

Local Government Structural Reform

Date of Report	16 April 2009
Location / Address	N/A
Applicant	N/A
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Senior Officer	N/A
Disclosure of Any Interest	Nil

SUMMARY:

In February 2009 the Minister for Local Government initiated a structural reform process for local government in WA. The process requires consideration of a reduction in the number of local governments in WA and a reduction in the number of elected members.

In response to the announcement and in accordance with guidelines produced to assist local governments in responding to the Minister, the Shire has undertaken a number of steps, including the completion of a "Reform Checklist" and initial exploratory discussions with neighbouring local governments. In addition, councillors and staff have received regular briefings. A community information session was held on 8 April 2009.

This report seeks:

1. council's endorsement of the Reform Checklist, which is to be submitted to the Local Government Reform Steering Committee by 30 April 2009;
2. to establish council's view regarding the type of structural reform to be further considered; and
3. council's endorsement of the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) as the most effective regional grouping to which the Shire should belong.

BACKGROUND:

The Minister for Local Government has requested that all WA local governments make an informed decision on voluntary amalgamation, preferred regional groupings and a reduction in the number of elected members. This decision is to be communicated in the form of a "Reform Submission" by 31 August 2009.

The process is also designed to allow local governments to identify appropriate regional groupings within which to work collaboratively to deliver community benefits on a regional basis.

Guidelines have been developed by the Local Government Reform Steering Committee (a body formed following the Minister's announcement to oversee the reform process) to assist local governments in developing their decision making process and in preparing their reform submission.

Stage one of the structural reform process required a number of actions to be completed in March/April 2009, the most notable of which are:

- Complete a Reform Checklist;
- Determine suitable partners for amalgamation;
- Hold initial exploratory meetings to confirm a potential local government amalgamation grouping is appropriate; and
- Consider a reduction in the number of elected members.

The Reform Checklist requires the Shire to provide information on the following areas:

- long term strategic planning
- detailed asset and infrastructure management planning
- future financial viability and planning
- equitable governance and community representation
- proficient organisational capacity
- effective political and community advocacy for service delivery
- understanding of and planning for demographic change
- effective management of natural resources
- optimal community of interest
- optimal service delivery to community
- membership of an effective regional grouping
- previous Structural Reform

The checklist is to be completed and forwarded to the Local Government Reform Steering Committee by 30 April 2009.

The City of Swan and Shires of Northam and Kalamunda were identified as potential partners with whom to engage in discussions about structural reform. Initial exploratory meetings with the City of Swan and Shire of Northam have been held, and a meeting with the Shire of Kalamunda is scheduled for 22 April 2009 (after the date of completion of this report).

With regards to consideration of the number of elected members (councillors), initial discussions with councillors resulted in support for this question to be deferred until after consideration of potential amalgamations. The reason for this was that the consideration would be influenced, to a significant degree, by whether the number of elected members was to represent the current local government district or a potentially new (amalgamated) local government district.

STATUTORY / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The process required to be followed by the Shire is to submit a Reform Checklist by 30 April and a Reform Submission by 31 August 2009. Following this, the Minister will refer the Reform Submission to the Local Government Reform Steering Committee for assessment.

The Steering Committee will assess the submission and seek further information if needed. The Steering Committee will provide advice to the Minister on the preferred option for reform by December 2009.

Finalised proposals will be referred to the Local Government Advisory Board for consideration and recommendation to the Minister. At this time, schedule 2.1 of the Local Government Act applies.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Minister for Local Government announced financial assistance to every local government embarking on reform. Local governments are eligible for initial payments of up to \$10,000.

Local governments can use the funding to help prepare their submissions. For example, the funding could go towards hiring a facilitator to help local governments engage with each other, or a consultant to assist in preparing the reform submissions or to undertake community consultation.

The Shire will consider such assistance if or when it is required, particularly as the need for community consultation and feedback is reviewed.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

The potential for structural reform of the local government sector and its impact on the Shire was identified in the Shire's strategic plan.

Initial discussions with neighbouring local governments and the completion of the Reform Checklist indicate that the Shire of Mundaring is a financially sustainable local government which is able to provide appropriate and affordable services to its residents.

Nevertheless, the Minister's request was welcomed as it provided an opportunity for the Shire to review its services and ensure it is operating at a high standard. Further, the Shire's response reflects its commitment to adopting changes which will benefit the community, including opportunities to liaise with other local governments to ensure a more streamlined approach in how it operates.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Reform Checklist (see **ATTACHMENT 1**) demonstrates the Shire's position as a financially sustainable local government which has established strategies and efficient partnerships in place.

Further, the Shire is well placed and sufficiently resourced to continue providing the necessary focus on social and environmental sustainability.

The Shire's governance processes and structures are sound and demonstrate proficient organisational capacity.

Many of the questions contained within the Reform Checklist clearly indicate a desirability for local governments to form appropriate regional groupings to more effectively deliver shared services. The Shire of Mundaring is currently a member of the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC), which is identified elsewhere as a successful model of an effective regional local government body. The EMRC is currently looking at the feasibility of expanding the number of shared services it provides to its members. This study will involve consultation with member councils. The outcome of increased shared service delivery has the potential to provide even greater benefit to the residents of the Shire by way of more streamlined processes and improved economies of scale.

CONSULTATION:

On Wednesday, 8 April 2009 a meeting was held which aimed to update key community stakeholders about the structural reform process, the guidelines and timeframes in place and the type of information required from the Shire.

The session was not a requirement at this stage of the reform process, but was something the Shire felt was important in keeping the community informed.

The night was well received with Shire staff being acknowledged for their hard work in not only addressing the reform process to date but helping to make the Shire a sustainable local government.

Regular updates are also being provided on the Shire's website and in its community newspaper column.

As noted earlier in this report, discussions have been held with the City of Swan and Shire of Northam at the time of writing this report. The meetings have been conducted in a positive manner, focussing on ways to improve service delivery to the community.

The preliminary view emanating from both discussions is that it would take a compelling case, where improvements to service delivery and benefits to residents and ratepayers are clearly demonstrated, for a whole-of-council amalgamation to take place. To date, evidence in support of that case has not been identified.

The Shire of Northam indicated that it views its most likely potential partners to be within the Avon region and not further west to the metropolitan area. The City of Swan is already the largest metropolitan local government and indicated its reluctance to expand.

However, both the City of Swan and Shire of Northam agreed that it would be useful to review the shared local government boundaries in an effort to remove anomalies and indicate more clearly communities of interest. This review would by necessity include a review of the impact of any proposed boundary adjustment on the sustainability of the participating local governments.

COMMENT:

As a result of the work undertaken in response to the Minister's request, council may form the view that:

1. A whole of council amalgamation is not considered to be necessary (in addition noting that there are no potential partners wishing to pursue this type of reform); and
2. The Shire should pursue a review of its shared boundaries to ensure they best serve the interests of all residents

Council is also requested to:

1. Reaffirm the EMRC as the most appropriate regional grouping for the Shire of Mundaring; and
2. Endorse the attached Reform Checklist and the comments contained therein.

Following completion of stage one of the reform process (which is effectively concluded by consideration of the matters in this report and submission of the Reform Checklist) the next stage will include:

- A review of the number of elected members;
- The forming of a project team to commence discussions on boundary adjustments;
- Ongoing community consultation; and
- Consideration of applying for funding to assist in the community consultation process and / or preparation of the Reform Submission.

Please note that the attachments referred to in the Reform Checklist have not been reproduced in this report or its attachment. They will be provided to the Reform Steering Committee.

VOTING REQUIREMENT:

Simple majority

<i>COUNCIL DECISION</i>	<i>C4.04.09</i>
<i>OFFICER RECOMMENDATION</i>	
<i>Moved by: Cr Johnson</i>	<i>Seconded by: Cr Gardhouse</i>

That Council -

1. endorses the Reform Checklist (and comments therein) located at **ATTACHMENT 1**;
2. forms the view that a whole of council amalgamation is not necessary as the Shire of Mundaring has clearly demonstrated financial sustainability, proficient organisational capacity and an absence of suitable and willing potential amalgamation partners;
3. endorses a review of the Shire's shared boundaries to ensure they best serve the interests of all residents; and
4. reaffirms the EMRC as the most appropriate regional grouping for the Shire of Mundaring.

CARRIED 9/0

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		Attachment 1
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		Attachment 2
o Your local government has detailed three/five year business plans.	Yes		<p>The Strategic Plan is the higher level business plan for the Shire.</p> <p>Other high level business plans include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategy (Attach 3) • Growing Mundaring: A Property Strategy for the Shire of Mundaring (Attach 4) • Strategic Transport Plan (Attach 5) • Human Resources Plan (Attach 6) • Positive Ageing Strategy (Attach 7) • Planning for Youth in the Shire of Mundaring 2008 -2011 (Attach 8 Part 1, Attachment 8 Part 2) • Twenty Year Infrastructure Rolling Capital Programs (Attach 9) • Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (Attach 10) • Housing Options for Seniors and People with Disabilities (Attach 11)

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

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management Plan. (Attach 12) • Infrastructure Services Group Plan for 2009 (Attach 13) <p>In addition to these higher levels strategic plans, Service Group plans for each service within the Shire are developed on an annual basis. Copies of these can be supplied upon request.</p>
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. 	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads in RoMan database software • Parks in a spreadsheet • Buildings in a spreadsheet • Playgrounds in a spreadsheet • Paths in a spreadsheet • Drainage in a spreadsheet • Twenty Year Infrastructure Rolling Capital Programs (Attach 9)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Asset maintenance and replacement gaps have been identified and addressed in the financial plan. 	Yes		<p>Involved in Western Australian Asset Management Improvement (WAAMI) program (a joint WALGA and Dept of Local Government and Regional Services initiative).</p> <p>The Shire is currently progressing towards step 4 and development of draft asset management plans.</p> <p>To date have developed an Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Working Group and an overarching Operating Practice document linked to the Shire's Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The replacement renewal gap costs have been identified for roads, paths, drainage, ovals, buildings and playgrounds.</p>

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
3. Future financial viability and planning			
<p>o Your local government has adequate reserve funds for future capital works and plant replacement.</p>	Yes		<p>Forecast 2008/09 - \$5.6M (Statutory Budget)</p> <p>Reserve Funds include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Investment Reserve - (\$4,333,696) • Children's' Services Reserve – (\$740,340) • Civic Facilities Reserve – (\$1,357,381) • Aged Persons Facilities Reserve – (\$689,451) • Gravel Pit Rehabilitation Reserve – (\$100,106) • Information Technology Reserve - \$275,954 • Insurance Reserve – (\$350,849) • Capital Income Reserve - \$91,438 • Long Service Leave Reserve – (\$30,548) • Plant Replacement Reserve – (\$627,833) <p>The Shire's Property Strategy will significantly increase the Capital Investment Reserve post 2011.</p> <p><i>Source: Audited Annual Report 2007/08</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 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		<p>Income stream for 2008/09 excluding grants is 81% (23.5/29M) of total estimated revenue.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Total Receipts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$29.0M</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Less</u> Operational Grants</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$(4.4M)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Capital Grants</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$(1.1M)</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$23.5M</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Shire's Property Strategy will significantly increase the income stream post 2011.</p> <p><i>Source: Audited Annual Report 2007/08</i></p>	Total Receipts	\$29.0M	<u>Less</u> Operational Grants	\$(4.4M)	Capital Grants	<u>\$(1.1M)</u>		\$23.5M
Total Receipts	\$29.0M										
<u>Less</u> Operational Grants	\$(4.4M)										
Capital Grants	<u>\$(1.1M)</u>										
	\$23.5M										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 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	No	<p>Debt Service Ratio 1%</p> <p>Depreciation \$9M Asset Purchases average year \$9M</p> <p>2007/08 – Operating Surplus of \$1.8M</p> <p>Reserves \$8.5M / Non Current Assets \$18M</p> <p>The Shire has no adverse trends (refer Ratio Analysis in 2007/08 Audited Annual Report)</p> <p><i>Source: Audited Annual Report 2007/08</i></p>								

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principle	Include figures	Explanatory comment
4. Equitable governance and community representation		
○ Indicate the number of vacancies at the 2007 ordinary local government elections.	6 (being 50% of elected members)	
○ Indicate how many vacancies at the 2007 ordinary local government elections were uncontested.	Nil	
○ Indicate the ratio of elected members to community population.	1 elected member per 2,003 electors; or 1 elected member per 2,786 of community population.	
○ Indicate the percentage of voter turnout at the most recent local government elections.	2007 – Average 36.1%	
5. Proficient organisational capacity		
○ 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.	Nil	Senior Management – Nil Middle management - Nil Senior operational staff – Nil As at checklist submission date.

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 an employee attraction and retention strategy. 	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Plan • Corporate Training Plan. • Workplace of Choice Strategy. • Current staff turnover rate for previous 12 months to 31/3/09 is 10% per annum (that is, we have a staff retention rate of 90% per annum)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your current staff engage in annual professional training and development opportunities. 	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Corporate Training Plan • Annual Service Group Training Plans • Biannual Performance and Development reviews for all staff. • Attendance at service specific conferences and other external training opportunities • Membership of service specific support and networking groups

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 currently experiences delays in meeting statutory reporting functions and / or requests extensions. 		No	The Shire does not experience any delays in meeting statutory deadlines.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government processes residential building licence applications within 20 working days. 	Yes		<p>It is noted that the Shire is required to comply with the statutory requirements of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960. Such requirements include consideration of an application within 35 days or 60 days if the application is subject to the Heritage of WA Act 1990.</p> <p>Notwithstanding these requirements, the Shire can process building licence applications within 20 working days where applications submitted comply with the requirements of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Regulations 1989 • <i>Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1960</i> • Building Code of Australia 2008 • Residential Design Codes of Western Australia <p>Where applications which are submitted do not comply/are incomplete, shire staff assist proponents to resolve outstanding issues. The timelines in relation to these are then based on respondent response times.</p>

<p>○ Under delegations your local government processes development applications within 20 working days.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>It is noted that the Shire is required to comply with the provisions contained within the Town Planning Scheme (which are based on model provisions and approved by the WAPC). The provisions note that Council is to consider an application within 60 days of receipt of an application or within such further timeframe as may be agreed in writing between the applicant and Council within that 60 day period.</p> <p>Notwithstanding these requirements, the Shire can process development applications under delegation within 20 working days where applications submitted comply with the requirements of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shire of Mundaring Town Planning Scheme no 3 • Residential Design Codes of Western Australia • Council Policies <p>and do not require public consultation or referral to relevant Government Departments.</p> <p>Where applications which are submitted do not comply/are incomplete, shire staff assist proponents to resolve outstanding issues. The timelines in relation to these are then based on respondent response times</p>
<p>○ All other development applications are processed within 40 working days.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>Again, it is noted that the Shire is required to comply with the provisions contained within the Town Planning Scheme. Notwithstanding these requirements the Shire can process development applications within 40 working days where applications submitted comply with the requirements of:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shire of Mundaring Town Planning Scheme no 3• Residential Design Codes of Western Australia• Council Policies <p>and do not require public consultation or referral to relevant Government Departments.</p> <p>Where applications which are submitted do not comply/are incomplete, shire staff assist proponents to resolve outstanding issues. The timelines in relation to these are then based on respondent response times</p>
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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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous partnerships in place. Including: • Bush Fire management outside of metropolitan bush fire district- FESA • Parent and Adolescent Counselling Service - Department for Communities • Operation of the Mt Helena Aquatic and Recreation Centre - Education Department (note shared service provision governed by license arrangement) • Trails Master Plan - Shire of Kalamunda, Department of Environment and Conservation • Perth Hills Precinct Working Party - Shire of Kalamunda, Department of Environment and Conservation, East Metropolitan Regional Council • East Metropolitan Regional Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy - City of Swan, Town of Bassendean, Shire of Kalamunda, Police Service • Club Development Program - Department of Sport and Recreation • Aboriginal Seniors Sports Program – Department of Sport and Recreation • 10,000 Step Program - Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce • Trek the Trail Sponsorship - Department of Planning and Infrastructure • Trek the Trail Sponsorship - Department Environment of Environment and Conservation • Trek the Trail Sponsorship - Water Corporation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trek the Trail Sponsorship - Healthways • Volunteer Works Program, Lake Leschenaultia – Department of Justice/Wooroloo Prison /Acacia Prison • Volunteer Works Program, Lake Leschenaultia - Royal Australia Air Force • Wooroloo Dirt Jump Development - Department of Local Government and Regional Development • Railway Reserves Heritage trail Marketing and Promotions - Department of Local Government and Regional Development • Family Day Care Outreach Program- Department of Local Government and Regional Development • Operation of the Wooroloo Swimming Pool for community use- Department of Justice/ Wooroloo Prison • Library Services - State Library of WA • Swan View Youth Centre - Lotterywest, OMCF, Department of Culture and the Arts, Office of Crime Prevention • Your Welcome Project - Disability Services Commission • Hub of the Hills programs - DLGRD, Community Arts Network WA • Access and Inclusion WALGA/DSC • Cultural Development Plan - Local Drug Action Group • Black Spot program - Main Roads • Landcare rehabilitation projects- Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP) • Native Grass Field Guide- Lotterywest • Private Land Conservation (2006) • -Outer Metropolitan Community Fund (OMCF) • Local Biodiversity Strategy -Dept Planning and Infrastructure • Tree Canopy and Understorey Program Infrastructure- OMCF
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<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. 	<p>Yes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inclusion Support Agency -Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations ● Eastern Region Family Day Care Scheme -Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations ● Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider-Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations ● Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program 2008/09 – Department of Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development and Local Government ● Roads to Recovery – DOTARS ● Jane Brook Restoration- Australian Govt. Water Fund Grant ● Bugle Tree Creek Restoration- Australian Govt. Water Fund Grant ● ● Mundaring Oval recycling water project - Australian Govt. Water Fund Grant ● Native Grass Poster-Perth Biodiversity Project ● Fungi Workshop for Local Government Staff-Perth Biodiversity Project ● Local Biodiversity Strategy-Perth Biodiversity Project ● Private Land Conservation Strategy-Perth Biodiversity Project ● Reserve Assessments-Perth Biodiversity Project ● WELL Program Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations - staff development initiative in conjunction with West Coast TAFE
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has funding partnerships in place with the private sector to enhance service delivery. 	<p>Yes</p>		<p>Numerous partnerships in place including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shire of Mundaring funds the following services to provide services to the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hills Community Support Group- youth, seniors and disability services ➤ Mundaring Tourism Association ➤ Katharine Susannah Prichard Foundation ➤ Mundaring and Hills Historical Society ➤ Mundaring Art Centre ➤ Swan View Youth Centre – Hills Community Support Group (HCSG) ➤ Parkerville Children and Youth Care (Seen and Heard Youth Service) ● Mundaring Truffle Festival - Wine and Truffle Company ● Mundaring Truffle Festival- Loose Box ● Local medical centres- 10 000 steps program ● Animal Sterilisation Program- Nestle Purina ● Hub Cinema - Mundaring Community Financial Services ● Hub of the Hills programs - HCSG ● Hub events and activities - Active Ageing Network, Rotary ● Constable Care program - Rotary, Constable Care ● Men’s Shed Project - Mundaring Community Men’s Shed Inc ● Perth Hills Precinct Working Party - National Trust, ● Seniors Week, COTA WA ● 8 Community playgroups and community kindergartens (shire provides buildings) ● Environmental Activity Book for schools -Mundaring Community Bank
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<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. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>The boundaries are appropriate for effective decision making. Whilst they vary between state, federal and local, no major issues have been experienced.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the past 2 years your local government has attracted investment that has led to economic growth and job creation. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Growing Mundaring: A Property Strategy for the Shire of Mundaring, which is currently being implemented will utilise existing Shire land holdings to attract private investment for the purposes on developing additional income streams. The Shire is currently negotiating with private investors in relation to several properties. • The Shire of Mundaring provides annual funding of \$82,000 to the Mundaring Tourism Association for the purposes of providing a level one accredited visitors centre. 302,200 people were overnight visitors to the Shire of Mundaring for the period 2005-2007. The economic contribution by tourism in the Shire of Mundaring contributes approximately \$18.06 million and 130 jobs to the overall economy of Mundaring each year. • The Shire of Mundaring provides two major festivals each year - the Mundaring Truffle Festival (MTF) and the Trek the Trail. The MTF has secured investment from the Wine and Truffle Company and the Loose Box. The two festivals have generated 6 part time positions and approximately 15 casual positions and in 2008 provided an estimated economic benefit in excess of \$480,000 (\$400,000 Truffle Festival and \$80,000 Trek the Trail) to the shire's economy from participant spend at the events.

Local Government Reform Checklist

Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
<p>o Your local government has community consultation strategies in place, both on-going and project specific.</p>	Yes		<p>Community Participation and Consultation Guidelines developed March 2006</p> <p>Various project specific strategies in place including community surveys, questionnaires, telephone surveys, shopping centre surveys, community meetings, focus groups, etc.</p> <p>On going strategies include Advisory Groups with membership made up of community members, organisations, businesses, councillors. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Advisory Group • Arts Advisory Group • Seniors Advisory Committee • Inclusion and Disability Advisory Committee • Environmental Advisory Committee. • Bushfire Advisory Committee • Tennis Court Advisory Committee • Mount Helena Recreation Centre and Aquatic Centre Advisory Committee <p>Other structures include Reference Groups and Steering Committees, such as the Active Ageing Network.</p> <p>76 Friends Groups and 5 Catchment Groups are also involved in various environmental projects throughout the Shire providing valuable community feedback on a range of projects.</p>

			Strategy in place for regular consultation and engagement with Resident and Ratepayer Groups and Progress Associations – June 2006. Includes opportunity for annual meetings with members, councillors and senior staff
7. Understanding of and planning for demographic change			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government's population trend for the past five years has been: - declining - stable - growing 			Growth of 2.6%.
	Yes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government's projected population for the next five years will be: - declining - stable - growing 			Estimated percentage: 2006-2011- 2.8% 2011-2016- 3.82% 2016-2021- 8.36%
	Yes		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Your local government has plans in place for demographic change. 	<p>Yes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Local Planning Strategy and Town Planning Scheme no 4 • Economic Development Strategy • Strategic Transport Plan • Positive Ageing Strategy • Planning for Youth in the Shire of Mundaring • Disability Access and Inclusion Plan • Housing Options for Seniors and People with Disabilities. <p>In addition the Shire is currently implementing a demographic forecast program (Forecast ID) which is based on current demographic trends, council policies and other relevant state and federal policies and trends. It provides an evidence base for future planning by forecasting how population, age structure and household types will change for the period 2006 to 2031.</p> <p>This forecast will be used as a planning tool for the shire for the development of relevant services, strategies and policies.</p>
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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>The Shire has committed to contributing towards the <i>Future Proofing Perth Eastern Region – Climate Change Adaptation Plan</i> project which is coordinated by the EMRC under federal funding. The Shire’s staff have undertaken with each member council in the EMRC a Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan for Climate Change. This document is in draft and will be available August 2009.</p> <p>The Shire has Reserve management plans for on-ground environmental management issues and strategic documents such as the Shire’s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Management Strategy • Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy • Draft Private Land Conservation Strategy. • Watercourse Protection Policy • Stormwater Management Policy <p>The Shire of Mundaring is a leader in the coordination of Environmental Volunteerism. There are 76 Friends Groups and 5 Catchment Groups within the Shire. A very successful partnership is held with the EMRC and the Eastern Hills Catchment Management Program Officers, as well as the Shire of Kalamunda and City of Swan. This program is a State Landcare award winning program</p>

		<p>Volunteers are guided by a comprehensive Friends Group manual and collectively input approximately \$150,000 per annum of in kind contribution to the management of Shire Reserves. The Bushcare coordinator conducts annual surveys and reports on the state of Environmental volunteerism in the Shire.</p> <p>The Shire's participation in the 2008 Greencorps Program, partnership with Mission Australia and the EMRC with Federal Funding provided 10 traineeships to unemployed teenagers for a six month works program.</p> <p>The shire is also involved in running Bush Skills for the Hills Workshops and a Greenpage Newsletter in partnership with the EHCMP which facilitates Community participation and education.</p> <p>The Shire runs a State Landcare award winning Tree Canopy and Understorey program where to date over 1 million locally grown endemic plants have been given out to the Shire's residents free of charge .</p>
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9. Optimal community of interest

<p>o Your local government provides services and facilities to communities with a similar community of interest.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Hills environment including escarpment and foothill areas with village identities.</p> <p>Townsites along heritage trail and major highway.</p> <p>Bush environment/Biodiversity/Water Catchments.</p> <p>High Arts, Literature, Tourism and History background.</p> <p>Industrial clusters of Mundaring and Midvale.</p> <p>Extensive firefighting expertise and resources</p>
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10. Optimal service delivery to community

<p>○ Your local government has the capacity to improve / increase service delivery in response to community expectation and associated demand.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>The Shire has the capacity to improve and increase service delivery.</p> <p>The Shire regularly conducts community needs analysis, demographic analysis and through taking a strategic approach to service delivery has the capacity to respond to emerging priorities. This is demonstrated through the capacity to change the organisational structure as required, developing sustainable income streams, such as through the Property Investment Strategy, effective staff recruitment and retention processes (e.g. the current staff turnover rate is 10% per annum) long term financial planning and long term asset management planning.</p>
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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			
<input type="radio"/> Your local government is a member of a regional grouping of two or more local governments to plan and deliver services regionally.	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) in which waste services, environmental services, tourism and economic development services are provided across the region. • East Metropolitan Regional Community Safety and Crime Prevention Planning Group (Town of Bassendean, Shire of Kalamunda, City of Swan) • Perth Hills Tourism – Shire of Kalamunda
<input type="radio"/> Indicate your regional grouping preference, identifying participating local governments.	N/A	N/A	Remain with Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC)

12. Previous Structural Reform

o Have you gained any benefits from structural reform measures taken with other local governments to date?

N/A

When Local Government in Western Australia began with the *Road Districts Act 1871*, the administration of the area comprising the present Shire of Mundaring was shared by the Road Districts of York, Northam and Swan.

Subsequent boundary amendments results in the area being included in the Swan Road District until the creation of the Darling Range Road Board (Mundaring/Kalamunda) in 1897. The latter proved unworkable due to the natural barrier formed by the Helena River. Local agitation resulted in the creation, on 17 April 1903, of the Greenmount Road District, an administrative region approximating the present Mundaring Shire.

The original Greenmount Road Board Office was located at Mt Helena. However, within 20 years, the gradual increase in road traffic in comparison to rail, led to a new office being open in Mundaring. The recognition that Mundaring was both the administrative and physical center of the district resulted in the change of name to Mundaring Road District in 1934.

Under the *Local Government Act 1960*, effective from January 1961, the Mundaring Road District became the Shire of Mundaring.

13. Conclusion

o After completing the checklist, are you of the view that amalgamation or any other type of structural reform is necessary for your local government?

No – whole of council amalgamation

Yes - boundary change

Yes - reduction in the number of Councillors

Boundary realignment on western boundary with City of Swan and on eastern boundary with Shire of Northam

Reduction in the number of councillors from 12.