Australia WA

*on this day the 2 of August 2017*



## OBJECTIVES

The State Government and the Local Government sector will work together to:

- enhance communication between both spheres of Government to promote —
  - transparent and accountable government
  - community engagement
  - seamless legislation and compliance requirements
  - better service delivery outcomes for communities across Western Australia;
- ensure appropriate consultation is undertaken between the two spheres of government; and
- provide good governance for, and on behalf of, the people of Western Australia.

## PRINCIPLES

This Partnership Agreement is based on the following principles:

1. Partnerships
  - a. Both spheres of government recognise the importance and benefits of working together in partnership; and
  - b. The complementary strengths of both spheres of government are acknowledged.
2. Communication
  - a. Both spheres of government undertake open and timely communication in relation to matters affecting the other sector.
3. Consultation
  - a. Both spheres of government undertake timely consultation regarding matters affecting the other sector; and
  - b. Consultation timelines and processes will be guided by this Agreement.
4. Accountability
  - a. Both spheres of government accept accountability for their decisions and decision-making processes.
5. Service delivery
  - a. Both spheres of government aim to deliver appropriate services efficiently and effectively; and
  - b. Both spheres of government aim to avoid duplication of services.
6. Community engagement
  - a. Both spheres of government acknowledge the importance of appropriate community engagement practices; and
  - b. The opportunity for Local Government Community Strategic Plans to inform State initiatives is considered.
7. Reciprocity
  - a. A two way partnership conveying respect and consideration for engaging the other sector when matters arise.
8. Roles and responsibilities
  - a. Both spheres of government acknowledge the roles and responsibilities of each sphere.



## STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP GROUP

A State and Local Government Partnership Group shall be formed and will aim to meet at least once per year to discuss matters of importance to both sectors.

The State and Local Government Partnership Group shall comprise:

- Premier;
- Treasurer;
- Minister for Local Government;
- Minister for Planning / Transport;
- WALGA President;
- LG Professionals President; and
- Such other Ministers and Local Government representatives as appropriate to the subject

matter on the agenda.

The Partnership Group will address:

- Strategic issues relating to the relationship between State and Local Government;
- Strategic policy and program matters where State and Local Government are key stakeholders; and
- Policy formation of a State or community interest to Local Government or where Local Government will be impacted.

## MEETINGS AT OTHER TIMES

To facilitate robust relationships, it is important that senior figures from both spheres of government are available to meet as issues arise.

## COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION PRINCIPLES AND PROTOCOL

Sufficient time for consultation and to identify stakeholders should be included in the planning stages for developing or amending legislation, policy and programs to ensure considered input and informed decision making.



## CONSULTING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local Government is a major stakeholder in many State Government decisions relating to legislation, policy and programs. As a party to the Agreement, the State Government, in good faith, will endeavour to consult with Local Government where it is appropriate to do so.

Both spheres of government acknowledge circumstances where consultation may be limited or not possible.

The State Government should consult with Local Government when developing, amending or reviewing State legislation and regulations, policies or programs that will significantly impact Local Government operations or resources.

Where appropriate and practicable, consultation should be for:

- 12 weeks – for proposals that will have a significant impact on Local Government responsibilities or operations. Examples include:
  - o New legislation and amendments to existing legislation that will impact Local Government; and
  - o Proposals and policy decisions that will have an impact on Local Government expenditure.
- 8 weeks – for proposals to amend regulations or other compliance requirements that will have an impact on Local Government’s responsibilities or operations. Examples include:

- o Regulatory change that will affect Local Governments – for example, regulations relating to the *Local Government Act 1995*, *Planning and Development Act 2005*, *Public Health Act 2016*, etc.

- 4 weeks – for proposals relating to changes in operating procedure or practice which will have a limited impact. Examples include:

- o Changes to operating guidelines; and
- o Circulars or policies clarifying or codifying existing responsibilities or arrangements.

When consulting at a State level, WALGA and LG Professionals should be the first point of contact. These two peak bodies are able, through formal and informal policy development processes, to develop representative responses and submissions on behalf of their respective memberships.

For more localised issues, it may be appropriate for Local Governments to be consulted individually or in groups. WALGA Zone groupings and WALGA Zone meetings may present opportunities for groups of Local Governments to be consulted.

Local Government should be consulted as early as possible in the process to elicit meaningful contributions.



## CONSULTING WITH THE STATE GOVERNMENT

The State Government is an important stakeholder in many Local Government decisions.

Individual Local Governments should consult with the State Government when developing or reviewing Local Government or Council policies, as well as local laws or planning schemes, which will impact State Government operations or resources.

For significant or State-wide issues, WALGA

will liaise with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries or the appropriate State Government agency.

Individual Local Governments or regional groups of Local Governments will consult with the relevant government agency in relation to local or regional matters.

The State Government should be consulted as early as possible, with twelve weeks being the minimum suggested consultation period.

## GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

State and Local Government must lead by example and demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to high standards of governance and transparency to maintain community confidence in government decision making.

Both spheres of government commit to working together to improve decision making processes that deliver greater transparency and community accountability: recognising and respecting that each sphere of government and the community are a partner in this process.





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