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Local Government Reform Review
Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries (DLGSC)
PO Box 8349
Perth Business Centre WA 6849

Dear LG Reform Officers,

My comments are very much in alignment with those of the Urban Bush Council , who welcomed some of the reforms but were disappointed there were no improvements to make the landscape a healthier natural environment for the community and were not included, but hopefully will be added following this consultative process.

Instead the reforms were very much focussed on the internal workings and governance of Councils , their staff and related processes.

Personally , I would have liked to see much more about policy setting , a more uniform approach to conservation and habitat preservation , ENFORCEMENT of penalties , against destruction of wildlife, prescribed significant trees and other vegetation. Compliance (hence transparency via independent audit) by Councils to their stated targets and objectives for biodiversity, planting , vegetation corridors etc .

3,0 Transparency and Accountability

Auditing of Processes and job definitions with accountabilities should be done for every Council staff member in WA , so all staff are aware of what is required and what they are accountable for and to whom and how their performance will be measured - hence KPIs for all . This is Corp Governance 101, but is it done and without independent auditing how will we the community know in terms of transparency .

Every works CONTRACTOR to a Council should have to sign a sheet saying the exact requirements of a job have been detailed verbally and in writing. together with any safety measures and equipment required for every job and the sheet must be signed off by the supervising Council staff and contractor - again process control 101 , but is it done ? An auditor should identify such deficiencies. This was not done for a recent watering contractor I had to monitor.

The word **audit and Auditor general** only appears in the Finance section . Auditing of many of the Council processes and practises should be common place and hence be used as a check reference at many levels throughout the Council and described in these reforms, if auditing is not already common place , in addition to monitoring .

Open Days : each Council should be required to have an open day of presentations and where a range of senior and junior staff must attend a public forum where the public can ask any questions to staff - the ultimate in transparency .

3.5 KPIs

KPI can only be measured against some standard or BENCHMARK / reference . This must be specified and shown how it is calculated and where the raw data for the benchmark is derived . It must be auditable .

Also FULL disclosure of donations by anyone to any councillor direct or to some related local cause being promoted by a councillor and certainly from any developer

5. Roles and Responsibilities

There is a huge area of blurry **undefined jurisdictional** issues between various authorities which needs addressing via a workshop with various authorities attending to gain some clarity

Examples - like - council- police - DBCA . A simple example being the theft of trees recently planted by the council near the foreshore on notionally DBCA land - OR the destruction / ringbarking of a large tree cared for by the council but on DBCA land OR people chopping down trees on a reserve on council land or DBCA land and setting fire to them - police - fire brigade - dbca - council - in winter not such a problem - in extreme fire ban conditions in a built up area - arson ? etc ??

Regards

Murray Radestock

