



## Background

*Monitoring outcomes: achieving goals offers an introduction and starting point for local and regional authorities in using indicators as a tool for monitoring progress towards the strategic directions of their area. It is based on research into community-based indicator projects and the learning experiences arising from them.*

In May 1999 the City of Onkaparinga was successful in its application for a grant under the Local Government Research and Development Scheme to undertake a project to:

... develop a suite of indicators for the ongoing measurement of the progress and sustainability of a local government area in terms of social, economic and environmental parameters.

As a result the Strategic Indicators Project commenced in October 1999. The project, a twelve month initiative, seeks to develop indicators for policy and decision makers to ascertain the status—economic integrity, social cohesion and environmental condition—of a geographic area. The indicators are intended to be used as a tool for the systematic monitoring of progress towards community-wide goals.

The project involved research into why and how indicators are being used in Australia and overseas with a view to developing a suite of indicators that:

- is applicable to local government (or a region)
- includes social, economic and environment parameters
- promotes sustainable communities.

The project was designed to achieve outcomes that have broad applicability and relevance to councils, both metropolitan and non-metropolitan. The City of Onkaparinga has achieved this through a 'sharing the journey' strategy in which 32 councils accepted an invitation to be regularly informed and engaged during the course of the project.

A discussion paper, *Tracking progress using indicators*, was also produced in March 2000 to document approaches to using indicators (including case studies) identified during the research phase of the project.

*... offers an introduction and starting point for councils wanting to use indicators as a tool for monitoring strategic directions.*