

# Western Australian Public Libraries: Our Future Background Paper



Front cover images (L-R, clockwise): courtesy of City of Melville, City of Wanneroo, City of Melville, City of Cockburn.

# Foreword from the Chair, Public Library Working Group

The Public Library Working Group (PLWG) was established in 2016, in recognition of the important contribution that public libraries make to Western Australian communities. The Group provided a structure for public library service provision planning between State and local government. The list of PLWG members is shown at the end of this document.



The PLWG was tasked with developing a shared vision and strategic framework to ensure our 231 public libraries remain relevant, contemporary and engaged with communities. That shared vision has been incorporated into this background paper, and has become the basis for the proposed WA Public Libraries Strategy that will mark a new chapter in the WA's public library system.

The strategy is a five-step action plan for transformational change to WA's public library system to deliver more efficient and flexible services that meet WA's growing and diverse community needs. Libraries are vibrant community hubs that have stood the test of time as hallmarks of civil societies. Libraries are in greater demand than ever as cultural, learning and recreational centres, providers of knowledge and skills, guardians of our cultural heritage and modern service providers, as well as playing a crucial role in the information society. Libraries continue to provide access to information for all, bridge the digital divide, support literacy, play a key role in community cohesiveness, facilitate citizenship and support learning for life, from early childhood to seniors, in a safe and welcoming environment.

There has been much international discussion, debate and research on the role of public libraries and their contribution to an accessible and civic society. In Western Australia the community wants its public libraries to remain as relevant tomorrow as they are today. The PLWG developed this paper to promote thinking about public libraries, the strategic opportunities, policy recommendations and potential reform directions.

This paper outlines the current strategic landscape, including the issues and challenges, drawing together key research to date into a consolidated document to facilitate the shaping of the policy reform and investment agenda for government across the identified drivers for change, which comprise of:

Integrated planning
 Good governance
 Best value service delivery
 Public value
 Community engagement and place-making

The PLWG recognised that many of the issues raised and potential opportunities are not new. What is new is the commitment to drive transformational change to the public library sector by all parties, and to ensure that all decisions made are in consideration of the long term vision for the future and provide the best return on investment for the Western Australian community.

We need to think strategically about what else is being achieved by public libraries to ensure that the workforce, resourcing and funding enables libraries to grow and reflect the needs of their communities now and into the future. We also need to develop strong partnerships to deliver services smarter and with greater efficiency.

The potential opportunities are designed to strengthen public library services to ensure best value for investment is derived for both government and the community, and in doing so contribute to the cultural vibrancy of Western Australia. Priorities identified from these potential opportunities will form a strategy for consultation to develop a strategic vision for public library development over the next four years.

The PLWG seeks your commitment to being a change-maker to help us establish the strategic direction for public libraries to secure long-term growth and sustainability. We cannot do it alone.

#### Duncan Ord OAM Chair, Public Library Working Group

Director General, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

# Contents

Delivering public library services in WA	5
The strategic landscape	9
Responding to drivers for change	14
Integrated planning	14
Good governance	20
Best value service delivery	24
Public value	27
Community engagement and place-making	30
Public Library Working Group Members	33
Appendices	34
Endnotes	38
References	40



# Delivering public library services in WA

# A partnered approach

Since the early 1950s, the Library Board of Western Australia has delivered public library services through the State Library of Western Australia (SLWA), in partnership with local government. There are currently 231 public libraries in Western Australia, operated by 142 participating bodies including 139 local governments, including Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Investment for the provision of public library services is shared between local governments, which provide the library building, staff and fund operating costs; and SLWA which is responsible for purchasing and delivering shelf ready stock and providing support services to public libraries throughout the State. SLWA provides additional support to the 161 remote and regional libraries.

Public Libraries Western Australia (PLWA) is the State's peak representative body for public libraries. PLWA provides significant support to the library sector and actively participates in the reform of public libraries. PLWA's recent *Inspiring Stories* report demonstrates the power of the public library to build capacity, meet local needs, and create a sense of place. From children's book clubs to digital literacy programs, the case studies featured in the report highlight how the role of public libraries has evolved from predominantly traditional service delivery to a much more community-oriented approach.

The Western Australian public library system has served the community well for over six decades, characterised by funding tied to resources, a centrally coordinated Statewide exchange system, centralised purchasing, processing and distribution of library resources, a State-wide online catalogue and a centrally coordinated inter library loans system.<sup>2</sup>

Engaging people in culture and arts is central to a connected, creative and civil society.

Arts Leadership Group 2015

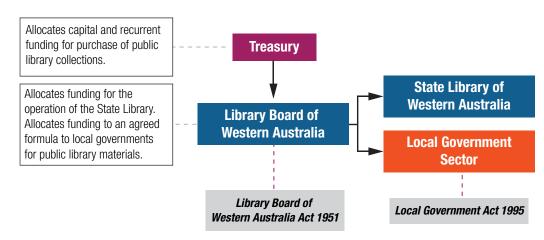


Fig. 1 - Libraries funding structure

# Current Agreed Roles and Responsibilities

# **Public Library Working Group**

The Public Library Working Group provides a structure for public library planning between State and Local Government across the State. Members of the Public Library Working Group at the time of developing the background paper were:

- Department of Culture and the Arts (Chair)
- Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC),
- State Library of Western Australia (SLWA),
- Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA),
- Public Libraries Western Australia (PLWA).

#### **State Library of Western Australia**

- Provide a framework for ordering collection items.
- Centralised purchasing and supply of collections funded by the State.
- Management of Exchange system refreshing collections in participating libraries.
- Provide direct support to three of the 11 regions.
- Maintain a Union catalogue of State funded stock.
- Provide an inter-library loan system to share items.
- Provide centralised collections (e.g. resources, Languages Other Than English (LOTE).
- Support professional development and training.
- Develop and maintain programs such as Better Beginnings, Storylines, etc.
- Collect and share statistics on public library services and use.
- Provide Central Enquiry Service and Public Libraries Online.

Supply of services to all public libraries (who determine which services to use).

Report on performance/ services via statistical return. Comply with the *Library Board of Western Australia Act 1951*.

#### **Local Government Authorities**

- Plan, develop and review library services.
- Provide library infrastructure and manage and maintain assets.
- Provide funding for additional library stock as required and maintain stock.
- Provide, maintain and upgrade library technology.
- Provide library staffing.
- Provide information and reader services.
- Provide library programs.
- Exchange stock for those local governments participating.
- Report to SLWA and local Council on services and performance.
- Participate in the state-wide inter library loan service.

Fig. 2 - Current agreed roles and responsibilities

<sup>\*</sup>The titles of the Departments were current during the development of the Background Paper. Machinery of Government changes that took effect from 1 July 2017 included the amalgamation of the Department of Culture and the Arts and the local government functions of the Department of Local Government and Communities in the establishment of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC).

# **Understanding the value**

Public libraries are valued civic assets.

They are safe spaces, and by virtue of their accessibility, they improve social cohesion. All over the world, libraries are trusted institutions, a 'third place' (neither home nor the workplace) where everyone, especially those who cannot afford to access or purchase information, can find that information and the guidance that they need.

Libraries also stimulate national and local economic growth.

Approximately \$3.18 billion of economic stimulus is provided to the Australian economy by public libraries each year, and nearly 40,000 jobs are supported by public library services. Public libraries are the most used local government service with consistently high satisfaction ratings.

Research commissioned by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) concluded that, "The level of investment in public library services does not display a pattern of diminishing returns... rather the larger the investment made into public libraries, the larger the benefits derived by the respective communities." Put simply, public libraries are a good investment for the wellbeing of Australian communities.

To ensure best value is derived we need to take a closer look at the business of libraries now and into the future.

KEY PU	IBLIC LIBRARY STATISTICS*
231	Public libraries in Western Australia
1,090,259	Active library members
16,247,690	Physical loans
369,641	New items were delivered to public libraries
\$11,100,000	Spent on public library resources
El	ECTRONIC RESOURCES
606,075	e-books and e-audio books were borrowed
50,493	e-books and e-audio books available
230,984	e-magazines borrowed
602,752	Downloads from databases
47 per cent	Increase in the usage of digital materials
	PROGRAM DELIVERY
9814	Programs for adults
16,847	Children's activities
500,000	People attended library programs

\*2015-16 Figures.



# The journey of reform

Public libraries are an excellent example of a mature community service that is ready for change. Queensland, Victoria and South Australia have recognised this and are increasing their investment in strategic planning, staff development, infrastructure and technology, in order to maintain relevance and deliver the range of services required to meet community needs.

In Western Australia, the reform of public libraries continues to be an iterative process. The development and support of the public library network is one of SLWA's key priorities, along with treasuring the stories of Western Australia, championing literacy and learning and cultivating creative ideas.

Until 2015, Western Australia's public library reform agenda was underpinned by the Framework Agreement between State and Local Government for the Provision of Public Library Services in Western Australia, which provided a shared vision for the State's public library service as a sustainable and responsive network of vibrant, connected, and well-resourced free public libraries that are hubs of community life.<sup>4</sup> Although the Framework Agreement expired in 2015, it provides a suitable framework to review the key principles, and roles and responsibilities of the State and local government for the provision of public library services.

Over the past decade, the Library Board of Western Australia has supported the public library reform process with a focus on technological innovation and literacy that has influenced the way libraries provide services, as well as providing the impetus to drive the reform process.

In Western Australia, extensive research and consultation has occurred between the State Government, local government and public libraries to re-imagine public library services and to develop a vision for the future. At a strategic level, several committees and working groups have been established to consider reform opportunities, the most



recent being the Public Library Working Group (PLWG). The PLWG was established to develop a shared vision and strategic framework for public libraries in Western Australia.

The Operational Management Group (OMG) was established in 2009 to lead key operational reform.

The OMG provides operational leadership and advice on public library issues between the State and local government. Its focus is on the provision of technical advice and guidance, development of model policies, operating procedures and documentation of best practice.

Further information is included at Appendix 1.

# The strategic landscape

Planning and investment in public library services cannot be done in isolation; it must sit within the context of local, State and national policy frameworks, budget considerations, and the service delivery needs and aspirations of the communities they serve.

"Delivering on priorities requires clear leadership, strategic policy and long-term planning, a focus on implementation and robust performance management and evaluation." <sup>5</sup>

#### **Western Australia - a snapshot**



At June 2015, 18 per cent of the State's population was aged 60 years and older, with the proportion expected to grow to 25 per cent by 2050.



Western Australia is one of the most culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse states in Australia, with 30.7 per cent of the population born overseas.



In October 2015, Western Australia accounted for 56 per cent of the value of Australia's major resource projects. <sup>6,7</sup>



The 2015 *WA Tomorrow Report* forecasts a population of 3.27 million by 2026.

We need to be co-designing and investing in smarter services that integrate across Government, private and not-for-profit sector.

WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission 2017-18

State and local governments play a significant role in supporting their communities' well-being through the planning and investment of infrastructure, programs and service delivery. Western Australia's local governments are governed by the *Local Government Act 1995*, which sets out the function of local government, which, in broad terms, is to provide good governance for their communities.

Local governments are required to engage with their community to establish a vision that will frame priorities and objectives for the future. They must balance the needs of the community against legislative requirements, fiscal realities and emerging social imperatives.

For libraries, these challenges differ greatly across the State. Rural and remote libraries continue to experience barriers such as geographic isolation, inadequate telecommunications and infrastructure, limited resources, lack of professionally qualified library staff and limited opening hours. The sheer size of the State and low population base are also major challenges.

Metropolitan libraries are also facing increased pressures, with many facing unprecedented population growth and lags in infrastructure, poor facilities, inadequate staffing levels, increasing diversity in the population mix and high levels of expectation and demand.<sup>8</sup>

SLWA has multiple roles over which its resources need to be applied and balanced. In addition to supporting the public library network, the SLWA has legislated responsibilities to collect, preserve and make available Western Australia's documentary heritage and provide a research library service to the Western Australian community.

SLWA also coordinates and operates, on behalf of the public library network, a number of State-wide services and contracts. SLWA operates within a limited fiscal environment resulting in reduced capacity to respond to the needs of the public library network and meet the increased community demand for its own services.

Whilst the Library Board of Western Australia has strived to balance these two demands, it has not been possible to fully meet the demand for library services from the community, nor the demand for support and reform from the public library network.

# **Capacity to meet need**

The capacity of local government to provide additional investment to libraries is limited by available financial resources. Local governments raise more than 80% of their revenue through user charges and property rates, with the remaining revenue coming from State and Commonwealth Governments grants.

Smaller populations mean that many rural and regional councils are not able to collect the same revenues as their urban and larger regional counterparts, and are consequently much more reliant on external funding sources.<sup>9</sup>

# **Planning for the future**

In Western Australia, the importance of planning and coordination of community and cultural infrastructure is recognised and supported within the *State Planning Strategy 2050* and associated policies. <sup>10</sup> There are a range of Commonwealth and State Government policies that influence public library service delivery.

The Department of Planning's *State Planning Policy 3.6 Developer Contributions for Infrastructure and Guidelines* sets out the principles and considerations that apply to development contributions for the provision of infrastructure in new and established urban areas, including libraries.<sup>11</sup> Developer contributions are an essential part of the planning system that supports the development of healthier and cohesive communities. The policy provides for consultation between the State Government and local government to ensure the future needs of the community are met through strategic land-use and facilities planning.

Strategic Directions 2016-2031, developed by the Arts Leadership Group outlined a joint vision for the arts and cultural sectors with measurable milestones. It recognises the valuable contribution of public libraries to the wellbeing of the community, and sets bold aspirations to ensure sustainability and vibrancy across the arts, culture and creative industries sectors.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, The Library Board of Western Australia's annual report 2015-16 and SLWA's *Strategic Directions 2013-17* highlight the continued reform and service delivery changes that are improving the public library network, with a particular focus on improving literacy outcomes, increasing materials and programs to cater for Western Australia's multicultural population and supporting regional service delivery. <sup>13,14</sup>

Through a partnership between PLWA and the Office of Multicultural Interests, PLWA has been funded to creatively engage and collaborate with Culturally and Linguistically

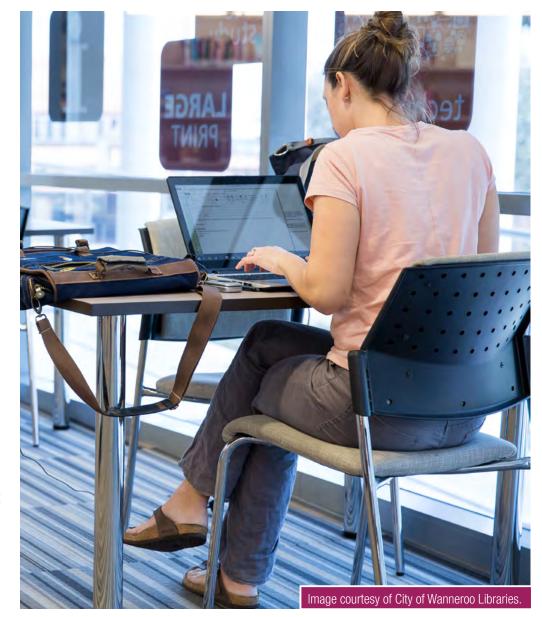
Diverse (CaLD) communities to identify priorities for the future development, delivery and evaluation of library services, and highlight existing examples of good practice for engaging with CaLD communities.

There are 287 discrete Aboriginal communities in Western Australia spanning 26 local government areas and accommodating approximately 17,000 Aboriginal people. Successive Commonwealth Governments have developed and funded policies and programs designed to improve the socio-economic status of Aboriginal Australians, and to overcome a long history of poverty and marginalisation. Despite these efforts, there has been only modest improvement in some areas, and many Aboriginal Australians continue to experience high levels of disadvantage in living standards, life expectancy, education, health and employment.

The Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) National Aboriginal Reform Agreement provides the current framework for the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments to work together with Aboriginal Australians and the broader community to achieve the target of 'Closing the Gap' in Aboriginal disadvantage. The Closing the Gap strategy includes seven targets relating to Aboriginal life expectancy, health, education and employment, which need to be in place in order to address the current level of disadvantage.

ALIA's response to the Australian Government's National Action Plan 2016-18 highlighted public libraries as an excellent platform for government communication and public education initiatives, and a mechanism to improve the discoverability and accessibility of government data and information. <sup>15</sup> In consideration of far-reaching transformation processes involving the digitisation of many aspects affecting our lives, it is important to develop a long-term technology investment plan for WA public libraries.

Other peak bodies, like the Chamber of Arts and Culture WA and Community Arts Network, have recognised the value of partnering with public libraries and are looking at ways to improve collaboration and maximise opportunities.



The 2015 *Arts and Culture in Western Australian Local Government* report highlighted the commitment of the (then) 139 Western Australian local government authorities and that their significant investment of \$155 million in cultural activities was the third highest per capita figure nationally.<sup>16</sup>

#### **Future considerations**

Public libraries are at the heart of community inclusion and access to services.

As libraries grow to meet changing needs, decision makers need to understand the economic and social benefits of their investment and identify the best strategies to support and improve service delivery.

The future opportunities and considerations are captured in the following section of this paper and are presented as the **key drivers for change**:

- Integrated planning;
- Good governance;
- Best value service delivery;
- Public value; and
- Community engagement and place-making.

There is a need for significant transformational change at both the State and local level in order to deliver more efficient and flexible public library services that meet diverse community needs.<sup>17</sup>

Research tells us that people are connected to the idea of libraries, and they are gateways to the community that provide safe places where people can connect with resources, learn new skills and meet new people.



Library staff and volunteers are passionate and committed to supporting customers' lifelong learning and access to services. However, there is a general consensus that public libraries need to be redefined to ensure they are relevant, valued and sustainable, and positioned to meet the challenges of constrained budgets, technology advancements and diverse community needs.

The research demonstrates the value and necessity of a strategic approach to the development of the public library services.

Libraries are moving away from being solely transaction-oriented resource lenders towards more activity focused community spaces. In addition, there is an emerging link between libraries and community development functions as a driver for workforce development. The way in which we measure the impact and value of libraries is largely through transactional indicators rather than qualitative measures and value to the community.

Libraries are leveraging technological changes to improve access to knowledge through education, digitising collections and service improvements. The challenge is to remain relevant and at the forefront of technology.

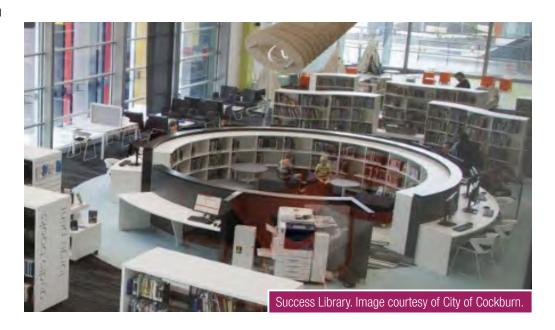
Taking into account previous reform, current trends and research outcomes, the PLWG identified the following **seven key reform priorities:** 

- 1. Legislative reform
- 2. New model for regional remote library services including strengthening the relationship with Community Resource Centres;
- 3. Single card access system;
- 4. Grants systems based on standards;
- 5. Incentive programs for innovative libraries;
- 6. A new model for support of WA public libraries; and
- 7. Public value modelling.

These priorities are discussed within the context of the identified drivers for change: integrated planning, good governance, best value service delivery, public value and community engagement and place-making.

In times of increasing digitalisation, it is important to secure public libraries' long-term future.

Dr. Frank-Simon-Ritz, Chairman of the German Library Association



# Responding to drivers for change

# **Integrated planning**

Public libraries serve their communities in ways that reflect and respond to local needs and priorities. Well-located, well-designed, accessible facilities and services encourage community participation, which in turn builds strong, socially inclusive, connected and active communities. There is a trend across all levels of government to work together more closely instead of providing stand-alone services.

There are examples of partnerships between local governments and not for profit providers to deliver library services.

The Western Australian Disability Enterprise (WADE) is contracted to provide the library courier service in the metropolitan region. At the Subiaco Library, Educated by Nature delivers a story time session named 'Wildtime' with outdoor adventures targeted towards fathers and sons. These examples of alternative models already used by WA public libraries illustrate the increased opportunities for collaborative approaches to service delivery. The determination of what works best will vary depending on local community needs and potential partners.

The vastness of Western Australia presents many challenges for service delivery. Regional Development Commissions support economic and social development in regional communities. There are nine Commissions across the State: Gascoyne, Goldfields, Great Southern, Kimberley, Mid—West, Peel, Pilbara, South West and Wheatbelt.<sup>20</sup> Each Commission has developed a regional blueprint setting out the aspirations and opportunities for the respective region.

Royalties for Regions (RfR) funding is delivered through the Commissions enabling it to be directed to the region's identified priorities. For example, the Kimberley Development Commission's blueprint highlights that its median population age is six years younger than the State as a whole, and literacy and numeracy rates are below those for the rest

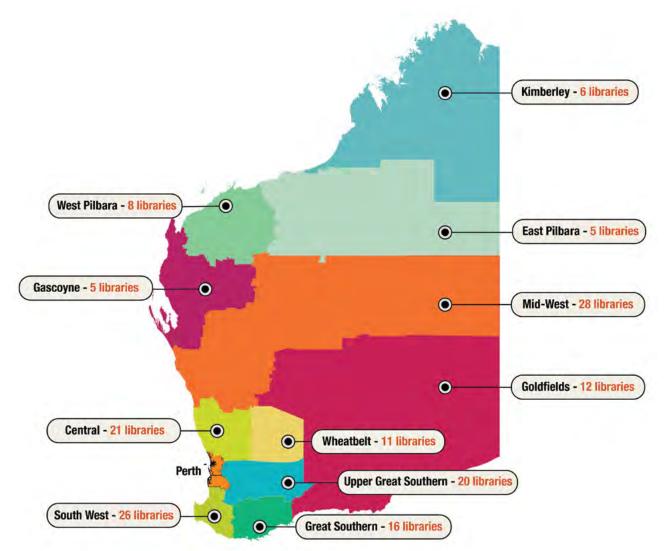


of the State and Australia.<sup>21</sup> The blueprint argues that literacy and numeracy rates can be improved with a commitment to innovation and appropriate policy settings.

One of the key challenges for SLWA is providing support to the 161 remote and regional public libraries. SLWA has established a 'hub and spoke' model, with 11 identified regions. Under the model, eight regional libraries receive additional funding to support smaller and remote libraries in their region and develop an annual activity plan detailing the support they will provide in the region for the coming year, which is assessed by SLWA. The remaining three regions are supported directly by SLWA, in addition to libraries located in the Indian Ocean Territories on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, including the selection of new and used resources.

An internal review in 2011 suggested that the regional model needs reform, and that an alternative model focused on strengthening local partnerships and opportunities for service delivery should be considered. The need for this regional reform is also reflected in the SLWA's *Strategic Directions 2013-2017*.

## State Library of Western Australia – Regional Library Model



Region	Libraries
<b>Great Southern</b>	Albany Public Library
South West Region	Bunbury Public Library
<b>Upper Great Southern Region</b>	Supported by the SLWA
East Pilbara Region	South Hedland Public Library
Gascoyne Region	Carnavon Public Library
Kimberley Region	Broome Public Library
Mid West Region	Geraldton Regional Library
West Pilbara Region	South Hedland Public Library
Wheatbelt Region	Merredin Public Library
Goldfields Region	Supported by the SLWA
<b>Central Region</b>	Supported by the SLWA

<sup>\*</sup>Map does not include 3 libraries in the Indian Ocean Territories, i.e. Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands.



#### **Shared use arrangements**

Libraries often collaborate with other local services through co-location in the same building, shared access to facilities in order to share costs and improve the customer experience, or through integration of the management of services.

The majority of shared use agreements between the State and local governments have been successful in enabling efficiencies and increased access to facilities and services by the community. Two examples of shared use arrangements are with the Department of Education on school sites, and Community Resource Centres (CRCs) that are colocated with public libraries. Lake Grace is an example of a co-located service, with a school library and community library at one end of the building and a CRC at the other end — each with its own opening hours.

The Western Australian Community Resource Network (WACRN) consists of more

than 100 rural, remote and regional CRCs that are independently owned and operated by the local communities and provide a range of information and community based services to local people, businesses and visitors to Western Australia. In 2013, Western Australian Regional Development Trust undertook a review of the CRC network, which highlighted clear synergies with public libraries, and opportunities for future partnership development.<sup>22</sup> The SLWA submission to the review noted that there are 30 CRCs that also provide library services, and further opportunities exist to extend this model of co-location, particularly in remote Western Australia. For further information about current shared use libraries with CRCs across Western Australia, please refer to Appendix 2.

The 2017-18 State Budget papers show that the funding to be allocated to CRCs will be \$13 million for 2017-18 and 2018-19; and \$8.0 million for 2019-20 and 2020-21.<sup>23</sup> The Minister for Regional Development had previously advised that the term of the next contract for CRCs would be reduced to 18 months, to enable a review of CRCs to be undertaken. This would include a review of CRC locations, usage, level of service provided and how resources are allocated between the regions.

Both the State Records Office (SRO) and the SLWA are physically located in the Alexander Library Building, which is located in the Perth Cultural Centre. Both entities hold collections of the State's documentary heritage which is accessed by hard copy, in person or online.

On 1 July 2017, the State Records Office (SRO) was administratively placed in the SLWA. Prior to this date, the SRO was administratively placed in the former Department of Culture and the Arts.

This is an administrative change only and the SRO will continue to support the independent State Records Commission (SRC) and the legislative responsibilities of the State Archivist and Executive Director State Records in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*. The SRC will continue to be independent and have the same status as other entities that have an accountability role for Government, such as the Office of the Auditor General. One of the reasons for changing the administrative placement was the potential to create a

single workforce of specialist positions and the sharing of digital collections systems and physical service locations, resulting in greater flexibility and improved public service delivery and single cohesive access to the State's documentary heritage. As part of the MoG changes, the Aboriginal History and Research Unit from the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs now forms part of the new DLGSC. The Unit will also relocate to the Alexander Library Building, providing another information/research service based around using SRO and SLWA documents to meet the specific needs of Aboriginal people.

On 20 July 2017, the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) released a <u>position</u> <u>statement on the State Records Office of WA</u>. The ASA stated it remains concerned that the change will reduce the finances and regulatory power of the SRO and is seeking for the SRO to not be administratively placed in the SLWA.

In its position statement, the ASA advises that libraries and archives have different missions and methods. The ASA advises that the mission of libraries is to maximise public access to information sources, mostly online and published sources; and that records and archives in digital and traditional form arise mainly from natural accumulation, not selective collection.

The ASA further argues in its position statement that "archivists, records managers and librarians have different areas of expertise and competence, resulting in the requirement for tripartite accreditation of degrees. Professional practice further develops these areas, including differences in appraising material for inclusion in the archive, descriptive practices and working with source records across the records continuum. SLWA currently has no archivists working for it and has minimal recordkeeping experience or expertise. The staff cannot assist with archival description or management or with records management training for government agencies.

The areas in which the SRO requires support cannot be met from the Library's specialist areas, other than conservation. Nor do archives and libraries share common

delivery systems for content. Library descriptive systems are designed for a different purpose and meet different standards. SRO collection content can be harvested for use in a range of library discovery layers, including the National Library's TROVE portal, but the full context does not carry across."

In 2004, Canada became one of the first countries in the world to combine its national library and its national archives. Dr. Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist of Canada delivered a speech on 20 August 2015 at the World Library and Information Congress that was held in Capetown, South Africa. The speech was also published in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) journal.

"Behind the creation of the new institution, called Library and Archives Canada (LAC), there was the vision of a new kind of knowledge organization, fully integrated between two disciplines and equipped to respond to the information demands of the 21st century."

The paper further states that, "By being both a national library and a national archives it has a unique opportunity to question the old ways of doing things, to find new routes to fulfil its mandate, and to mirror back the society we are busily documenting — one which is fluid, interconnected, spontaneous, and decidedly un-hierarchical."

The SRO also aligns well with the direction of digital transformation of Government information led by the <u>Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (GCIO)</u>. Therefore there is also the potential to disaggregate the SRO from its current administrative placement in the SLWA.

On 6 December 2017 the final report on the Service Priority Review was released. <sup>24, 25</sup>

The Service Priority Review is one of several measures being implemented to drive significant reform and cultural change across the public sector, in order to deliver better services for the community. The final report states: "With sustained, patient and thoughtful reform, WA can aspire to having the best public sector in Australia. But to



realise this, the sector must arrange its institutions well, design and deliver services to meet contemporary needs, and manage and develop its workforce with thought to the future. It must have absolute clarity about the Government's priorities and it must foster and develop leadership at all levels to serve the public interest.

"The WA public sector has an opportunity now to capitalise on its strengths to achieve purposeful reform. There is widespread agreement across the sector about what needs to change and there is already good practice that can be more effectively harnessed. There is also vast experience in reform outside the State that can be drawn upon."

The final report recommends that the Government establishes system-wide leadership to drive performance across common functions. It recommends developing a functional leadership framework and allocating responsibility for leadership of common functions across the sector, beginning with human resources, procurement, and ICT. The report also suggests introducing less formal 'heads of profession' or 'communities of practice'

arrangements to build capability and expertise in key professions across government, explaining that "There are multiple benefits from arrangements allowing greater collegiality and shared knowledge, including professional growth and enhanced skills for individual officers and efficiencies for the sector and the community."

Based on these recommendations, the State Library could take on the 'professional leader' role for WA government libraries service, particularly in the context of the Machinery of Government reforms.

## **Partnering with business**

There has been an increase in Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements to build facilities that meet the needs of businesses and their communities. This is complemented by the Australian Infrastructure Plan, which recognises that infrastructure upgrades are essential to support economic and social development. The plan outlines the challenges for infrastructure and service provision in remote regions and that the demand for community infrastructure can often outstrip available supply.<sup>26</sup>

A number of Western Australian local governments have partnered with business for the benefit of public library users and the community. The City of Kwinana successfully partnered with Dome Coffee to co-locate a Dome Café within the Darius Wells Library and Resource Centre, "to offer great books, great people, and great coffee all under the one roof."<sup>27</sup>

Others such as the City of Cockburn, City of Armadale and City of Stirling have located public libraries within shopping centres to provide library lounge rooms with wifi hotspots. In regional areas, libraries are working with local tourism and accommodation providers. These arrangements deliver improved economic outcomes for the community.

One of the key challenges for government is overcoming the duplication of services and infrastructure, and libraries are not immune to this issue. Recent Victorian research

identified that "Library services have failed to standardise approaches leading to higher levels of duplicated efforts and wastage." Western Australia's existing Statewide systems help to minimise the risk of duplication, but there are opportunities for continued exploration of what can be developed and refined.

While systems attempt to maximise resources and services, the lack of coordinated infrastructure planning across individual local governments has sometimes resulted in too many libraries servicing geographical areas. This is particularly true in the metropolitan area where libraries may be as little as five kilometres apart.

#### **Potential opportunities**

- Lead a whole of government discussion on integrated planning and service delivery for public library asset development and management.
- Consult with regional communities to identify what their aspirations are for the services that are delivered through their regional library, to inform a review of the SLWA's regional model for the provision of public library services.
- Audit the current state of the buildings providing public library services and identify the amount required for new buildings, upgrades and extensions.
- Explore the establishment of a Public Library Infrastructure and Innovation Fund for local government developing or refurbishing library infrastructure.
- Explore partnerships, including with the WACRN, to deliver better library infrastructure and services.
- Work with the Regional Development Commissions to identify the key social priorities of each region and how public libraries can deliver on those priorities.
- Explore with the Department of Education current and future shared service arrangements to improve literacy and learning outcomes across the community.
- Develop guidelines in collaboration with the Department of Planning to improve public library infrastructure in accordance with State Planning Policy 3.6 Developer Contributions.



# **Good governance**

#### **Legislative arrangements**

The *Library Board of Western Australia Act 1951* (the Act) established a free public library network in Western Australia and established the Library Board of Western Australia as a statutory body with management responsibility to oversee this process. The first public library opened in York in 1954 and 65 years after the Act was enacted, there are now 231 registered public libraries.

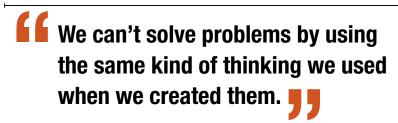
The Act provides for the constitution and functions of the Library Board and prescribes the relationship between the Board and Local Government in the provision of public library services. The Act was amended in 1955 to include the management of the State Library of Western Australia in the Board's responsibilities, which included the delivery of reference services and the collection and preservation of the State's documentary heritage.

The Library Board also has responsibilities under the *Legal Deposit Act 2012* for the collection and preservation of the State's documentary heritage.

There are currently three sets of Regulations under the Act:

- Library Board (State Library) Regulations 1956;
- Library Board (Conduct of Proceedings) Regulations 1955; and
- Library Board (Registered Public libraries) Regulations 1985.

Over the past 10 years, there have been several reviews of public library services in Western Australia.



Albert Einstein

Some of these reports include:

- Proposed changes to the Library Act: Consultation Summary (Library Board of Western Australia, 2007);
- Structural Reform of Public Library Services (AEC Group, 2007); and
- WALGA: Public Library Services in Western Australia in 2025; Research & Consultation Findings (AEC Group, 2015).

There is unanimous agreement between stakeholders on the need to change the existing Library Act to reflect current practice, and the environment in which the SLWA and public libraries now operate. While there has been extensive discussion on how to amend the current Act to make it more contemporary, the preferred option is to develop a new Act that reflects the business of today's public libraries and the needs of the SLWA.

ALIA launched the *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries* (the Guidelines) in November 2016. Developed in partnership with



Australia's public and State libraries, the Guidelines outline a strategic and operational framework for Australia's public libraries. They establish the strategic and community context for the work of public libraries, describing not just what libraries should be doing, but why it is important.

Most importantly, it provides a set of standard outcome indictors for public libraries to encourage consistent reporting, evaluation, and demonstration of the real impact of libraries on people's lives.<sup>29</sup> The Guidelines could form the basis for new regulations for public library services in Western Australia.

#### **Funding purpose and model**

Funding for WA public libraries is provided to the Library Board of WA in the form of capital funds to purchase physical library materials (books and DVDs) and recurrent funding to purchase electronic materials (e-books, e-magazines, e-audio books).

The funding for materials is allocated annually by SLWA using an agreed funding methodology based on the population of each local government providing public library services. A minimum funding threshold is provided for local governments with small populations.

While this model is relatively robust, the lack of CPI or a mechanism to account for population growth is a concern. Without regular adjustments this investment can lose its relativity in terms of meeting community need and service costs.

Population is a sound base measure for library funding allocations as it is equitable and transparent. Adjustments for minimum allocations, regional centres, and remoteness are transparent and fair and are used in other States successfully. Allocations for electronic resources and other shared materials such as languages other than English are determined for the whole State and agreed by the Operational Management Group (OMG) each year.

Each public library spends its annual material allocation through the SLWA by selecting the specific titles to meet the needs of their communities, while the SLWA undertakes book selection for small remote and regional public libraries that do not have the staff with the skills to undertake this function. A number of contracts are managed by the SLWA with suppliers for this purpose.

While the role of the State funding has historically been to enable the purchase of library materials, it may be more appropriate for funding to be provided for a range of other purposes such as technology, innovation and administration support. In QLD, NSW, SA and VIC, funding is provided for a range of services and is not limited only to library materials. This has supported significant innovation and helped to cement public libraries as community hubs.

The *Public Library Services in Western Australia in 2025: Research and Consultation Findings* report includes a comparative analysis of the funding models

operating in other states and determined that Queensland had the most relevant comparison for the funding of library services in a state due to its size and population dispersal.<sup>31</sup> The local governments are also of similar size and demographics.

The Queensland model is a two tier system based on population. Local government areas with populations above 15,000 (Tier One) receive cash funding directly, while smaller regions (Tier Two) participate in a model called Rural Libraries Queensland.

This model is not dissimilar to the SLWA's regional model whereby regional libraries receive a notional allocation that is automatically indexed each year for population growth, funding the purchase of library materials and e-resources, which are accessed from a shared database.

From a funding perspective, the point of difference is that a further cash grant is paid to these libraries for local needs such as tablets, e-readers, and other resources as agreed. The Tier One libraries receive a direct grant from the State Library of Queensland to spend equally on library materials and local library priorities. The grant is automatically indexed each year for population growth and is administered under a Service Level Agreement.

Both tiers are able to access further competitive grant funding for innovation, which is provided by the State Library of Queensland and other state government agencies, to enable public libraries to create new spaces for engagement, collaboration, and community connectedness.

The current economic climate is a challenging time for government and business alike. The public library network could benefit from a central business unit to navigate and drive the reform process. Whilst the PLWG was tasked with setting strategic direction and the OMG has successfully continued to address joint operational issues, there is a need to consider what model is needed to propel public libraries into the future.



#### **Governance arrangements**

There are many examples across Australia and internationally; the most closely aligned to Western Australian local government needs is the South Australian model — Public Libraries South Australia. It is a business unit that reports through the Director of the State Library to the Library Board of South Australia with part of the annual funding allocation for public libraries funding the operation of this unit.

Councils are accountable to their community and the decisions they make need to deliver a return on investment for the community, be it economic, social, or environmental.<sup>32</sup>

Consideration of moving towards a dedicated business unit (or similar operational arrangements) to drive the reform process in Western Australia would require the appointment of additional staff with resultant resourcing considerations for the State Government.

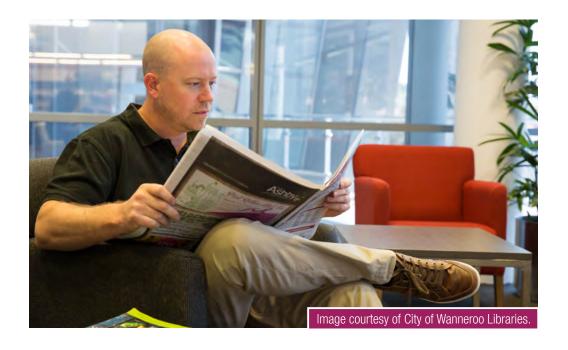
To provide strategic input for this unit, a formal subcommittee of the Library Board of WA could be established with specific responsibilities for public libraries. The subcommittee would include both Local Government and State Government representatives. SA, QLD and NSW operate with similar Board committees.

If new legislation is to be developed, the Victorian model could also be considered. Currently in Victoria, a board of stakeholder representatives reports directly to the Minister. Standing working groups/and other occasional working groups are established on a project basis. Funding is provided by the Victorian Government through grant programs, managed by the Victorian Government.

#### **Potential opportunities**

- Develop new library legislation to clearly define the relationship between State and local government and the decision-making and governance arrangements.
- Repeal the existing *Library Board (Registered Public libraries) Regulations* 1985. Work to implement the ALIA *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries* across WA public libraries.
- Determine the future investment from State Government and local governments for the provision of public library services including the purpose, amount and indexation methodology that addresses population growth.
- Determine the purpose of the funding, amount and indexation to be applied.
- Ensure that the value of public library services is understood, considered, and reflected in the development of State Government policy frameworks.
- Identify alternative funding that could be leveraged to encourage innovation, collaborative service delivery and partnerships.

- Investigate the establishment of a specific grant fund to encourage innovation in service delivery in Western Australian public libraries.
- Explore the establishment of a specific public libraries unit to lead the strategic and operational requirements for the provision of public libraries in Western Australia.
- Establish a new funding model to support the provision of public libraries services
  that meets community needs and agreed service outcomes. The funding model
  used in Queensland may be a useful model given the similarities with Western
  Australia.



## **Best value service delivery**

The societal shift to digital information is significantly impacting the library landscape. Libraries need to ensure services and resources are aligned to meet public demand and infrastructure needs to be fit-for-purpose.

The feasibility of a Single Library Card, underpinned by a Shared Library Management System (SLMS) or interoperability between systems, has been under consideration for nearly a decade.

The 2007 Structural Reform Report observed that 'opportunities for shared systems, particularly in metropolitan areas should be investigated. A State-wide strategy should be developed and opportunities for cooperative acquisition and management of library systems at the State and local level should be pursued.'<sup>33</sup>

A variety of Library Management Systems (LMSs) are currently being used by libraries across Western Australia. While some libraries manage their own LMS, others are managed by their local government's administration. Some very small regional libraries do not use a LMS at all, using spread sheets to manage their library service.

SLWA uses a suite of systems to provide a single catalogue of public library materials purchased with State funding and materials held by the SLWA and to support the inter library lending functions across public libraries.

At present there is limited integration of these systems and business processes across the State's libraries, yet it is recognised that ICT infrastructure can be a driver of innovation, improve efficiencies, and enable equity of access.

Libraries are increasingly turning to consortia arrangements to pool their resources, increase their negotiating powers and to integrate their systems.



The potential value of a SLMS is demonstrated in the number of SLMSs that have been established, or are in the process of being established in WA. These include:

- South West Consortium: Shires of Dardanup, Capel, Harvey, Manjimup, Boyup Brook, Waroona, Donnybrook-Balingup, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Nannup, Boddington and the Cities of Bunbury and Busselton.
- Western Suburbs Regional Library Network: The Grove (Shire of Peppermint Grove; and Towns of Mosman Park and Cottesloe), Cities of Nedlands and Subiaco, and Town of Claremont.

The PLWG has acknowledged that ICT plays a significant role in delivering efficient, effective contemporary and relevant library services, and has prioritised the investigation of a State-wide SLMS model that would facilitate single card library access for the community for consideration by government.

The PLWG established a Single Library Card Access Subgroup to investigate potential management and procurement models, costs and the benefits that might result. Discussions were conducted with the SLWA to ascertain its specific needs including digital preservation, archiving and e-resource platforms to ensure these needs could be met as part of a State-wide SLMS.

A survey was conducted with WA public libraries and discussions were also conducted with State Library South Australia to ascertain their learnings, best practice, benefits gained, considerations and risks; as well as potential SLMS and fee sharing models.

Three options were considered:

- 1. The development of a new system.
- 2. The expansion of an existing system.
- 3. Development of a discovery layer.

An Investment Logic Map (ILM) was developed to identify the scope of the SLMS and identify the purpose and benefits for WA. The PLWG concluded that there is significant public benefit for a SLMS. It would facilitate the WA community to easily borrow materials from all public libraries (regardless of funding source) across the State using a single library card and enable a more efficient State-wide inter library loan system that reduces duplication in information handling for libraries.

Further benefits of a SLMS include offering seamless access to loan materials of all types including e-resources, improving inclusivity and accessibility across the State and offering contemporary and convenient services to the WA community. The ILM is included at Appendix 3.

The PLWG continues to explore opportunities to enhance public library users' experience, through the introduction of a Single Library Card and SLMS. The South West Consortium SLMS went live in July 2017 with policies and processes designed for WA around a common set of resource sharing goals and a robust delivery system.<sup>34</sup>



#### **Equity of access and changing technology**

Cooperation and sharing are cornerstones of effective library provision. The public library network is particularly well placed to engage with shared service delivery and collaborative models through its physical and virtual library network.

Public libraries will continue to play an important role in facilitating equitable access to the internet and bridging the digital divide. National trends and observations in public libraries show that internet terminals in public libraries continue to be well-used, despite increased access to the internet using other devices.<sup>35</sup>

WALGA noted further research was needed to identify the changing usage of technology within public libraries, in particular how the rise of smart phones and the shift away from PCs and laptops to tablets will influence what technology will be provided, the allocation of space and the impact on workforce development.

#### **Workforce development**

Earlier in this paper the PLWG identified the broader role of public libraries as community hubs and the move away from simple transactional loaning of library materials. This evolving role raises the need to explore what this means for the development of the future library workforce and the skills required, such as community development, place-making, effective marketing, communication and relationship management, and evaluation skills.

Supporting people to use digital resources competently and confidently is increasingly important as information sources continue to move online. Those who work in libraries will need ongoing support and access to training to improve their skills in order to navigate complex information systems.

Libraries traditionally measure outputs (how many people, visits, loans etc.) however

there will be a shift to measure outcomes of the programs and activities — the specific benefits to the community that result from the provision of a library service. As previously stated, ALIA has developed national Guidelines. These guidelines are outcome measures for Australian public libraries, and will enable the library sector to measure, compare and report consistently on its impact effectiveness and value.

It provides a framework for local governments to measure return on investment and aligns with the legislative requirements under the *Local Government Act 1995*. <sup>36</sup> The Guidelines will enable decision-makers to make more informed choices about budget allocation, infrastructure investment, and workforce development.

#### **Potential opportunities**

- Develop a business case for government for a Single Library Card and SLMS for Western Australia.
- Adopt ALIA's *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries* for the Western Australian Public Library Network.
- Develop guidelines for the Commonwealth and State governments to procure library services for the support and delivery of centralised government information services.
- Assist public libraries to pilot emerging e-services and technology to meet the changing needs of library users.
- Explore the opportunities of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and self-directed care policy to strengthen accessibility of resources by people with disabilities.
- Explore opportunities to develop bilingual digital content, Aboriginal language content and languages other than English (LOTE) e-resources to better serve WA's CaLD community.
- Develop an ICT strategy for public libraries in Western Australia and working with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer.

#### **Public value**

Western Australian libraries are community centric; delivering services around the aspirations and interests of their local communities.

Despite being one of the most valued services provided by a local government, often it can be a challenge to measure the true value of the library against the economic return of recreation centres or waste services. It is not enough to simply say people love libraries. In the previous section, the importance of standards and guidelines to improve service delivery was outlined. Now we will consider public value.

There is an increasing pressure across all government services to demonstrate their value in terms of return on investment, and library services across Australia and the world are striving to demonstrate the link between expenditure and service delivery outcomes.

As stated in the 'Integrated planning' section of this discussion paper, the review of the CRC Network highlighted the limited knowledge of the potential of the CRC network across other government agencies. While there are examples of effective utilisation by one or two agencies it was not consistent across government as a whole.

The same observation could be made for public libraries. The intrinsic value of public libraries to the civic wellbeing of our community is understood, yet it is very hard to measure. As a result libraries often remain out-of-focus for whole of government policy frameworks, despite their success at the local level.

#### **Culture Counts**

The Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) (now the Culture and Arts (WA) division of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries) recognised a similar situation for arts organisations which were finding it challenging to provide qualitative

Libraries are not only great places for books and reading, they are social hubs, technology hotspots and learning spaces for all.

Sue McKerracher, CEO, ALIA June 2016

rather than quantitative feedback. To address this, the DCA, in partnership with Pracsys Economics and the UK's Intelligence Agency, developed the Culture Counts system, which collates in real time the quality of arts and cultural experiences.<sup>37</sup> It measures the artistic value and community benefit of government funded programs, and illustrates the impact and value through standard co-designed metrics.

Culture Counts is a digital application and web portal system based around a set of core metrics, which are answered by an organisation, their peers and members of the public to assess the quality of the experience, which can be translated into the intrinsic, instrumental and institutional values. It also collects information on attendance, sponsorship, investment and profit. Put simply, it quantifies the anecdotal.

Culture Counts provides a standardised level of benchmarking for organisations and funders. Arts organisations that receive recurrent funding from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' Organisations Investment Program utilise the Culture Counts application for free.



In terms of efficiency savings, Culture Counts saved more than \$950,000 in research and administration costs for WA arts organisations last year.<sup>38</sup>

In Western Australia, there are 16 public libraries using the Culture Counts system, which is demonstrating the value of the library services, programs and partnerships, in real time.

In turn, this is being used to leverage further funding resources and open up partnership opportunities. Public Libraries South Australia is currently leading collaboration with Culture Counts to trial a set of library metrics to measure against the community outcomes contained within ALIA Guidelines. It is being piloted across six local governments in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. The Cities of Wanneroo and Armadale are taking part. As outlined in Appendix 4, the ALIA guidelines:

- Support adoption of best practice work processes within libraries;
- Enable local governments to benchmark their library services and to plan effectively;
   and
- Promote clearer understanding of what public libraries do and why they do it.<sup>39</sup>

#### **Spaces and places**

There is a growing trend in USA and European libraries to increasingly focus on the library space, community use and participation — moving away from being 'collection centric'.

These libraries reduce and curate their collections and create spaces where community members can create in the physical or virtual space (sometimes under the guidance of an artist), or sometimes just collaborate on a project. The State Library of Queensland's (SLQ) report 'The impact of libraries as creative spaces', highlights that as more library contact goes digital, and as less floor space is required to store hard copies, there is a trend to repurposing library spaces for creative activity.<sup>40</sup>

As an outcome of its research, SLQ developed a Creative Spaces Framework to allow

for the evaluation of libraries and creative spaces through the creative activities they deliver.

Much of the creative activity in libraries is attributed to makerspaces where people come together to share creative practice across a variety of mediums. From robotics coding, combining textiles with electronics, recording studios, 3D printing and face painting, makerspaces are teaching participants new skills and broadening and redefining their definition of the 'library'. <sup>41</sup>

This shift to repurposing of existing space lends itself to the broader imperative of planning for library spaces for the future. In 2012, the Library Council of New South Wales updated *People Places: A Guide for Public Library Buildings in New South Wales*. 42

It contains practical advice and tools to assist with the step-by-step planning process for the development of new public library buildings to meet the needs of the community now and into the future; and in consideration of the digital technology and optimising resources.

#### **Potential opportunities**

- Adopt Culture Counts as the measurement and evaluation framework for larger libraries in the public library network.
- Explore the development of a State-wide marketing campaign on the relevance and diversity of service offerings. Look for opportunities to leverage existing campaigns across tourism, economic development and literacy.
- Develop guidelines for the space required for public libraries to assist with the sustainable development of public library buildings.
- Undertake an ILM process to define the public value of public libraries in Western Australia to ascertain what is driving the need to invest in libraries and to ensure



strategic investment reflects the aspirations of the WA community and service providers.

- Develop and implement a public libraries workforce plan with identified partners, to ensure library staff have the right skills and access to training to meet the needs of contemporary library services. This will include Universities and education institutions to ensure new approaches are integrated into their curricula.
- Explore opportunities for cross resourcing and up skilling staff with other local services providers and organisations.

# **Community engagement and place-making**

Public libraries strengthen public participation, and increase access to the world of information. They are powerful spaces for exchange, creation and learning.

Public libraries provide a range of opportunities for participation that cultivate a sense of belonging and offer services that improve community wellbeing. Increasing over the past decade, libraries are adopting a place-making framework to achieve this.

The *City of Fremantle Library's 2015-16 Annual Report* highlighted how the library is working with local businesses and care facilities to support patients and people with disabilities with information about their community, the services they can access, and programs to improve their skills. This is part of a broader human services initiative of the Southwest Metropolitan Forum, which takes a collaborative approach to regional planning in partnership with business, not-for-profits and the Cities of Fremantle, Cockburn and Melville. <sup>43, 44</sup> It is an excellent example of how public libraries deliver a social, economic and cultural return on investment for local communities in terms of learning, literacy, wellbeing, connectedness and communities.

Our communities are changing. Engaged and empowered citizens generate optimism about the future; they produce good decisions on meeting tough community challenges, and contribute to economic vitality. In communities large and small, public libraries provide leadership, information, tools and a place where people can connect to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of active civic engagement.<sup>45</sup>

#### **Building cohesion**

Community cohesion is generally considered in terms of the quality and nature of the relationship between residents of a given locality. People want to 'belong' to a community and feel welcomed. Australia has experienced sustained population growth through immigration since 1945 with a substantial increase in the past two

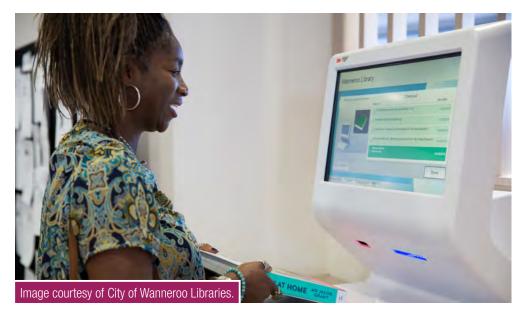


Public librarian, local government consultations 2015

decades, particularly to Western Australia. Over 30% of Western Australians were born overseas. In this context, local governments need to be adaptive to support their changing communities. The role of the library service offers a significant opportunity for new and strengthened functions in the changing role of local government. Through their strong civic presence, libraries have the potential to assume a leadership role in local community engagement. This opportunity also applies with regard to diverse age demographics.

The Scanlon Foundation survey *Australians Today*<sup>46</sup> identified challenges to community cohesion including the relatively low level of personal trust and sense of safety, and heighted experience of discrimination and misconceptions that impede mutual understanding and respect.

In a recent submission to the Commonwealth's Inquiry into the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) tendering processes, the National Congress of Australia's First People highlighted the need to develop and implement an Indigenous outcomes accountability framework for organisations responsible for delivering positive results for Aboriginal and



Torres Strait Islander people. The intent was to ensure that organisations receiving funding were clear about their obligations and expectations, and that they matched community needs.<sup>47</sup>

SLWA has established the Storylines program, an online archive for the Library's digitised heritage collections relating to Aboriginal history in Western Australia. By engaging Aboriginal communities through the return of digital photographs and other materials, the program assists in the building of digital skills, the retention and protection of cultural knowledge and the building strengthening of trust between the library and communities.

SLWA is also piloting alternate models of public service delivery through the Ideas Box which is being piloted at the Yungngora community in the Kimberley region.<sup>48</sup>

Public libraries are well positioned to respond to the challenges of community cohesion

and collective effort to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CaLD communities.

International research shows that there are effective solutions that libraries can implement to encourage social cohesion including relationship building activities to promote trust; ensuring community programs maintain fairness and prioritise local issues; creating youth focused programs; and developing risk management strategies to respond to challenges to social harmony.

#### **Investing in early literacy**

If we want young people to be engaged, they need to be literate and connected to their wider community. There are many examples of libraries' commitment and investment in early literacy. One of the best regarded is the State Library's Better Beginnings program led by the SLWA and which is delivered by the public library network and partners. 49

Better Beginnings aims to develop literacy skills in young children through fostering a love of books and language. The program supports parents and caregivers in reading to children so that they build the early literacy skills they need to become good readers and succeed at school.

Using a partnership approach between public libraries, child health, community organisations, and schools, Better Beginnings supports families as their child's most important teacher in modelling early literacy practices starting from birth. SLWA developed the Better Beginnings program with the belief that literacy transforms lives. Exposing children to libraries early in life gives children a head start in literacy and learning to read.

To date, there have been more than 550,000 reading packs provided to Western Australian families with newborn babies and children aged four and five since the Better Beginnings program's pilot in 2004.

The report *From Little Things Big Things Grow*,<sup>50</sup> identified public libraries as the driving force behind efforts to improve early literacy in Western Australia, noting they:

- Support and encourage parents to play greater roles in their children's literacy and on-going education;
- Expose children to a wider range of books, stories and literacy activities; and
- Provide year-round free access to books, parenting information, story and rhyme sessions and knowledgeable staff.

SLWA recently released *Literacy Matters- State Library of Western Australia Literacy Strategy 2017-2027. Literacy Matters* provides a 10 year strategy to coordinate the work of the State Library of Western Australia with its partners and supporters to improve literacy for all Western Australians. <sup>51</sup> *Literacy Matters* identifies a clear leadership role for libraries in their communities in developing and enhancing literacy for life.

#### **Investing in Smart Australia**

The Australian Government is committed to achieving the vision of an innovative Australia. Significant funding is being invested to support the STEM agenda (Science Technology, Engineering and Maths) through education and business support.

It is recognised that the inclusion of the Arts agenda (to make STEAM) delivers a deeper knowledge of a subject, creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and communication skills, which are relevant to an increasingly wide range of occupations. They will be part of the foundation of adaptive and nimble workplaces of the future.

Any industry that relies on innovation benefits greatly from people who can bring different perspectives or look at problems in new ways. STEAM fields are charged with imagining the future for all of humanity, and providing new solutions to big problems.

Public libraries are well positioned to support the growth of STEAM through programs such as robotics, makerspaces as well as a safe community space that fosters innovation.

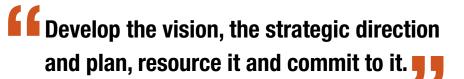
#### **Potential opportunities**

- Work in partnership with the SLWA to achieve the goals and deliver the strategies outlined in *Literacy Matters*.
- Identify and promote good practice in libraries in support of community cohesion and diversity.
- Explore opportunities to promote good practice community development programs and outreach services delivered by libraries to meet local needs.
- Develop literacy and engagement strategies with the CaLD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to improve literacy and lifelong learning outcomes.
- Facilitate and encourage the STEAM agenda in public libraries through community engagement with initiatives that increase public interest and involvement.
- Seek further opportunities to expand Better Beginnings at a State and local level.
- Work across governments to identify human services strategies that would benefit from the experience and knowledge of the WA public library network.

# Public Library Working Group Members

(At the time of developing the background paper)

Duncan Ord OAM	Director General, Department of Culture and the Arts (Chair)
Margaret Allen	Chief Executive Officer and State Librarian, State Library of Western Australia
Jennifer Mathews	Director General, Department of Local Government and Communities
Ricky Burges	Chief Executive Officer, Western Australian Local Government Association
Debbie Terelinck	Chair, Operational Management Group
Fiona Reid	Councillor, City of South Perth
Jodie Holbrook	Policy Manager-Community, Western Australian Local Government Association



Local Government Association Chief Executive Officer, 2015 Consultations



# Appendices

## **Appendix 1**

The **Operational Management Group (OMG)** was established in 2009 to provide operational leadership and advice on public libraries issues between the State and local government. To date, OMG has proven successful in developing solutions to the issues outlined below:

Completed	
Lost and damaged items	Process improvements made so that a pre-determined charge is levied annually to alleviate considerable workload by public library staff.
Exchange system review	A two-tier system introduced to create efficiencies for selecting public libraries whilst enabling the exchange system to continue for those public libraries requiring this service.
Metropolitan van service	Measures put in place to enable the continuation of a van service for metropolitan public libraries and enabling the interlibrary loans system to continue.
Review of public library materials allocations	Improved processes to ensure funds are appropriately spent.
e-resources	Management, implementation and process improvements for the e-resources accessed by all public libraries in WA; and introduction of radio frequency identification (RFID) tagging for centrally-purchased library materials.

In Progress	
Inter Library Loans (ILLs)	Alternative system to administer ILLs, and recommendations to ensure the model is efficient and sustainable.
Supplier stock selection	Pilot successfully completed with the City of Stirling and will now be rolled out to other selecting libraries over the coming months.
Language Other Than English (LOTE) materials	Review of stock selection and management.
Collection management guidelines	Develop collection management guidelines to assist public libraries with the ongoing management of their collections to meet the needs of public library patrons.

# **Appendix 2**

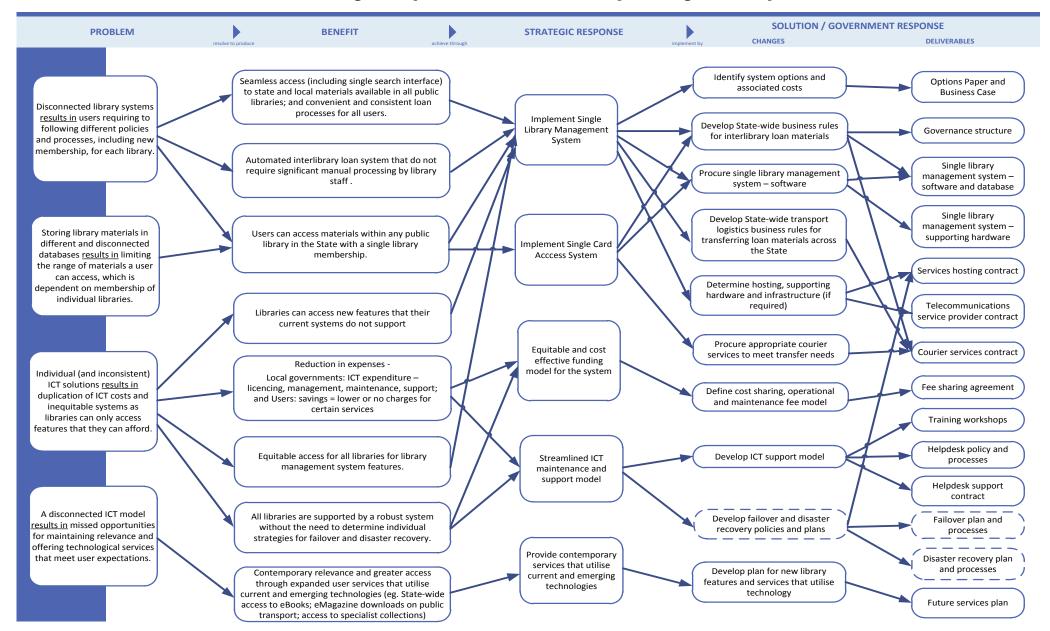
Shared Use Libraries with the Department of Education	
<b>Bullsbrook Library</b>	City of Swan
<b>Cocos Home Island Library</b>	Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Cocos West Island Library	Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Donnybrook Library	Shire of Donnybrook
Eaton Library	Shire of Eaton
Ellenbrook Library	City of Swan
<b>Kununurra Community Library</b>	Shire of Wyndham/East Kimberley
Lake King Library	Shire of Lake Grace
Lake Grace Library	Shire of Lake Grace
Lesmurdie Library	Shire of Kalamunda
Newman Library	Shire of East Pilbara
<b>Warnbro Community Library</b>	City of Rockingham

Co-located Community Resource Centres and Public Libraries	
Beacon	Kellerberrin
Bremer Bay	Lake Grace
Brookton	Laverton
Coolgardie	Menzies
Cunderdin	Mount Barker
Dalwallinu	Newdegate
Dandaragan	Pingelly
Dowerin	Pingrup
Dumbleyung	Ravensthorpe
Frankland River	Tambellup
<b>Gascoyne Junction</b>	Wandering
Gingin	Wellstead
Goomalling	West Arthur
Halls Creek	Westonia
Hopetoun	Wickepin
Jerramungup	Williams
Jurien Bay	Wongan Hills
Kambalda	Wyalkatchem

These tables were correct at the time of publication.

## **Appendix 3**

#### **Investment Logic Map for the Shared Library Management System**



# **Appendix 4**

Australian Library Information Association (ALIA). A Framework for Australian Public Libraries. Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries 2016.

#### STRATEGIC COMMUNITY FOCUS

Public libraries work actively with their communities to provide services that are responsive to community needs and build individual and community capacity

**Ensure access for all** 

Reflect community needs and aspirations

Engage the community in shaping library services

Champion the community's cultural identity

Create partnerships to build community and individual resilience and capacity

PUBLIC LIBRARIES		
SERVICE MANAGEMENT	SERVICE OFFERING	SERVICE DELIVERY
Governance  Strategic decision-making  Strategic planning  Accountability and reporting  Advocacy  Management  Policy and planning  Human resources management  Financial and asset management  Technology management	Content/Collections     General and specialist     Local studies, heritage, culture     Digital  Information and reference services  Programs     Literacy     Learning     Creative, cultural	Service points  Branches (incl. opening hours)  Mobile libraries  Website and online services  Outreach services  Staffing  Staffing levels  Skills, qualifications  Funding  Operating
<ul><li>Public relations and promotions</li><li>Monitoring and evaluation</li></ul>	Technology awareness, digital literacy  Technology access	<ul><li>Capital</li><li>Sustainability</li><li>Partnership and collaboration</li></ul>
	<ul><li>Computers</li><li>Internet and wifi</li></ul>	<ul><li>Community</li><li>Government</li><li>Education and business</li></ul>
	<ul> <li>Places (physical and digital)</li> <li>Read and relax</li> <li>Study and work</li> <li>Meet and connect</li> <li>Collaborate and create</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Library sector</li><li>Volunteers</li><li>Customer service</li></ul>

# INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Effective library programs and services help individuals to change their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours and communities to be more inclusive, productive and creative.

Literacy and lifelong learning

Informed and connected citizens

**Digital inclusion** 

Personal development and wellbeing

Stronger and more creative communities

Economic and workforce development

# Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Public Libraries Western Australia, *Inspiring Stories*, 2015.
- <sup>2</sup> State Government and Local Government, *Framework Agreement for the Provision of Library Services in Western Australia*, 2004.
- <sup>3</sup> Australian Library and Information Association, *National Welfare & Economic Contributions of Public Libraries Final Report*, 2013.
- <sup>4</sup> State Government and Local Government, 2004.
- <sup>5</sup> Economic Audit Committee, *Putting the Public First*, 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> Office of Multicultural Interests, *Cultural Diversity in Western Australia: A Demographic Profile*, 2015.
- <sup>7</sup> Department of State Development, *Economic Profile October 2016*.
- <sup>8</sup> WALGA & AEC Group, *Public Library Services in Western Australia in 2025. Research and Consultation Findings*, 2015.
- <sup>9</sup> Australian Local Government Association, *Local Government's Plan for an Innovative and Prosperous Australia*, 2016.
- <sup>10</sup> Western Australian Planning Commission, *State Planning Strategy 2050*, 2014.
- <sup>11</sup> Department of Planning, State Planning Policy 3.6 Developer Contributions for Infrastructure and Guidelines, 2014.
- <sup>12</sup> Arts Leadership Group, Strategic Directions 2016-2031.
- <sup>13</sup> State Library of Western Australia, <u>Annual Report 2015-2016</u>.
- <sup>14</sup> State Library of Western Australia, <u>Strategic Directions 2013-2017</u>.
- <sup>15</sup> Australian Library and Information Association, <u>ALIA Response to the Australian Government Open Government National Action Plan</u>, 2016.
- <sup>16</sup> Chamber of Arts and Culture WA and Community Arts Network, Arts and Culture in Western Australian Local Government, 2015.
- <sup>17</sup> The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) undertook a comprehensive visioning and strategic planning review of the public library service delivery in Western Australia called <a href="Public libraries">Public libraries in Western Australia 2025</a> to better understand what public libraries could and should look like in 2025. This body of work built upon the 2007 Structural Reform of Public Libraries in Western Australia.
- <sup>18</sup> WALGA, Public Library Courier Services, member information sheet, 2015.
- <sup>19</sup> City of Subiaco website.
- <sup>20</sup> Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- <sup>21</sup> Kimberley Development Commission, <u>2036 and Beyond: a Regional Investment Blueprint for the Kimberley</u>, 2016.
- <sup>22</sup> Western Australian Regional Development Trust, <u>Review of the Western Australian Community Resource Network</u>, 2013.
- <sup>23</sup> Western Australia State Budget 2017-18
- <sup>24</sup> Service Priority Review: Public Sector Reform
- <sup>25</sup> Service Priority Review: Media Statement

- <sup>26</sup> Infrastructure Australia, Australian Infrastructure Plan: The Infrastructure Priority List, 2017.
- <sup>27</sup> Darius Wells Library and Resource Centre.
- <sup>28</sup> Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries, *Review of Victorian Public Libraries Stage 2 Report*, November 2013.
- <sup>29</sup> ALIA, APLA & NSLA, *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries*, 2016.
- <sup>30</sup> WALGA & AEC Group, 2015.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> WALGA, Consultation Roundtable with Local Government Chief Executive Officers on the future of Public Libraries, 2014.
- <sup>33</sup> State Library of Western Australia, WALGA & AEC Group, <u>Structural Reform of Public Libraries in Western Australia Report</u>, 2007.
- <sup>34</sup> South West Consortia, 'Shared Vision for South West Shared Library Management System', 2016.
- <sup>35</sup> SLWA, WALGA & AEC Group, 2007.
- <sup>36</sup> Local governments are required to report on their community strategic plans in accordance with section S5.56 (1) of the Local Government Act 1995 and Regulations S5.56(2) of the Act which outlines the minimum requirements to achieve this.
- <sup>37</sup> www.culturecounts.cc
- <sup>38</sup> Department of Treasury, WA State Budget 2016-17 infographic.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> State Library of Queensland, *The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces*, 2016.
- <sup>41</sup> Andrew Kelly, *Why do we need one of those? The role of the library in promoting and creating makerspaces* ALIA National Library and Information Technicians Symposium 2013.
- <sup>42</sup> State Library of New South Wales, *People Places: A Guide for Public Library Buildings in New South Wales*, 2012.
- <sup>43</sup> The South West Metropolitan Partnership Forum (SWMPF) brings together all individuals, groups and thirty organisations who are concerned about social disadvantage in the local government areas of Cockburn, Fremantle and Melville who work together to address local disadvantage through collective impact approach.
- <sup>44</sup> City of Fremantle Annual Report 2015-2016.
- <sup>45</sup> <u>Urban Libraries Council</u>, 22 November 2016.
- <sup>46</sup> Scanlon Foundation, *Australians Today Survey*, 2016.
- <sup>47</sup> National Congress of Australia's First People Submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration Inquiry into the Indigenous Advancement Strategy Tendering Processes, pg 6.
- <sup>48</sup> Media release. Out of the box: Ideas that excite at Yungngora.
- <sup>49</sup> Better Beginnings is led by the State Library of Western Australia in partnership with public libraries, with assistance from the Department of Health, the Child and Adolescent Health Service. Delivery partners also include Child and Adolescent Community Health and the WA Country Health Service. Departments of Training and Workforce Development (North Metropolitan TAFE), Corrective Services and Education (through the Child and Parent Centres). Funding partners are Rio Tinto and the Department of Regional Development supports the delivery of the program.
- <sup>50</sup> State Library of Western Australia, *From Little Things Big Things Grow*, 2013.
- <sup>51</sup> State Library of Western Australia, *Literacy Matters*.

# References

ALIA, APLA & NSLA, Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries, 2016.

Arts Leadership Group, Strategic Directions 2016-2031.

Australian Library and Information Association, ALIA Response to the Australian Government Open Government National Action Plan, 2016.

Australian Library and Information Association, National Welfare & Economic Contributions of Public Libraries Final Report, 2013.

Australian Local Government Association, Local Government's Plan for an Innovative and Prosperous Australia, 2016.

Chamber of Arts and Culture WA and Community Arts Network, Arts and Culture in Western Australian Local Government, 2015.

City of Fremantle Annual Report 2015-2016.

City of Subiaco.

Culture Counts.

Darius Wells Library and Resource Centre.

Department of Planning, State Planning Policy 3.6 - Developer Contributions for Infrastructure and Guidelines, 2014.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

Department of State Development, *Economic Profile October 2016*.

Department of Treasury, WA State Budget 2016-17 infographic.

Economic Audit Committee, Putting the Public First, 2009.

Infrastructure Australia, Australian Infrastructure Plan: The Infrastructure Priority List, 2016.

Kelly, A. Why do we need one of those? The role of the library in promoting and creating makerspaces ALIA National Library and Information Technicians Symposium 2013.

Kimberley Development Commission, 2036 and Beyond: a Regional Investment Blueprint for the Kimberley, 2016.

Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries, Review of Victorian Public Libraries Stage 2 Report, November 2013.

National Congress of Australia's First People Submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration — Inquiry into the Indigenous Advancement Strategy Tendering Processes.

Office of Multicultural Interests, Cultural Diversity in Western Australia: A Demographic Profile, 2015.

Public Libraries Western Australia, *Inspiring Stories*, 2015.

Scanlon Foundation, Australians Today Survey, 2016.

South West Consortia, Shared Vision for South West Shared Library Management System, 2016.

State Government and Local Government, Framework Agreement for the Provision of Library Services in Western Australia, 2004.

State Government and WALGA, Funding Arrangement between the Minister for Culture and Arts and WALGA regarding Funding for Public Libraries, 2010.

State Library of New South Wales, *People Places: A Guide for Public Library Buildings in New South Wales*, 2012.

State Library of Queensland, The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces, 2016.

State Library of Western Australia, Annual Report 2015-2016.

State Library of Western Australia, From Little Things Big Things Grow, 2013.

State Library of Western Australia, Strategic Directions 2013-2017.

State Library of Western Australia, WALGA & AEC Group, <u>Structural Reform of Public Libraries in Western Australia Report</u>, 2007.

#### Urban Libraries Council, 22 November 2016.

WALGA, Public Library Courier Services, member information sheet, 2015.

WALGA & AEC Group, Public Library Services in Western Australia in 2025. Research and Consultation Findings, 2015.

Western Australian Planning Commission, State Planning Strategy 2050, 2014.

Western Australian Regional Development Trust, Review of the Western Australian Community Resource Network, 2013.

