

Local Government Reform Steering Committee

Local Government Reform Checklist

FEBRUARY 2009



Department of **Local Government
and Regional Development**
www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au

Timeframe for Reform Submission to the Minister

Stage 1

March/April 2009

- Individual local governments to complete the attached reform checklist.
- Initial exploratory meeting to confirm local government amalgamation grouping is appropriate.
- Local governments determine suitable partners for amalgamation.
- Consideration of the reduction in the number of elected members.
- Consideration of skill sets for the establishment of a project team to coordinate local government's reform process.
- Local governments to forward completed checklist to the Local Government Reform Steering Committee by **30 April 2009**.

Stage 2

April/May 2009

- Project team established (2-3 members from each local government).
- Project team meets as required to determine preferred amalgamation structure.
- Project team to determine appropriate elected member representation and methods for ensuring appropriate community representation.
- Project team to consider local government regional grouping.
- Seek State Government funding assistance as necessary for preparing Reform Submissions.
- If required, consultant/facilitator engaged.
- Community consultation undertaken within each affected local government and comments recorded.

Stage 3

May/June 2009

- Project team develops Reform Submission to include:
 - preferred amalgamation structure or other types of boundary adjustments;
 - number of elected members; and / or
 - regional grouping; and
 - transition timeline, including timeframe and estimated additional transition costs.

Stage 4

June/July 2009

- Project team finalises Reform Submission and circulates to affected local governments.
- Each council passes a resolution to proceed based on the findings of the submission.
- Each council agrees to identify a date the amalgamation is to take effect.
- Each council is to agree to a date at which elected member numbers will be reduced.

Stage 5

August 2009

- Local governments forward the Reform Submission to the Minister for Local Government by **31 August 2009**.

- Minister provides Reform Submission to Local Government Reform Steering Committee for assessment.
- Steering Committee assesses Reform Submissions and seeks further information if needed.
- Steering Committee provides advice to Minister on preferred option for reform.

- Finalised proposals referred to the Local Government Advisory Board for consideration and recommendation.

Attachment 1: Local Government Reform Checklist

Local Government Reform Checklist			
Guiding principle ¹	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
1. Long term strategic planning			
o Your local government has a five year (or longer) strategic plan in place.	Yes		If yes, attach plan. The Strategic Plan 2008-2011 is attached.
o Your local government has a five year (or longer) financial management plan in place that is linked to the plan for the future.	Yes		If yes, attach plan. The current Strategic Financial Plan adopted in 2006 is attached. A revised and updated Strategic Financial Plan will shortly be considered by Council.
o Your local government has detailed three/five year business plans.	Yes		If yes, attach plan. The City develops Directorate and Business Plans and these are reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The City also develops an Annual Plan which details the annual work program and priorities. The Council receives quarterly progress reports against the Annual Plan. The Annual Plan 2008/09 is attached and copies of the 2008/09 Directorate and Business Unit Plans can be made available if required.

¹ It is understood that some of these principles are not mandatory, however reflect principles of best practice.

2. Detailed asset and infrastructure management planning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has an inventory of all infrastructure and assets and has an accompanying maintenance and renewal plan in place. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>If yes, attach plan.</p> <p>The following attachments are provided:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Asset Management Policy: shows the high level commitment of the organisation. 2 Asset Management Plan: shows the confidence level of the data contained in the asset inventories and the program to update the data. 3 Report to Council outlining the City's progress on its Asset Management Strategy including endorsement of the Asset Management Plan 4 Year Building Maintenance and Capital Works Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Asset maintenance and replacement gaps have been identified and addressed in the financial plan. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>The following Infrastructure Financial Forecasts are attached:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 20 Year Financial projections – Buildings 2 20 Year Financial Projections - Roads

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
3. Future financial viability and planning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has adequate reserve funds for future capital works and plant replacement. 		No	The City has a regime for the use of reserve funds to assist in the provision of future capital works and plant replacement. The major reserves are Strategic Asset Management Reserve, Parking Reserve and Plant Replacement Reserve.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government income stream including rates, fees, charges and grants can satisfy your long term community service and operational needs and without grants represents at least 40% of your total revenue. 	Yes		For the year ended 30 June 2008 on total revenues of \$98,059,931 non-grant revenues amounted to \$90,176,533 or 92%.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has financial management plans indicating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing debt levels; - depreciation allocations compared to allocations on asset replacement and renewal; - operating deficit compared to rates revenue; - amount of reserve funds compared to expenses/asset values; and - adverse financial trends. 	Yes		

Local Government Reform Checklist		
Guiding principle	Include figures	Explanatory comment
4. Equitable governance and community representation		
o Indicate the number of vacancies at the 2007 ordinary local government elections.	6	The 2007 ordinary elections were the second round of elections following the re-establishment of the elected Council in 2006. The elected Council comprises a Mayor (elected by the electors) and 12 Councillors representing 6 wards (2 per ward) – the 2007 election was a non-Mayoral election.
o Indicate how many vacancies at the 2007 ordinary local government elections were uncontested.	3	One elected member in each of the following Wards was returned unopposed:- South-East Central North
o Indicate the ratio of elected members to community population.	Total population approximately 150,000 – 13 elected members. 1:11,538	When reviewing boundaries, the Act requires the ratio of elected representation against electors – the following figures apply (January 2009) for the City: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central - 16,835 electors (ratio 1:8,418) • North – 18,342 electors (ratio 1:9,171) • North-Central – 17,149 electors (ratio 1:8,574) • South – 15,724 electors (ratio 1:7,862) • South-East – 16,933 electors (ratio 1:8,466) • South-West – 18,584 electors (ratio 1:9,292) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total - 103,567 electors (ratio 1:7,967)

o Indicate the percentage of voter turnout at the most recent local government elections.	2006 election – Mayor and 12 Councillors (27.75%) 2007 election – 3 Councillors (27.17%)	The 2006 election was the first election since re-establishment of the elected Council – all elections held since then have been as ‘postal elections.’
5. Proficient organisational capacity		
o Indicate the number of staff vacancies and the period these vacancies have continued in each of; - senior management; - middle management; and - senior operational staff positions.	As at 27 March 2009 1 x senior management position. 2 x middle management positions.	Director Governance and Strategy vacated 6 February 2009. Replacement commences on 20 April 2009. Manager, Strategic Development vacated 30 January 2009. Structural review in progress. Manager Planning, Approvals and Environmental Services vacated 15 January. Replacement commences in June 2009.

Local Government Reform Checklist			
Guiding Principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
o Your local government has an employee attraction and retention strategy.	Yes		Forms part of Corporate Plan. Corporate Plan 2008 – 2011 is attached.
o Your current staff engage in annual professional training and development opportunities.	Yes		All employees have a Development Plan that includes training for current role and potential development for next role. The City holds an annual Staff Conference as part of the corporate training regime. Employees can also apply for generous study assistance.
o Your local government currently experiences delays in meeting statutory reporting functions and / or requests extensions.		No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government processes residential building licence applications within 20 working days. 	Yes		This is correct where the application lodged is complete and does not require a Planning Approval.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under delegations your local government processes development applications within 20 working days. 	Yes		Approximately 23% of Development Applications in the month of February 2009 were processed within 20 working days.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All other development applications are processed within 40 working days. 		No	Approximately 37% were processed within 40 working days. Many of the applications in this category and those in excess of 40 days require additional information from the applicant and public advertising.

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
6. Effective political and community advocacy for service delivery			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has funding or other partnerships in place with programs and services sourced by the State Government. 	Yes		<p>The City has entered into partnerships with State Government including programs such as the Travel Smart Program, Living Smart Program, Youth Holiday Program, National Youth Week, and Emergency Relief Program.</p> <p>The Central Area Transit (CAT) service is in partnership with Edith Cowan University and Transperth.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has funding or other partnerships in place with programs and services sourced by the Federal Government. 	Yes		<p>The City has entered into partnerships with Federal Government including programs such as ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity Project, ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Program, ICLEI Water Campaign, Youth Link Program.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has funding partnerships in place with the private sector to enhance service delivery. 		No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The relationship between local government boundaries and relevant State and Commonwealth Agency boundaries are appropriate for effective decision making. 	Yes		

<p>o In the past 2 years your local government has attracted investment that has led to economic growth and job creation.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>The City's Economic Development Plan 2007 – 2011 sets out a number of strategies for economic growth and job creation.</p> <p>The City:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides funding support to the Small Business Centre – North West Metro; • Provides funding support for the Sunset Coast Tourism Association; • worked with Eco-Business to develop and promote a regional Eco-Business industry, accreditation program; • supports the ongoing operation of the Joondalup Business Centre (business incubation service); • continues to identify trade and investment opportunities through the Jinan Sister City Relationship; and • conducts regular business forums for the City's stakeholders and business community.
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Attachment 1: Local Government Reform Checklist continued

Local Government Reform Checklist			
Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has community consultation strategies in place, both on-going and project specific. 	Yes		<p>In recognition of Section 1.3(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1995, the City has a stated objective to encourage greater community participation in the decisions and affairs of the local government.</p> <p>The City has a Public Participation Policy 1-2 which it follows in relation to ongoing programs and projects, and allocates resources in the budget for consultation activities.</p> <p>The City also has a number of Advisory Committees to provide a vehicle for facilitating community input and participation in the City's decision-making processes. These Advisory Committees comprise community representatives and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety and Crime Prevent Advisory Committee; • Conservation Advisory Committee; • Seniors Interest Advisory Committee; • Streetscape Advisory Committee; • Sustainability Advisory Committee.

7. Understanding of and planning for demographic change			
o Your local government's population trend for the past five years has been: - declining - stable - growing			Provide percentage.
	Yes		
o Your local government's projected population for the next five years will be: - declining - stable - growing			Provide estimated percentage.
	Yes		
o Your local government has plans in place for demographic change.	Yes		<p>The City has a number of plans in place or in development to address the changing demographics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development Plan • Seniors Plan • Housing Strategy (being developed as a part of the review of the District Planning Scheme). <p>The City also examines changing demographics during the annual business planning process and each Directorate and Business Unit examines customer and community needs, including changing demographics during this process.</p> <p>There are approximately 2800 undeveloped lots in the City and there are some suburbs in the southern sector of the City that could undergo redevelopment.</p>

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principles	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
8. Effective management of natural resources			
<p>o Your local government, by itself or in partnership, has resource management plans to address changing environmental conditions.</p>	Yes		<p>Provide details.</p> <p>The City has an Environment Plan and a number of supporting plans to facilitate sustainable environmental management including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Master Plan • Biodiversity Action Plan (attached) • Water Conservation Plan (attached). <p>The City was invited to participate (along with 21 other Cities in the world) in the Local Action for Biodiversity Project to focus on enhancing the profile, planning and management of biodiversity at the local level.</p>

9. Optimal community of interest			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government provides services and facilities to communities with a similar community of interest. 	Yes		<p>Apart from its City Centre, three large suburban shopping centres and many local shopping centres, the City of Joondalup is an urban local government with few significant discontinuities in terms of lifestyle and land use.</p> <p>Across the 22 suburbs of the City of Joondalup there is an even distribution of schools, sporting clubs and other associated facilities for the benefit of the community.</p>
10. Optimal service delivery to community			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has the capacity to improve / increase service delivery in response to community expectation and associated demand. 	Yes		<p>The City's planning processes include the development of Directorate and Business Plans on an annual basis. These plans include the requirement to document approved service levels, and to document expectations for increased service levels by the community identified during community research and consultation activities. The planning processes link closely to the budget process and any requests for increases to service delivery are considered during the budget process.</p>

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principles	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
11. Membership of an effective regional grouping			
o Your local government is a member of a regional grouping of two or more local governments to plan and deliver services regionally.	Yes		The City is an active member of the:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tamala Park Regional Council; • Mindarie Regional Council; • WALGA North Metropolitan Zone. The City did participate in meetings of the North West Corridor Coordinating Committee.
o Indicate your regional grouping preference, identifying participating local governments.	N/A	N/A	North Metropolitan Corridor
12. Previous Structural Reform			
o Have you gained any benefits from structural reform measures taken with other local governments to date?	Yes		In 1998, the former City of Wanneroo was split into the current City of Wanneroo and City of Joondalup. The City has gained significant benefits arising from the restructure, including an extensive analysis of operations, including examination of in-house versus use of external contractors and this analysis has been ongoing. See attached planning framework and executive reporting system.

13. Conclusion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After completing the checklist, are you of the view that amalgamation or any other type of structural reform is necessary for your local government? 	Yes		The City of Joondalup is supportive of local government structural reform as identified in WALGA's SSS report.