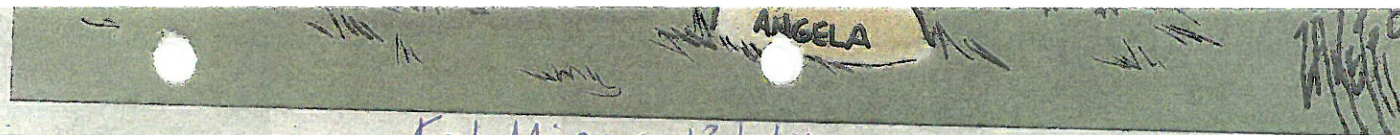


and one person, man ne, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.
John Stuart Mill, English philosopher (1806-1873)
AAP/AP/Reuters



Welfare card is worth a try

WILSON'S WORD

■ Rick Wilson

A trial of a cashless debit card for welfare payments in Leonora and Laverton would only happen with the support of local elders.

The idea of trialling the card in these communities came about when some local elders met me in despair after tragedy struck with a number of youth suicides in the area.

A solution is needed to stop the alcohol, drug and gambling abuse that sadly takes place in some communities, and this card could be it.

I was fortunate when Assistant Minister for Social Services Alan Tudge visited my electorate just before Christmas to speak to community leaders in Leonora and Laverton about the potential trial of the card.

We had a constructive dialogue with the leaders and Shire councillors from the communities and it will be up to them if they want to take this proposal further.

The Federal Government is already trialling the card in East Kimberley and in Ceduna, South Australia.

The healthy welfare card is just like any other debit card, but it can't be used to withdraw cash or to purchase alcohol or gambling products.

All other merchants in Australia would be able to accept payments made with the healthy welfare card.

Eighty per cent of all regular



The Leonora meeting about a potential trial of the healthy welfare card.

payments and 100 per cent of arrears payments and lump payments would be placed on to the card.

If the local community is chosen for a trial, a support package will be announced with the trial to help address addiction, dependence on alcohol or drugs, and help people with financial management.

For example, in Ceduna a new mobile outreach team will be on duty 24/7 so vulnerable people get the help they need.

Nearby, a new 12-bed residential rehabilitation service is being

funded and the Government is providing extra funding for drug and alcohol case management and outreach services in the region, along with extra funding for family violence services.

Business development and training opportunities are being provided as well as assistance with financial management and transitional support.

If the trial goes ahead in Laverton and Leonora, it is hoped that domestic violence rates and hospitalisation rates from assaults, crime and suicides will come down.

The Federal Government will have a complete independent evaluation of all the trials, which will inform our decisions going forward.

Any decision to go further in Leonora and Laverton is now in the hands of the local community elders and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

However, I am fully supportive of a healthy welfare card trial as the Federal member representing the area.

■ Rick Wilson is the Federal Member for O'Connor

WEIRD WORLD

Palma de Mallorca

Princess Cristina and her husband are heading to court for the start of a historic trial that marks the first time a member of Spain's royal family has faced criminal charges since the monarchy was restored in 1975. The 50-year-old Cristina is accused of two counts of tax fraud carrying a maximum prison sentence of eight years for allegedly failing to declare taxes on personal expenses paid by a real estate company she owned with her husband. She will sit in the dock on Monday with 17 others including her husband, Inaki Urdangarin. He faces charges of using his Duke of Palma title to embezzle about €6 million (\$9.41 million) through the non-profit Noos Institute he ran with an associate.

AP

HAVE YOUR SAY

Your letter to the editor must be SIGNED with the writer's full name and residential address and telephone number. Send to: Letter to the Editor, Kalgoorlie Miner, PO Box 10392, Kalgoorlie 6430; or email to news@kalmineer.com.au (include full address and phone number).

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Editor will pass it on to the Independent Media Council for review.

Thursday, February 4, 2016

Consultations on welfare card

■ Josh Chlat

The northern Goldfields Shires of Laverton and Leonora will edge a step closer to becoming the third trial site for the Federal Government's proposed cashless welfare card when community consultations begin next week.

Consulting teams from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Social Services will travel to the shires over the next two weeks to assess local sentiment on the introduction of the trial.

The departments will conduct community consultations in Laverton on February 9, Mount Mar-

garet on February 10 and Mulga Queen on February 11, before visiting the Shire of Leonora on February 16 and 17.

Representatives from the DPMC, DSS, community housing, the WA Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Child Protection and Family Services will all be present at the meeting with the Laverton Residents' Group at Laverton Town Hall next Tuesday.

Indigenous leader and Laverton resident Bruce Smith, an advocate of the trial, said the meeting would give Laverton residents an opportunity to discuss the potential for mental health services in the community.

"Individually and personally I support it, but while I support it I still need to understand what the processes are," he said.

"Some of the other programs that we were looking at are the mental health services and other drug and alcohol mentors.

"Those are the issues that we're trying to tackle, but there is an opportunity there to look at what (else) can be a part of the wrap-around services."

The DPMC said consultations would gauge community interest and map the services that were available on the ground, before Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister Alan Tudge made the deci-

sion on the third and final trial site. Meanwhile, the introduction of the Centrelink Cashless Debit Card was placed under the microscope in the Senate yesterday when Greens Senator Rachel Siewert lodged a disallowance motion to stop the trial in the South Australian town of Ceduna, which is due to begin in March.

The WA senator told Parliament the card would not meet its objectives to cut alcohol and drug use in remote communities.

If the Laverton and Leonora communities agree to the trial, they will join Ceduna and East Kimberley as sites for the rollout of the trial program.

31st March, 2016

Hon Alan Tudge MP
Minister for Human Services
Liberal Party of Australia
PO Box 6022
House Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister Tudge,

RE: RESTRICTED DEBIT CARD PROPOSAL – IDENTIFICATION OF SUITABLE SITES.

The Shire of Laverton has kindly provided me with a copy of their letter to yourself, regarding the above matter and requesting that both Laverton and Leonora be considered as a further trial site. I can confirm that Members of my Council overwhelmingly support the correspondence submitted by the Shire of Laverton.

Unfortunately, I was away on annual leave during your visit to Leonora on the 22nd December, 2016, however feedback from those in attendance suggests that it was an excellent meeting with very positive outcomes.

Since that time, I have heard of some negative comments in regard the Restricted Debit Card Proposal, however, from within the Leonora community, the positives are far outweighing the negatives and so it should.

Leonora is a very unsettled community at the moment, almost crisis stage and the proposal to introduce a Restricted Debit Card arrangement into the community is considered as a big step forward in overcoming the problems that currently exist. Residents living in Leonora/Laverton are struggling to cope – our communities are no longer safe or healthy places to live.

- Violence has become a way of life for many people, particularly Domestic Violence – yet our Police are under resourced, and we have no safe house or shelter for abused women or children in our community
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse is rife throughout the region – yet Drug and Alcohol Counsellors in the region are diminishing

- Our hospitals are under resourced putting nursing and other hospital staff at risk, as they are forced to deal with increasingly violent situations from drug and alcohol cases
- Suicide numbers amongst young people living in, or recently from the region, have increased dramatically over the past 3 months, with 4 dead youths and 7 attempted suicides recorded
- Children on the streets all day and night is out of hand. Children asking (not begging) for money to buy food is now a common occurrence. I dare say this leads to other forms of illegal activities.

Needless to say, we are now witnessing a serious breakdown in the health and wellbeing of residents and their communities across the region. Levels of violence and antisocial behaviour have escalated to the point where residents are now lodging complaints and expressing their fears for the wellbeing of their families and property on an almost daily basis, to the Shire CEO.

Currently, the region is also critically impacted by the failure of our Legal and Justice systems, which are now at the level of exacerbating a very serious social issue.

Please don't dismiss the Leonora/Laverton region as a trial site. Both communities are desperate for change and we all believe that the Restricted Debit Card proposal will provide the assistance we so desperately need.

Yours faithfully,

J.G. EPIS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

May 12, 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

Outback Shire Committed to Supporting Community

In Western Australia's Northern Goldfields, more than 800km from Perth, is a small town doing its best to provide a sustainable, enjoyable and safe community for its residents to live and work.

Leonora has a diverse cultural mix, including mine workers and a strong Aboriginal population, many who would classify as being from a low socio-economic situation. The town has seen highs and lows, from the heady days of the gold rush in nearby historic Gwalia, to the quiet state of affairs currently affecting the mining business.

Towns with such geographical isolation are faced with unique problems and unfortunately, Leonora is no different. Dubbed the Leonora Hope Bus, a group recently drove 3,500km through the desert in search of answers to the suicide of four young people in the Goldfields town since Christmas. They attended the Inaugural National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference in Alice Springs.

In addition to these recent sad matters, alcohol consumption has long been an issue in Leonora and Shire of Leonora chief executive Jim Epis has campaigned, to no avail, to introduce a cashless credit card system in an effort to abate the problem.

Mr Epis said residents of the Northern Goldfields were already disadvantaged compared to their city cousins, through geographical isolation. Fourteen years ago he initiated a project that sought to offer locals entertainment and sporting opportunities they otherwise might never have experienced.

The Leonora Golden Gift was born and each year brings quality entertainment and first class sporting competition whilst providing an opportunity for residents of Leonora and its surrounding communities to come together.

Special athletic events and workshops are also organised for school children, providing them with competition, raising self esteem and encouraging them to become more physically active, therefore providing additional health and social benefits.

"The event provides a social occasion rarely experienced in remote towns and adds to the social and emotional wellbeing of visitors and locals, while promoting a harmonious atmosphere," Mr Epis said.

"The weekend also provides us with an iconic national event, which increases the tourism appeal whilst raising the regions profile.

"But it is what the event brings to our community that is most important, a sense of pride, opportunity and security."

Available for comment:

Shire of Leonora President Peter Craig - 0418 950 572

Shire of Leonora CEO Jim Epis - 0418 118 220

ENDS

Media contact:

Frances Thornton

Ph: 0405 135 304

Email: frances@frances Thornton.com.au

frances thornton
MEDIA



Our Ref: tb: JG:

27 September 2017

Dougall Ethell
Minderoo Foundation
PO Box 3155
NEDLANDS WA 6009

Dear Mr Ethell

SHIRE OF LEONORA SUPPORT FOR CASHLESS DEBIT CARD TRIAL

On behalf of the Council of the Shire of Leonora, I am forwarding this correspondence in support of having the proposed Cashless Debit Card (CDC) trialled in our community. I have been an elected member of the Shire of Leonora for sixteen years, and since becoming President of the Shire four years ago, it has been devastating to see the escalation of anti social behaviour and damage to individuals caused by alcohol, illegal drugs and gambling. In recent years, the issues have reached a crisis level. These include issues such as suicide, violence within the community and the impact that this has on families – such as young children wandering the streets late at night because they don't feel safe in their homes. Every child deserves a safe place to sleep at night.

Suicides in our community were so prevalent only two years ago, that The Hon Alan Tudge (now Minister for Human Services) travelled to Leonora in Western Australia just two days before Christmas to listen to leaders within the community highlight just how bad the situation was, and how important it was to try and address the problems before more lives were lost. He heard about the concern for young people in the community, and how important it was to try and facilitate some form of change before more suicides were experienced, more children were inadvertently put at risk and before further unaddressed unrest in the community resulted in these negative actions being 'expected' or 'accepted'. These behaviours are not what our community prides itself on. We pride ourselves on being progressive, proactive, safe, friendly and prosperous. Every community member of the Shire of Leonora should expect nothing less.

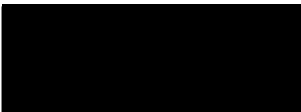
Although there has been some vocal opposition to the introduction to the CDC, this is not synonymous of views of the entire community. There have been many community members who have visited the CEO's office who feel that they were not heard at community workshops for the CDC (due to being overrun by those opposed) to convey their strong support for the CDC. They are of the opinion that our community will benefit through its introduction.

Despite the Council endeavouring to work with government and community agencies to reduce the negative impacts being experienced, more is needed to be done to facilitate long lasting change. The CDC presents an opportunity for that change. The results of trials in other communities demonstrate that there is a real opportunity for change, but that the community needs assistance to make it happen. The accompanying services proposed to be introduced with the CDC will aid community members and provide much needed support with the issues being experienced. If the reduction in gambling, alcohol consumption and violence is mirrored in Leonora as with other trial sites – it can only be a good thing, and an improvement.

Our community needs the additional support and assistance that the CDC offers, and we look forward to the opportunity to witness the positive change that it can offer in our community. I can assure you that the Shire of Leonora wholeheartedly supports the introduction of the CDC, and furthermore supports the submission by the Minderoo Foundation for the introduction of the CDC in the Shire of Leonora.

I would be most pleased to provide further information or clarification if it is required.

Yours sincerely



Cr. PJ Craig
President

Jim Epis

From: Jim Epis
Sent: Friday, 27 October 2017 7:29 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: 'Community Affairs, Committee (SEN)'
Subject: Re: Cashless Debit Card Bill

Morning Hannah,

I refer to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Meeting held in Kalgoorlie on the 12th October, 2017. Even though I participated in the Public Hearing, I did not remain in the room to listen to evidence provided by others.

Apparently it was raised in evidence that day that a well-supported petition against the Cashless Debit Card existed in Leonora.

I would be pleased if you could advise who provided this information to the Legislation Committee.

I can honestly advise that no petition is circulating the Leonora community. I certainly haven't heard or seen of anything.

My own personal enquiries with those in the community that should know have come up with blanks.

Even if a petition did exist, it would be a waste of time because momentum would be non-existent.

The Leonora Community is waiting patiently for the rollout of the Cashless Debit Card.

It is clear in my mind that some of the Senators at the Public Hearing have absolutely no idea about what is going on in towns like Leonora.

I believe that they don't want to know the truth. Did any of the Senators take time out during their visit to Kalgoorlie Boulder to witness the unruly behaviour that existed in the streets that day? I bet not, but I did. Absolutely disgusting.

If any of the Senators did walk the streets that day it would have been Senator Hanson. She appeared to have an excellent understanding of what our problems are and I thank her for that.

Meetings after meetings after meetings and no action. Enough is enough. Who is going to accept the blame for the next suicide in Leonora? It is unfortunate but I can guarantee this is likely to happen any day.

For those Senators that participated in the Public Hearing in Kalgoorlie, I now invite all to visit Leonora for one or two days to witness for themselves the issues this community is dealing with.

The Shire of Leonora is prepared to cover all costs including air travel, accommodation and meals. I know that all Senators are probably time poor but I assure you, a better understanding of the issues will fix firmly in their minds.

Kids as young as five can't be expected to be roaming the streets day and night (early hours of the morning 3.00 am – 4.00 am) and then front for school. It's an impossibility.

For those that are attending school I hope it's not the five year old's turning up "stoned".

I would be pleased if a copy of this email could be provided to the Senators concerned. Thank you.

Regards,

Jim Epis

Chief Executive Officer

Shire of Leonora

PO Box 56

LEONORA WA 6438

Ph: 9037 6044 Fax: 9037 6295

3.2 Apologies

Cr Tracey Rathbone, Deputy President, Shire of Coolgardie
Mr Doug Stead, CEO Shire of Dundas
Cr Shaneane Weldon, Deputy President, Shire of Laverton
Cr Peter Craig, President Shire of Leonora
Cr Keith Dunlop, President, Shire of Ravensthorpe
Cr Ian Goldfinch, Councillor, Shire of Ravensthorpe

Mr Rick Wilson MP, Member for O'Connor

3.3 Guests

Mr Dougall Ethell, Minderoo Foundation (left the meeting at the break for morning tea, returning at 11.09am)
Mr Neil McGilp, Manager Goldfields Tourism Network Association Inc (entered the meeting following the morning tea break at 10.22am, leaving the meeting at 10.54am)
Dr Lesley Arnott, Research Officer, Rick Wilson MP Member for O'Connor (left the meeting at the break for morning tea at 10.00am)
Mr Jarrod Lucas, News Reporter ABC Goldfields-Esperance (left the meeting at the break for morning tea at 10.00am, returning at 11.09am)

The following people attended the biosecurity workshop following lunch and the conclusion of the GVROC Council Meeting:

Mr Ross Wood, Executive Officer, Goldfields Rangelands Biosecurity Association
Dr Gaye McKenzie, CEO Rangelands NRM
Mr Kieran Massie, Rangelands NRM Program Manager
Ms Kim Eckert, CEO Kalgoorlie-Boulder Urban Landcare Centre
Ms Glenice Batchelor, Department of Food and Agriculture WA
Mr Barry Hooper, Ranger Coordinator, Goldfields Land and Sea Council
Mr Trevor Donaldson Jnr, Ranger Superintendent Goldfields Land and Sea Council

3.4 WALGA Representatives

Mr Mark Batty, Executive Manager Environment and Waste
Ms Cherie Wallace, Road Safety Advisor, Goldfields Esperance

3.5 Department of Local Government and Communities Representative

The Department is unable to send a representative to the meeting.

4. GUEST SPEAKERS/PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Mr Dougall Ethell, Minderoo Foundation (Attachments)

Mr Dougall Ethell from Minderoo Foundation has been invited to discuss with GVROC's Member Councils the cashless debit card and its trialling here in WA and South Australia (this matter was a topic for discussion at the last in-person GVROC Council Meeting held in Esperance in early February).

Copies of a brochure and handout made available by Dougall Ethell form attachments to the minutes of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned for morning tea at 9.58am

Meeting resumed after morning tea at 10.22am

8.3 Introduction of the "welfare card" across Communities in the Goldfields Esperance Region

Reporting Officer: Helen Westcott, Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose

Date: 13 April 2017

Attachments: Nil

Background:

The introduction of the "welfare card" across the Goldfields Esperance Region was discussed at the GVROC Council Meeting held in Esperance on Friday 3 February 2017, with the meeting resolving as shown below:

RESOLUTION: *Moved: Mr Epis* *Seconded: Cr Harris*

That the matter of the introduction of the "welfare card" across communities in the Goldfields Esperance Region be included in the consideration of the resolution related to Item 8.12 - Law and Order – Alcohol Sales in Laverton.

CARRIED

Executive Officer Comment:

Since the February GVROC Council meeting an invitation to Dougall Ethell from Minderoo Foundation has been extended to discuss with GVROC's Member Councils the cashless debit card and its trialling here in WA and South Australia.

Member Councils might wish to further discuss issues raised during the presentation.

Consultation: Shire of Coolgardie

Voting Requirement: Simple majority

The matter is presented for discussion and decision.

RESOLUTION: *Moved: Mayor Bowler* *Seconded: Cr Botting*

That the GVROC support the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Shires of Coolgardie, Dundas, Laverton and Leonora and other Member Councils who may advise of their desire to be involved in their efforts to have the cashless debit card trialled within their communities.

CARRIED

CREATING PARITY¹

Mr Forrest was commissioned by the Prime Minister to provide the Government with advice on how to eliminate the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Andrew Forrest handed down the Forrest 'Creating Parity' Review on 30 July 2014.

Creating Parity calls for seismic, not incremental, change and the time for action is now. Parity is completely achievable with the strength of will from all Australians.

Creating Parity contains 27 recommendations. Two of the recommendations are summarised below.

HEALTHY WELFARE CARD²

The recommendation for a cashless welfare debit card, referred to as the Healthy Welfare Card in Creating Parity, aims to reduce the harm caused by illicit drug use, gambling and the excessive consumption of alcohol among welfare recipients on working aged payments. While the card can be used for all everyday purchases, the card limits the recipient's capacity to use welfare payments to acquire restricted items by blocking purchases at liquor and gambling outlets and preventing the withdrawal of cash at ATMs and EFTPOS terminals.

The Australian Government, with the support of the respective State Governments, have implemented a trial of the Cashless Welfare Debit Card in Ceduna SA and the East Kimberly WA.

Under the trial, 80% of the welfare recipient's payments are transferred onto the cashless debit card. The remaining balance is transferred into an ordinary bank account and can be withdrawn as cash and be used for purchases with any merchant.

Early indicators from the trial areas have been encouraging (summary of Progress Report attached).

Minderoo calls upon the Government to expand the implementation to across all Australia for other vulnerable groups including all under 18 year-old welfare recipients.

NO SCHOOL NO PAY³

The Family Tax Benefit (FTB) is a payment designed to help parents with the cost of raising children. There are no mutual obligation requirements placed upon the payment and as such parents are not obliged upon receipt of the payment to ensure their children attend school.

Among other details, Creating Parity recommends amending the application form for FTB to ensure that parents understand their obligations extend to ensuring their children go to school and that a reduction of payment will occur if unexplained school absences occur.

Application of this recommendation requires both Commonwealth and respective State Government support (the Commonwealth administers the payments, and the states administer schools and hold attendance data).

Minderoo is strongly encouraging the Government to roll out a trial of 'No School No Pay' – linking Family Tax Benefit to School Attendance, in at least 10 regions across Australia.

¹ Forrest Review: 2014 <http://webarchive.nla.gov.au/gov/20160330081543/https://indigenousjobsandtrainingreview.dpmc.gov.au/forrest-review>

² Forrest Review: 2014 p100 <http://webarchive.nla.gov.au/gov/20160315155645/https://indigenousjobsandtrainingreview.dpmc.gov.au/chapter-2-healthy-welfare-card>

³ Forrest Review: 2014 p96 <http://webarchive.nla.gov.au/gov/20160315155553/https://indigenousjobsandtrainingreview.dpmc.gov.au/recommendation-2-school-attendance>

RESULTS FROM CASHLESS DEBIT CARD – DSS TRIAL PROGRESS REPORT (OCT 2016)⁴

CEDUNA – KEY POINTS

- Poker machine revenue in the Ceduna region between April 2016 and August 2016 was 15.1% lower than for the equivalent period in 2015.
- Monthly apprehensions under the Public Intoxication Act 1984 (SA) were 54% lower between March 2016 and June 2016 compared to the same period in 2015.
- Compared to February 2016, the proportion of people discharged from the Ceduna Sobering-Up Unit while still at risk fell from 14% at trial commencement to 2% in June 2016 (most recent data available).
- There has been a strong uptake of financial counselling and capability services in the Ceduna region. Since the start of the trial, approximately 300+ people have sought financial counselling services in Ceduna.
- The number of people supported by specialist homelessness services in Ceduna has decreased by 42% in the quarter since trial implementation in March 2016
- The community leaders are strongly supportive of the trial and are noticing a difference in their communities.
 - » Mayor Allan Suter has said, “this is the best thing that we’ve ever had.”
 - » Representatives from the Koonibba Community Aboriginal Corporation have observed noticeable improvements in the community, including more children walking around with cleaner newer clothes and a significant decline in individuals requesting basic supplies (like milk and sugar) from the Koonibba Community Shopfront.
 - » Local police based in Yalata have noticed a reduction in cash and alcohol coming into community, and a perceived reduction in violence as a result.

EAST KIMBERLEY – KEY POINTS

- Admissions to the Wyndham Sobering-Up Unit in September 2016 were 69% lower than before the trial began in April 2016.
- The number of domestic violence incidence reports received in July 2016 was 13% lower compared to April 2016 (latest data available).
- There has been a 28% decrease in call-outs to St John Ambulance in Kununurra in September 2016 compared to September 2015.
- There has been a strong uptake of financial counselling and capability services in the East Kimberley region. As at the end August 2016, there were 616 occasions where East Kimberly trial participants have been seen.
- Community leaders are supportive of the trial and are noticing a difference in their communities:
 - » The senior medical officer in the East Kimberley has reported a, “dramatic reduction in alcohol related presentations to the emergency department”
 - » Jean O’Reeri, the Director of the Ngnowar Aerwah Aboriginal Corporation, has stated, “since the card came in, there has been a big reduction in alcohol and domestic violence. People are starting to save and the kids are coming to school.”
 - » Ian Trust has said “unlike other reform efforts undertaken by government, it has been the Indigenous leaders of the East Kimberley who have led this reform”.
 - » Feedback from various service providers, participants of local services and community members indicates that people are better able to save money and budget, there are fewer drunk people and less fighting in the street, less gambling is occurring in town, more purchases of food and essentials, an increase in school attendance.

⁴ <https://www.mhs.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1006/t/cashless-debit-card-trial-data.pdf>

What is the Cashless Debit Card?

A card to help build healthy people, families and communities.

The Cashless Debit Card (CDC) works as an effective tool in helping to minimise the social harm caused by excessive alcohol consumption, illegal drug use and gambling.

Card holders receive 80% of their benefit on a debit card. The other 20% is deposited into a standard bank account and is available to be withdrawn as cash.

The benefit amount remains the same and the CDC only applies to those on working aged benefits, not aged or veteran pensions.

**80% CARD
20% CASH**



IS

WORKING

Why should we care?

Cash is the currency of the drug trade and gambling industry.

Alcohol abuse, drug taking, and excessive gambling is harmful to individuals and their families. We want our communities to thrive.

The CDC strikes a balance between allowing welfare recipients to make independent decisions about what they wish to buy, and helping to create safe communities.

We know that the CDC plays a critical role as a circuit breaker.

Prove it!

Independent evaluation of the trials in Ceduna SA, and the East Kimberley WA show that:

66% of trial participants reported drinking, gambling or taking drugs before the trial;

53% of the above reported a reduction in at least one of these behaviours;

31% said they were able to save more money, and take better care of their kids;

46% not on the trial said life was better in the community; less than 19% said it was worse;

94% did not express shame or embarrassment as an issue.

ORIMA: Wave 1 Interim Evaluation Report - Feb 2017

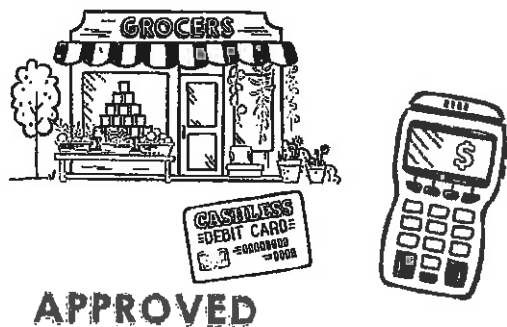
“

...the Trial has been effective in reducing alcohol consumption, illegal drug use and gambling - establishing a clear 'proof-of-concept'...

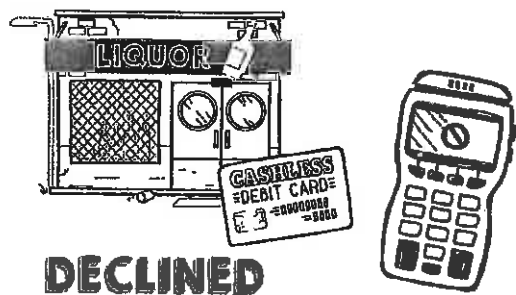
”

How does it work?

The CDC works just like any other credit or debit card that most Australians already have.



The Card can be used for everyday purchases at any store. The only change is that many transactions will become electronic and it cannot be used to buy alcohol or gambling products.



For more information visit:

creatingparity.org.au

 Cashless-Debit-Card



The new age
of welfare payments



minderoo
FOUNDATION

Federal cashless welfare card trial a critical step for WA Goldfields community in crisis

ABC GOLDFIELDS [SAM TOMLIN](#), [RHIANNON SHINE](#) AND [REBECCA CURTIN](#) THU FEB 18 17:56:34 EST 2016



PHOTO: Community leaders say the withdrawal of key services from Leonora has pushed the community to crisis point. ABC GOLDFIELDS: SAM TOMLIN

Leaders of a northern Goldfields town struck by a spate of suicides and rampant drug and alcohol abuse say the trial of the Federal Government's cashless welfare card could be a circuit-breaker for the crisis facing the community.

The small community of Leonora, around 240 kilometres north of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, experienced a number of suicides in late 2015 and last week, an Indigenous woman took her own life.

Staff from Human Services Minister Alan Tudge's office visited Leonora this week to lay out the mechanics for a trial of the card, which places 80 per cent of a person's welfare payments onto a card that cannot be used for alcohol or gambling.

Shire president Peter Craig said the trial — first floated for Leonora and neighbouring Laverton before Christmas — was a critical step forward in addressing the problems facing the town.

"We see it as a great benefit to our communities," Mr Craig said.

"While it's not going to solve all the problems, it's going to reduce the amount of cash that's available to buy alcohol and drugs."

While legislation for the trial passed in October with bipartisan support, Greens Senator Rachel Siewert moved to disallow the legislation earlier this month, citing concerns from community members.

Mr Craig said while there was some negativity, it may stem from poor understanding of the new system.

"There are people on the ground from the Minister's

office at the moment, explaining how it is going to work," Mr Craig said.

"There are always going to be some people who aren't going to want it, but from a community perspective, we think it will be a significant plus."

Degradation and withdrawal of services led to present crisis

The proposed trial is just one aspect of a solution being formulated by the Shire, local Aboriginal elders and agencies, to a crisis they said had developed due to the steady drain of government services out of the northern Goldfields.



PHOTO: Leonora and Laverton shire presidents Peter Craig and Patrick Hill ABC GOLDFIELDS: RHIANNON SHINE

Since 2014, the area has lost a regional midwife, two Aboriginal maternal health workers, a parenting program, open days for licensing, fine payment and other easy access to services, and a program promoting health for pregnant women.

Access to mental health services remains sporadic, with many agencies sending their Kalgoorlie-based staff out for as few as three days per month.

The Shire of Leonora has been expected to fill much of the funding gap, with the Council forced to provide money for hospital equipment, retention of medical staff and the provision of youth services.

Had funding not been found in the last fortnight, the town's only remaining drug and alcohol counsellor — Hope Community Services' Jane Waterton — would have been forced to close up shop at the end of February.

The recent upswing in crime and violence has seen Leonora's small police station reinforced by officers