Handout 5: Policy Instruments

This is the part of policy development where the ideas turn into a reality, where it gets converted into a practical application.

There are broadly four different ways of applying policy:

- Advocacy – getting people to accept the idea through being persuasive, arguing the case and community education
- Financial – using funds from the budget or through seeking funds from elsewhere
- Government action - getting government to deliver the services through community welfare organisations
- The law – using legislative power and official authority.

HINT visit the tearoom for further discussion on ways to implement policy using the Carmen Poldis Community Centre hypothetical case study above.

The criteria for selecting one method over another will depend on:

- How appropriate a particular method will be i.e. is it a reasonable way of proceeding taking into account the client group, staff, resources and timing?
- Cost effective- will the choice of implementation be efficient?
- Effectiveness – can this method of implementation achieve the objectives?
- Equity – will the consequences of implementing the policy in this way just and equitable?
- Workable – can the method be implemented easily. Is it sound but simple and can it hold up in adverse conditions?

Choosing the correct policy instrument is crucial to achieving the objective of the policy.