

# Putting the Public First: Economic Audit Implementation

No. 4

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Hello,

The Partnership Forum considered a number of significant matters at its second meeting on 5 October. The Partnership Forum agreed another meeting would be required in November to further progress, in particular, the review of community sector funding and establishment of the Social Innovation Grants Program. This meeting will be held on 10 November.

In this edition of the newsletter we provide an update on: the discussions of the Partnership Forum; work to involve consumers in the Economic Audit implementation, including through an upcoming workshop and a project on self directed services; and the establishment of project teams to further outcomes in the areas of mental health, early childhood and homelessness.

Best wishes,

The Economic Audit Implementation Team.

## Partnership Forum

The Partnership Forum, which is comprised of heads of public and community sector organisations, held its second meeting on 5 October. The Forum considered a number of significant pieces of work, including community sector funding and procurement reforms.

The Forum discussed progress in examining and quantifying the shortfall in funding for existing contracts for the delivery of community services. The Forum is finalising its review and will provide its recommendations to the Premier following its next meeting on 10 November.

The Forum endorsed a set of *Partnership Principles* (and associated behaviours) required to practically support a true partnership between the public sector and the community not-for-profit sector. The *Principles* includes recognition of the value that the community sector has to broader community well-being beyond just delivering services.

The Forum considered a *Collaboration for Community Policy* intended to provide a clear framework for the procurement relationship between Government and the community sector. The Forum agreed that the policy should identify the key behaviours which will demonstrate the Partnership Principles in procurement practices; outline the different funding and contracting requirements and guide the selection of the best

arrangement for particular relationships and services; and, reduce the administrative burden of both sectors including through a pre-qualification process, standard templates and streamlined reporting.

The Forum agreed to further options to administer the Community Development Investment Fund being explored, including consideration of new directions at the Commonwealth level. Finally, the Forum endorsed the strategic direction of the Social Innovation Grants Program, which is on track to commence in January 2011.

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## Consumer Engagement Workshop

Consumer engagement is central to the Economic Audit implementation. We would like consumers to tell us directly their preferences for how they can engage in the development and implementation of these reforms. A workshop will be advertised shortly. Other than attending this workshop, please feel free to contact us at any time.

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### Outcome Area Project Teams

The Economic Audit Committee Final Report made a number of recommendations to improve outcomes for citizens in Western Australia. Recommendations 3, 7 and 8 seek to enhance the strategic management of service delivery by adopting an 'Outcome Area' approach, improving the performance reporting regime by aligning it with Outcome Areas, developing consistent key performance indicators, and using a cross sectoral evaluation network and access to common data sets to strengthen the evidence base for decision making.

The Policy Capacity and Collaboration Steering Group recently endorsed the establishment of three practical on-the-ground projects to build reform in policy capacity from the ground up and deliver better outcomes for the community.

Mental health, early childhood and homelessness have been chosen as the three priority areas.

It is anticipated that the project teams will:

- articulate desired outcomes that lead to demonstrable improvements in the lives of people; and
- involve a collaborative approach to policy development and implementation by bringing together diverse input from the different agencies and sectors and the community;

The project teams include representatives of State Government agencies, community sector organisations, local government and research institutes. It is intended that the project teams will, as a priority, engage directly with consumers to contribute to the projects. If you are interested in contributing to these exciting projects, please get in touch.

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### Consumer engagement in self directed services

Self directed services (SDS) aims to give individuals, families and communities more control and choice over how the services they access are designed and delivered. The Community Building Steering Group is overseeing the formation of a small project team to help progress SDS in Western Australia.

The project team will be comprised of members from both the public and community sectors. It will be supported by a high-level reference group, which will provide strategic direction. Together with consumers, these groups will progress key initiatives to promote awareness of SDS, share findings and, ultimately, encourage and facilitate a shift towards SDS. These initiatives include publishing a discussion paper and hosting a conference on SDS in early 2011.

This approach will have a number of key benefits including: a shared understanding of the concept and merits of SDS and its possible application to different areas of policy and service delivery; and the identification of alternative approaches to service delivery that are more responsive to citizen needs and are financially viable for service delivery agencies.

It is intended that the SDS implementation process will at all times be guided and informed by consumers. One key strategy is the inclusion of consumers and consumer representative organisations on the reference group.

The Project Team is currently developing a concept paper on SDS with guidance from the reference group. It is intended that this concept paper will feed into the discussion paper. An SDS workshop is proposed for early December to inform the discussion paper and conference planning. The workshop will be primarily open to consumers, who are strongly encouraged to attend.

We are keen to get direction and guidance from consumers from the outset. Please contact us if you would like to discuss SDS.

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