




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

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LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (3.30 pm): I, too, rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's report on Queensland Audit Office report No. 3 of 2018-19 titled *Delivering shared corporate services in Queensland*. I acknowledge my colleagues on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: the members for Lockyer, Mirani, Toohey, Macalister and Mansfield. I also acknowledge the assistance of the Queensland Audit Office and its officers, the then acting auditor-general Ms Daniele Bird and her staff, for appearing before us in April last year to fill us in on the work they have been doing in this field.

In a world where the cost and size of government is rising, it is very important that we go down the pathway of minimising the costs of the administration of government. Every dollar invested in administration is a dollar not invested in the patient, the policeman or the teacher. That is something on which we all agree. It was interesting to see the Queensland Audit Office's findings looking into the success of shared corporate services in Queensland. The office found that customers became increasingly satisfied with their shared corporate service provider as technology makes their work easier or costs cheaper. The office also found that providers needed a better understanding of what are the costs of providing their services. In a way, the Audit Office is quite right, because if you want to embark on efficiencies and focus the dollars on the front line then you really need to be able to see where you are spending elsewhere.

The conclusions of the Auditor-General were that there is benefit in the shared corporate services model but that, over time, a vision for Queensland shared corporate services and customers' confidence in the benefits it can deliver have started to fade. Because of this, customers are making decisions in silos which will limit the benefits that can be achieved at the whole-of-government level. There needs to be constant awareness and vigilance of the shared corporate services in order to ensure the model remains a winner.

The Queensland Audit Office made a number of recommendations. The Department of Housing and Public Works, in consultation with central agencies, should prepare a vision, strategy, principles and a proposal for the government's agreement. The Department of Housing and Public Works, with Queensland Treasury, proposes options for a revenue and investment model for shared corporate service delivery in Queensland. Of course, that is a way that ensures the customers of those services appreciate them, because they must contribute to the cost of delivering them.

The Public Service Commission worked with agencies to ensure they can plan, support and manage the impact of automation on corporate services. The providers better define, measure and price services and formalise agreements with their customers. Customers should commit to shared service effectiveness through quality input, collaboration and communication, consideration of whole-of-government implications, and monitoring of provider performance. Lastly, agencies should work together to develop and align shared service technology and workforce strategies. That all seems very sensible to me.

Mr Russo interjected.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from my honourable friend the member for Toohey. We see eye to eye on that. I caution all members that, when we are spending money, we spend taxpayers' money. The role of government is to run hospitals, schools, police and so forth. It behoves us all to monitor costs and always to seek the most efficient way to deliver services. In principle, shared corporate services has my support. The Audit Office's report was interesting in showing how the benefits can fade if we are not vigilant, but I am sure the minister and the department will take these things on board and look closely at how they perform in future.