Notice Under Section 82 of the Financial Management Act 2006

Pursuant to section 82(1)(a) of the Financial Management Act 2006, I give notice to both houses that I have decided to provide information to Parliament (in redacted form) in response to Legislative Council Question On Notice No. 1189 from the Hon Martin Aldridge. The information being sought was as follows:

"I refer to the article published in the Geraldton Guardian on 1 May 2018, Hospital wait times doubled, and I ask:

... (d) will the Minister please advise if the business case to redevelop the Geraldton Regional Hospital is complete and, if not, when it will be complete and will he table the business case?"

On 26 June 2018, I provided the following answer:

"I am advised that:

... (d) The business case for Stage One redevelopment of the Geraldton Health Campus was submitted to Government in January 2018. It was announced on 11 May 2018 in the 2018-19 WA State Budget Papers that the WA State Government is investing $73.3 million over five years for the Stage One redevelopment of Geraldton Health Campus. The business case is an internal working document and is not written for public release."

On 28 June 2018, the Hon Martin Aldridge asked in the Legislative Council (Question On Notice No. 1438)

"I refer to Legislative Council question on notice No. 1189, in relation to the Geraldton Regional Hospital, and the Minister's decision to refuse access to the business case relating to the redevelopment of the hospital, and I ask, when does the Minister intend to satisfy his obligations under Section 82 of the Financial Management Act 2006?"

I have decided that it is reasonable and appropriate to provide a redacted version of the Geraldton Health Campus Redevelopment Project Stage One and Community Mental Health Step Up/Step Down Service Business Case on the basis that the information that has been redacted is commercially sensitive information. In making this decision, I have specifically considered the public interest and accountability for the expenditure of public monies and the efficient and effective management of these monies, and the inherent public interest in the provision of information to Parliament. The information being sought relates to budget, funding and procurement strategies. The disclosure of the information of this nature would result in detriment to the State as it would provide an unfair disadvantage to the Government in that the market would be provided with information which would potentially provide it with an unfair advantage when bidding for this project. This in turn could reduce the value for money outcomes for the Government. Program milestones have also been removed as this information is not currently in the public domain. This could also provide unfair advantage to the market regarding procurement information. After careful consideration of all the issues, the potential prejudice that will result from the disclosure of the information in this case is of such a magnitude that the information should not be disclosed notwithstanding those competing public interests in favour of disclosure.

The reasons set out above are provided in accordance with my obligations under section 82(2) of the Financial Management Act 2006. Notice is also being provided to the Auditor General in accordance with section 82(T)(b) of the Financial Management Act 2006.

Hon. Roger Cook MLA
Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health
28 NOV 2018