WA Public Libraries Strategy
Single Access Card Project
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why has the Single Access Card project been initiated?

- The Public Library Working Group (PLWG), with membership from both State and Local Governments was formed in July 2016 to strengthen the current role and services of libraries in Western Australia through positive reforms to enhance and modernise library services. The PLWG identified seven key reform priorities including a single access card system.

- The Background Paper, prepared by the PLWG to accompany the release of the Strategy, states that "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 LMS model that would facilitate single card library access for the community for consideration by government".

- From this, the WA Public Libraries Strategy outlined five priority areas to establish a shared strategic vision for public library development in WA. **Priority 4** relates to a **single access card system**, also known as 'one card' and states that:

  *There are a number of Library Management Systems currently in use across the State by different local governments with little interoperability. A consolidated system would benefit all Western Australian library members and enable better collaboration between libraries. Research into a single card access system and shared Library Management System (LMS) demonstrates that centralisation would enable a more efficient loans system, improving accessibility across the State.*

  *The following priorities have been identified to ensure best value service delivery:*

    4.1 Investigate further the proposed options for the single access card system and shared LMS to determine best value and return on investment.

    4.2 Develop a business case for a single access card system and shared LMS for submission I 2018-2019.

2. How do we know that a single access card is a priority for the community and local government stakeholders?

- Following extensive consultation with stakeholders including an on-line survey that attracted over 1,300 responses, over 70% of which came from community members, there was clear support for the proposal to investigate further the proposed options for a single access card and shared LMS with almost 93% of respondents prioritising this project.

- As reported in the final evaluation document, endorsed by WALGA State Council and the Library Board of WA in July 2018:

  *Almost 93% of respondents agreed with the priority to investigate further the proposed options for the single access card system and shared LMS. Almost 95% of*
community members supported the proposal. While most acknowledged the benefit of this priority for library customers, the lowest agreement came from local government respondents where there were two concerns – firstly, that many local governments had recently entered into contracts for a new LMS and secondly that this would increase movement of stock around the State and this has resource implications for both staff time and freight costs. Some responses from local governments agreeing with the proposal indicated that if a single LMS was agreed, this could be phased in over five years to enable local governments to transition from existing contracts.

- From a community perspective, there was a strong appetite for a single card that provides access to all of WA’s public libraries, with 95% of respondents endorsing this.

- Full details of the responses to the consultation question is provided below.

Do you agree or disagree with the priority to investigate further options for a single access card system which provides access to all 232 WA public libraries and the ability to locate and borrow an item from any public library through that card?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Category</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th># in Agreement</th>
<th>% in Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Member</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected Members</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LG Officers</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Library Managers</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>89.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Library Staff</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC Representatives</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLWA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALIA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWRC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. What work has been done to identify the options for providing a single access library card for Western Australia?

- In 2016, the PLWG established a Single Library Card Access Subgroup (with representatives from PLWA, WALGA, SLWA, the then Department of Culture and the Arts, the City of Bunbury and Shire of Dardanup) to investigate potential management and procurement models, costs and benefits that might result. Consultation was conducted with SLWA to ascertain its specific need; a survey was conducted of WA public libraries and discussions were held with the State Library of South Australia to understand learnings from their One LMS for South Australia project.
Three options were considered:
  o The development of a new system
  o The expansion of an existing system
  o Development of a discovery layer

An Options Paper was developed and provided to the PLWG for consideration in drafting the Strategy. An investment logic map from this work was included in Appendix 3 of the Background Paper [http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Public_Libraries_Our_Future_Background_Paper.pdf](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Public_Libraries_Our_Future_Background_Paper.pdf)

Based on this work, the PLWG concluded that “there is significant public benefit for a Single Library Management System. It would facilitate the WA community to easily borrow materials from all public libraries 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.” Three options were identified for further consideration:
  o New single library management platform
  o Expansion of an existing shared library management system – South West consortium
  o Expansion of an existing shared library management system – South Australian consortium

4. What has the process been in prioritising the development of the business case for this project now?

The PLWG was re-established in 2018 to guide the implementation of the Strategy following the consultation process. At its first meeting on 23 April 2018, SLWA CEO Margaret Allen outlined the work done on this Options Paper and its role in underpinning work on the implementation of the Strategy. At the following meeting on 21 May, the Consultation Report was endorsed by PLWG and it was agreed that the Strategy’s implementation would be prioritised according to available resources. It was noted that resources were required to undertake research and develop a business case for the Single Access Card priority and that SLWA would look at how these resources could be found. Full minutes of these meetings are available of the SWLA website [http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/about-us/corporate/wa-public-libraries-strategy](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/about-us/corporate/wa-public-libraries-strategy)

At the PLWG meeting of 11 March 2019, Margaret Allen informed the group that SLWA had found funds to use for preparation of a business case to progress the work on the Single Access Card project and that an RFQ would be developed to engage a provider to undertake this work. At the following meeting of 13 May, an update was provided noting that procurement of a consultant to develop a business case was underway and that a reference group would be established to contribute information and advice. This was identified as a key stakeholder message for PLWG members to advocate.
The business case is a pre requisite for Government to consider whether it will prioritise funding for this initiative.

5. What will the process be for on-going consultation in the development of the business case?

- Following the mandatory State Government procurement process, SLWA has engaged AOT Consulting Pty Ltd [http://aotconsulting.com/] to develop the business case.
- PLWA and WALGA have been invited to nominate members to the steering group for this project to inform and guide the work of the consultants.
- In addition, as part of the consultation plan, there will be an opportunity for a wider group of stakeholders to provide feedback at workshops at the end of each stage of the project.

6. What is the scope for the business case?

- The scope for the business case is to investigate further the three options below:
  - New single library management platform;
  - Expansion of an existing shared library management system – South West consortium, Great Southern consortia, Mid-West Consortia; and
  - Expansion of an existing shared library management system – South Australian consortium.

with particular consideration of:

- An effective governance model and an appropriate lead entity to manage the system across the State (including how the contract will be managed across local governments);
- Additional functionality to meet the needs of the State Library of Western Australia and to facilitate access to local and State materials for public library members; or the ability to integrate the software that provides this functionality with a shared LMS; and their associated costs (procurement, data migration and ongoing maintenance);
- Exploring a cost effective and equitable logistics model to support the shared LMS’s interlibrary loan system; and
- A discovery layer that provides access to loan materials across the State and local public libraries, including eResources

For Options 2 and 3, the following should be considered:

- Part participation (i.e. the viability/sustainability of a model with some local governments, which may or may not include SLWA)
- Full participation over time (i.e. an incremental implementation of a state-wide consortia model) with recommendations on the timeframe.

The business case should give consideration to:
- A cost benefit analysis for each option including part and full participation options.
- An assessment of the telecommunication infrastructure required to implement a state-wide LMS for Western Australia's 233 public libraries and SLWA, including a gap analysis with the current capacity of the network.
- Options for a cost effective and equitable logistics model to support an inter-library loan system with a shared LMS.
- A discovery layer that provides access to materials (physical and electronic) across SLWA and public libraries state-wide.
- A digital preservation system for SLWA and local government collections to store, manage and preserve heritage digital materials.
- An effective governance and ongoing funding models
- An appropriate lead entity model to deliver and manage the system across the state for each option
- Additional functionality to meet the needs of the SLWA and its key government partners, and to facilitate access to local and State materials, or the ability to integrate software that provides this functionality with a shared LMS.
- Benefits and risks of each option.
- Recommendations for the roll-out of the project to ensure cost effectiveness and viability in the short-term and sustainability in the medium to long term.
- A procurement strategy for all options.
- Costs, including procurement, data migration and ongoing maintenance, for all options.

7. **What are the next steps and timeline for the development of the business case?**

- A steering group (which includes PLWA representatives) has been established to guide the project.
- A reference group of stakeholders will be established to act as a sounding board for the findings from AOT at the end of each stage of the project.
- Meetings have commenced with key stakeholders.
- AOT will be sending a survey to all local governments in mid-July 2019 and a letter from SLWA to all CEOs will be sent prior to this.
- The business case is expected to be completed by October 2019.

8. **What will the business case be used for?**

- The business case will be provided to Government for their consideration as part of the 2020-21 budget process.