



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS
THURSDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2003**

MINUTES

OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS HELD IN THE FUNCTION ROOM, ADMINISTRATION CENTRE, ORCHARD AVENUE, ARMADALE ON THURSDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2003 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT:

The Mayor, Cr L Reynolds JP presided:	Westfield Ward
Deputy Mayor, Cr J H Munn JP CMC	West Armadale Ward [7.30 – 8.30pm]
Cr J Knezevich	West Armadale Ward
Cr F R Green	Armadale Ward [7.30 – 8.30pm]
Cr R J Tizard	Armadale Ward
Cr H A Zelones JP	Kelmscott Ward
Cr V L Clowes-Hollins	Kelmscott Ward
Cr J Everts	Seville Ward
Cr G Wallace	Seville Ward
Cr D L Hopper JP	Roleystone Ward
Cr P J Hart	Roleystone Ward [7.55pm – 8.45pm]
Cr J A Stewart	Westfield Ward
Cr A L Cominelli JP	Forrest Ward
Cr G M Hodges	Forrest Ward [7.30 – 8.30pm]

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr R S Tame	Chief Executive Officer
Mr A F Maxwell	Executive Director Corporate Services
Mr I MacRae	Executive Director Development Services
Mr A Bruce	Executive Director Technical Services
Mr C Askew	Director Community Services
Mrs S D'Souza	CEO's Executive Assistant

Public: 25

His Worship the Mayor, Cr Linton Reynolds, welcomed those in attendance to the 2002-2003 Annual General Meeting of Electors. He advised that the proceedings were being recorded and requested that people state their name and address prior to addressing the meeting.

1 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

2 BUSINESS OF MEETING

2.1 PRESENTING & RECEIVING THE 2002-2003 ANNUAL REPORT

2.1.1 2002-03 Annual Financial Report

MOVED Mrs Munn that the 2002-2003 Annual Financial Report be received.
SECONDED Mr Davis

CARRIED

2.1.2 Auditor's Report

The Chief Executive Officer, Mr R S Tame, read aloud the Auditor's Report.

MOVED Mr Clay that the Auditor's Report on the 2002-2003 Annual Financial Report be received.
SECONDED Mr Davis

CARRIED

2.1.3 2002-03 Annual Report (Remaining Parts)

Mayor Reynolds read aloud his Report, as printed in the Annual Report.

MOVED Mr Clay that the 2002-2003 Annual Report be received.
SECONDED Mr Davis

CARRIED

In concluding his Report, the Mayor said as part of his other roles he enjoys in local government he was very privileged to have visited every single local government in WA at least once. He had also served on enquiries and panels that

have investigated problem behaviour in 7 other councils. However, he was very proud to be surrounded by what he considers to be the best team of people that he has ever worked with in local government. – both the staff and the elected people at the City of Armadale. There are some difficult issues to work through and Council is doing just that and is always keen to receive feedback from the community.

2.2 GENERAL BUSINESS

2.2.1 Questions of which prior notice has been given

Mr Dave & Mrs Marjorie Foster, 248 Albany Highway, Bedfordale

Q1. Some of our land at Fletcher Park was recently sold after the land had been partially fenced off, and the purchasers had exclusive use for some time. What was the purchase price? How was this figure arrived at? Does this have implications for other areas?

Response:

Land at Fletcher Park has not been sold.

Council has supported requests by two landholders that adjoin Fletcher Park who are seeking to purchase land south of Mitchell Road and has initiated procedures prior to making a final decision on the proposal.

Sale of public open space follows a multi step process including advertising of the proposal, rezoning of the land and then sale in accordance with relevant legislation. This process provides for public comment at the advertising stage and at the rezoning stage, and Council may choose not to proceed with a proposal as a result of comments received at either of these stages.

The Fletcher Park proposal has been advertised and two submissions were received, one in favour of the proposal and one against. Council considered the issues raised by submissions at its October 2003 meeting and resolved to progress to rezoning of the land through Town Planning Scheme No. 4.

Because Fletcher Park is not land reserved under Section 20A of the Town Planning and Development Act 1928, funds from the sale would be credited to the State Government's Consolidated Fund.

- Q2. Last year Mr Tame quoted a very substantial and apparently prohibitive price to replace the bridge that connected the main parcel of land, part of the children's playground and the public lavatories, in the Lions Park, corner Albany Highway and South West Highway (\$30,000) Could not a cheaper simpler bridge be built similar to the one taken down?**

Response:

Public liability and community concern are such that a pedestrian bridge in Lions Park must be constructed to all the appropriate Australian standards. The preliminary bridge cost estimate of \$30,000 is based on this requirement.

Questions relating to Reserve 35613 – Neerigen Brook

- Q3. Are there any plans to complete the partial survey so that the entrances are marked and the promised permanent markers put in?**

Response

Permanent markers will be put in following reserve mowing anticipated in January 2004.

- Q4. Why was the large Marri tree cut down, beside the large patch of blackberries near the grazing patch?**

Response

Several trees were removed for safety reasons. Three trees were cut down at Topaz Court end of reserve. Two were dead and one was on a dangerous lean with rot at the base. These were located near a small pedestrian access bridge. One fallen Acacia was also removed as part of storm damage cleanups.

- Q5. Mr Tame told Martin Whitely that the local landowners had fenced off and restricted access to our land in order to look after it on our behalf, is there a formal agreement?**

Response

Mr Tame advised Mr Whiteley's office exactly what he advised Mr Foster at this meeting last year – some local landowners had taken it upon themselves to maintain sections of the reserve. No formal agreements were in place and no fencing had been approved. Equally, Council had not required fences to be removed.

Q6. Is Mr Tame aware that large areas have no firebreaks and exotic weeds have been deliberately planted and nurtured, to prevent access?

Response

Yes, some areas have no firebreaks. I cannot substantiate that exotic weeds have been deliberately planted and nurtured, to prevent access. However, there are exotic plants planted by local residents within the reserve.

Q7. The barbed wire fences illegally erected are still there. Why?

Response

Initial assessment by City Officers has identified parts of the reserve adjoining some residences being used for storage of building materials, parking vehicles, the erection of structures and fences, private plantings and animal grazing. In this regard, members of the public have restricted access due to obstructions within the reserve. Landowners have been advised that they cannot prohibit public access.

A reserve management plan, which addresses such matters as ease of access and removal of incursions into the reserve is to be developed for the long-term management of the reserve. Some (but not necessarily all) of the private property will be required to be removed, but not until appropriate management measures have been determined.

Q8. There was a well-defined path which was largely covered by spoil when the ramp was constructed at the southern end of the reserve. Is the path to be restored?

Response

A reserve management plan will need to be developed for the long-term management of the reserve. This may include restricting public access (Refer copy of Draft Budget 2003/2004 Technical Services Budget). (A site meeting on 3 December 2003 failed to locate 'spoil' referred to).

Q9. Are there any plans to establish the pedestrian access, as marked on the map (next to the "private" road access) which, like a large part of the park is now incorporated into a private garden?

Response:

A reserve management plan will need to be developed for the long-term management of the reserve. (Refer copy of Draft Budget 2003/2004 Technical Services Budget).

Q10 What is the status of the “private” road?

Response

There is a 10 - metre private access way and a private bridge to access Lots 144, 145, 146 and 147 Amethyst Crescent. Alongside this accessway, there is a 5-metre public access way which is currently inaccessible due to the existence of introduced plants and shrubbery. If it is Council's intention to make this access way accessible, the plants will have to be removed (at some cost and opposition by residents) and Council will need to construct a public bridge alongside the private bridge for public access to the reserve. This would be considered as part of the overall Management plan.

However, approximately 140 metres further along Amethyst Crescent and located between Lots 97 & 98 Amethyst Crescent, there is an 8-metre wide public access way to the reserve, which may be considered adequate public access.

Q11 Are there any plans to restore our creek where it has been diverted to landscape a private garden?

Response

A reserve management plan will need to be developed for the long-term management of the reserve and ongoing maintenance funding.

Q12 Could the park entrances be clearly marked? As Public park or reserve entrances?

Response

Yes, following determination of the reserve's role and management plan however there are no current funds for any immediate works of this nature. It is intended that minimal access be provided in the future subject to all considerations, with particular attention to public safety/liability and funding priorities.

Q13 Do ratepayers have a right to question the answers at this meeting?

Response

Council will seek to answer any questions put forward, but may need to place questions “on notice” where investigation is required.

Mr N F Towle – 6 Wyee Place, Armadale WA 6112

Q1. What will be done with the \$60,000 for economic development initiatives budgeted for this year?

Response

Expenditures to date from this year's economic development budget include:-

- a \$10,300 annual contribution towards the Armadale/Gosnells Business Enterprise Centre;
- a \$3,700 sponsorship of the Chamber's Annual Business Awards to be held in the Jull Street Mall in December 2003; and
- a \$10,500 allocation towards the Apprenticeship Program commencing with three positions in 2003-04

This allocation was set aside in the Five Year Plan to complement work under way with the ARA in encouraging economic development, employment and investment in the area. It had been anticipated it may be necessary to contract the services of a specialist in this area. To date, much of this work has been conducted by the Project Officer, whose contract soon expires. Council will then determine how it can best approach the recommendations made in the Economic Development Strategy by Derek Kemp and subsequent directions gained from the Enquiry By Design process.

Q2. Could the details for the \$114,000 towards a specialist streetscape programme be advised.

Response

\$114,000 is budgeted for works to complement and extend streetscapes within the Armadale Central Business District arising from the City's and the Armadale Redevelopment Authority's works programmes. For example, the Commerce Avenue streetscape development to complement the relocated railway station and pedestrian crossing is of such a scale that it is likely to consume all these funds.

Q3. The reserves has a budget of \$2.9m for 2003-04 compared with \$2.1m last year, which is plus \$0.8m or 40%. What was the increase of \$0.8m for?

Response

Reserve funds are, and have been, established to provide for funds for use in a future year. Rules for the use and establishment of Reserve funds are set out in Section 6.11 of the Local Government Act 1995. The primary benefit of Reserve funds is that the raising of funds for a specific programme or project is spread out over several years without having a tremendous impact on rates on any particular year.

In relation to the question provided, the increase of approximately \$740,000 in the 2003-2004 Budgeted Reserve funds relates to increases in the following Reserves:

Waste Management Reserve -	approximately \$400,000
Plant and Machinery Reserve -	approximately \$144,000
Building Plant and Equipment Reserve -	approximately \$65,000
Telephone System Upgrade Reserve -	approximately \$8,000
Mobile Garbage Bin Programme Reserve -	approximately \$93,000
Future Recreation Facilities Reserve -	approximately \$50,000

Reductions in some Reserve funds of around \$40,000 is also proposed.

Cr Hart joined the meeting at 7.55pm

Q4. The capital upgrade program for the Recreation Centre. What was the actual cost to the City of Armadale for stages 1, 2 and 3. Is stage 4 a cost to the City of \$175K? What will be done for the \$175K? Will stage 4 be the last?

Response

In short, the upgrade program has been as follows;

Stage	Year	Scope of Works	Funding
1	2000/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade & extend gymnasium Upgrade aerobics room 	CoA \$100,000 DSR <u>\$50,000</u> Total \$150,000
2 & 3	2001/02 2002/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air conditioning to gymnasium and aerobics room New ceilings to aerobics room Redesign and upgrade entry & foyer New kitchen, kiosk and café Relocate offices New dance & martial arts room Upgrade & refurbish mezzanine 	Lotteries \$300,000 CoA \$200,000 DSR <u>\$100,000</u> <hr/> Total \$600,000
4	2003/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbish floors Install cladding to court 3 end walls Replace alsonite sheeting to roof in sports halls Air conditioning to dance and martial arts room Painting throughout Install mechanical ventilation to sports halls Brick paving at entry 	CoA \$125,000 DSR <u>\$50,000</u> <hr/> Total \$175,000

Stage	Year	Scope of Works	Funding	
5	2004/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade crèche • Construct new storage facilities 	CoA	\$60,000
			DSR	<u>\$30,000</u>
			Total	\$90,000

The cost to the City of stages 1 & 2 was \$200,000 i.e. \$100,000 for each stage.

The cost to the City for stage 4 is \$125,000, with a grant of \$50,000 to come from the Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR).

Subject to funding, stage 5 will be the final stage.

Q5. For property maintenance A/c 1420120 Armadale Hall 7001 and Kelmscott Hall 7002. Why have the budgeted amounts for 2003-2004 been reduced from \$51K to \$40K and \$54K to \$48K when for 2002-2003 both were actually more than budgeted?

Response

The main reason is due to programmed maintenance such as painting and refurbishment programmes as well as building modifications and upgrades. Annual maintenance costs can also vary from year to year due to such matters as vandalism and misuse which require expenditure above that planned.

Q6. Operating expenses for History House M56. Why is there an increase in the budget amount from \$75670 in 2003-03 to \$91,555 for 2003-04 when 2002-03 actual was \$64,597? An unspent 16% to an increase of 20% seems quite unusual over two budgets.

Response

In short, the budget increase for History House from \$75,670 (actual \$64,597) 02/03 to \$91,555 budgeted in 03/04 is due to the expanded activities and services provided by the Library & Heritage service area. In the past History House has referred only to Museum and Museum Curator activities and services, however in 02/03 the part-time Museum Curator role was expanded and a full-time Historian/Museum Curator position created.

In 02/03 our actual expenditure was lower than budget because of the following under expenditures:

- salary \$5,078
- conservation activities \$1,338
- storage modifications \$3,117

In 03/04 we have projected increases from 02/03 in the following areas:

- salary \$4,893
- conservation \$1,600 (plus the above carry forward)
- displays \$2,100
- storage modifications \$3,117
- Preservation Assistance project \$4,700 **

(** relates to anticipated grant monies of \$2,350 plus Historical Society contribution of \$2,350)

Mr J.E. Green, 47 Sixth Road, Armadale

Q1. Why is it not possible to have both (all) pools? Are we not a growing City and in need of more than one pool?

Response

The unfortunate reality was that the plant and equipment at Kelmscott Pool had reached the end of its lifecycle, and would have required a major injection of funds (over \$130,000 in 2003/04) just to keep the doors open. Attendances at Kelmscott had fallen by some 46% since 1995. Rising costs and reduced revenue made it uneconomic to retain Kelmscott as a seasonal outdoor pool. At the same time, all of the surveys undertaken by Council in recent years indicate a strong demand for an indoor year round aquatic facility. Council made the difficult decision to close Kelmscott Pool because it cannot afford to retain two seasonal outdoor aquatic facilities, located within 2.2km of each other, and plan for the provision of an indoor aquatic facility at the same time.

Q2. When was Community Heritage Advisory Committee (CHAC) notified of the intended demolition of Kelmscott Pool?

Response

Let me begin by clarifying Council's intention with regards the Kelmscott Pool, It does not necessarily follow that our decision to close the pool will automatically see it demolished. The Pool has been closed, and will not be able to be used for swimming, but a substantial amount of the built form will remain. The matter was discussed by CHAC held on 21st August 2003 when it was noted that a member of the public had referred it for possible listing on the State Register of Heritage Places. Council has since been advised that it was not accepted for the State Register of Heritage Places.

Q3. If they were notified, what action was taken to document it?

Response

The request by a member of the public for the Kelmscott Pool to be listed on the State Register of Heritage Places was declined however, The Heritage Council has recommended that the historical significance of the site be recorded and recognised in some way. It had been Council's intention for this to occur as a matter of course and at the consultation workshops that were held in August and September this year, attendees were asked to put forward ideas as to how any redevelopment of the site might also maintain a historical connection with the former Kelmscott Pool. Council will shortly consider a consultant's report that I understand will recommend the creation of a "Story Wall" that records and celebrates the history of the Kelmscott Pool.

Q4. What has officially been documented?

Response

The process to officially document the history of the site is yet to be undertaken. However, Council has retained files, photographs and records of the Kelmscott Pool and these will be used to ensure the history of the site is correctly recorded.

Q5. Where are the video interviews with people like Lorraine Riddout, widow of the Chairman of the Armadale-Kelmscott Roads Board at the time of its opening or Dawn Fraser who opened it officially by diving into it?

Response

The City does not have copies of video interviews with Mrs Riddout or Dawn Fraser but would be keen to obtain copies if they are still in existence.

Q6. Why were not the people of Kelmscott asked if they wanted it restored, even if it were to be a community exercise like its original construction?

Response

The Kelmscott Pool had reached the stage in its lifecycle where a major injection of funds was required for the pool to continue to operate. The nature of the works required was such that even with the best intentions of local residents, the works were technically beyond the capability of non specialist people.

Q7. Why was this decision made to demolish it when Henry Zelones was out of the country?

Response

The decision to close the pool was taken at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 3rd June 2003. Cr Zelones was in attendance at that meeting and in fact supported its closure on the basis that the savings be used to advance the broader provision of swimming facilities in our City. It should be noted that in addition to the demand for an all year round facility, the Champion Drive facility is also aging very rapidly and will require significant expenditure in order for it to continue to operate.

Q8. Why was it announced after the Ward Councillors were re-elected?

Response

The timing of Council's decision to close the Kelmscott Pool was not in any way linked to the Local Government Elections held in May this year. When Council adopted its Recreation Strategic Plan in early March 2003, one of the major priorities identified in that plan was to develop a strategy for future provision of aquatic facilities and services. Given the complex nature of this issue, a period of two months was allocated to carry out the necessary research and prepare the report. It was the discussion of this report, in conjunction with the Annual Budget that brought on a decision that it can be argued Council should have made some years ago.

Q9. Why was not a real mandate for its demolition sought by announcing its proposed demolition well before the last ward elections?

Response

It is noted that the only works conducted on the site since Council's decision to close the pool have been the removal of the old plant room, the old rusted out filter and some exposed pipes. The pool basins will be filled with sand within the next week or so. The majority of the other infrastructure is likely to remain in place and form part of the redevelopment of the site. The report on the future provision of aquatic facilities and services was not available prior to the Local Government Elections and therefore was not considered as an election issue.

To argue that only issues that are aired during election campaigns that are two years apart can be proceeded with would leave Council moribund. This is after all representative democracy at work.

Q10. Why was the pool not maintained over the years?

Response

As with all of Council's facilities and buildings, a preventative maintenance program for Kelmscott Pool had been in place for a number of years. This program allowed for the replacement of essential items of plant and equipment as they reached the end of their respective lifecycles. During the course of the 2001/02 pool season it became evident that the pool filter required replacement and there were major leaks in the old pipes. This was simply due to the age of this plant and equipment, and was not caused by a lack of maintenance in previous years.

Q11. What are the maintenance funding figures for this facility?

Response

Kelmscott Pool maintenance costs for the previous five years were:

2002/03	\$59,287
* 2001/02	\$8,221
* 2000/01	\$12,237
1999/00	\$6,204
1998/99	\$5,817

* The costs indicated for 2000/01 and 2001/02 exclude any maintenance costs incurred by the private contractor that was managing the pool on Council's behalf during that period.

Q12. "The numbers are down so we have to demolish it". What sort of logic is that?

Response

The decline in attendances was only one of a number of factors that was considered by Council when coming to a decision on this matter. [Declining attendance is a common feature of outdoor facilities. Competition from more sophisticated indoor/outdoor facilities and changing sport/recreation patterns has an effect right across the country. Kelmscott attendances would not recover with a simple maintenance injection.](#)

Q13. With this proposed facility at Wright Lake, how will it all fare in terms of access for the locals and what will be the effect of trucks etc with horn, air breaks, accelerating engines and other distracting sounds on an event or a peaceful swim?

Response

The Champion Lakes Concept Plan indicates significant improvements in terms of access for the general public to the Wright Lake / Champion Lakes area. Vehicle access points will be available on Champion Drive and Lake Road while pedestrian access is proposed from Lake View Terrace. In fact pedestrians will be able to walk right around the whole lake. Public parking areas will be provided and picnic and non powered boat launching areas are also proposed.

Given the development is wedged in between the Tonkin Highway in the west and Lake Road / Westfield in the east, it is inevitable that urban noise will be audible in Champion Lakes, which is no different to many other regional recreation or sporting facilities in the Metropolitan area. Champion Lakes is a Regional Recreational Reserve, located in an urban location – not in a pristine / isolated rural setting. (Its location in itself improves its accessibility to the general public).

It should be noted that while the water quality will be such that swimming can occur, the facility is not attempting to replace a normal swimming pool complex.

- Q14. With regard to in particular Sugar Gum trees in the district, will the Council employ the services of a properly qualified arboriculturist to investigate the retainability of all these trees where possible?**

Response

Council currently employs the services of qualified arboriculturists to assess trees in the City of Armadale, including the following leading WA arborists.

- Arbor Centre Pty Ltd
- Arbor Care (Arboricultural Consultant – J Banks)
Charles Aldous-Ball (Arboricultural Consultant) a local resident, who is well aware of community attitudes to our signature trees.

The Technical Services Directorate Parks & Reserves department have a number of arboricultural reports particularly relating to Sugar Gum trees and other trees in the district.

- Q15. Relates to trees possibly under threat from new development near the Gull Service Station, Third Road near the railway crossing.**

Response

At the outset let me take the question as having a broad intent, and I want to make some general comments. Like all living things, trees have a life span. Many of the

signature trees that Armadale is well known for are in the latter stages of their life having been planted a hundred years or so ago and in the intervening period surrounded with hard standing and pollarded.

Sadly, very few signature trees were planted over the next 90 years, so there is no new crop yet that will take centre stage when the original ones die. If our existing trees were standing proud in the middle of a farmer's field, it is very likely that they would remain standing until they had actually died. However, the trees that we are concerned with are in a built up urban setting, and Council needs to balance its desire and your desire to keep the trees as long as possible, with its duty to the wider community to not put their personal or property safety at risk.

An arboricultural report recently commissioned that relates to the Commerce Avenue trees did not consider the trees adjacent to the service station in question as it is beyond the area of current development proposals.

However, following the collapse of a sugar gum in the car park near the RSL, the City of Armadale has commissioned a consultant to undertake an inspection, and to submit a report on the twenty Eucalyptus cladocalyx or sugar gums, as I know them, situated within the car park to the north of Armadale train station. This report sought to establish the mechanical structural condition of the trees and to determine what action might be necessary to safeguard property and persons while preserving those that were healthy

Council has for some years been aware that one or two of the trees might pose risk to the extent that they would have to be removed, but the situation is worse than I had thought. The two trees currently in focus have both been found to be unsafe by the arboriculturalist along with a number of the others. This report will go to Council in the New Year for consideration of the larger group of trees, but in the meantime the trees affected by the railway station forecourt will be dealt with by the Council and the ARA.

Q16. Were Councillors' informed that the Sugar Gums outside the ACC offices were 'A' class management Heritage list No. 1 category trees before they decided to get rid of them?

'Refer Report to Council 4 December 1998'

Response

The Heritage listing that relates to this question is "A32 Sugar Gum Trees & Minnowarra Park". As this report was written after the current Council Building was constructed, and after the 14 sugar gums that lined the original driveway to "Brookside" had been reduced in height from somewhere between 20 and 25 metres back to 6 metres, I don't believe that the listing included them, particularly as the wording of the listing is in part Quote "Aesthetically they add a measure of grandeur and provide a height and size dimension commensurate with trees of this maturity".

End Quote Ironically it was with the very intention of reintroducing the symbolism of a driveway lined by trees that led me to move that the existing pollarded and dangerous trees which were causing damage to cars parked beneath them be removed and replaced by well advanced specimens of a tree that would be more suitable to this high activity area. The trees were then replaced over a period of three years.

It also bears saying that the City has a Streetscape Management objective which is: "To preserve trees, control practices harmful to trees and avoid the removal of trees unless warranted under exceptional circumstances relating to public risk and safety and public works".

In relation to street tree removals and replacements of trees in streets, ways and reserves the policy says in part.

(iv) *Street trees shall be removed if they are considered unsuitable tree species only where replacement strategies are in place to avoid mass reduction of living vegetation in the streetscape environment.*

In this regard plans / project planning is underway between the COA, the ARA and Landscape Architects to significantly enhance the entire length of the Commerce Avenue streetscape.

This Council is acutely aware that trees are one of the things that together with the topography make this Strategic Regional Centre totally different from all others in the Perth Metropolitan Area, and we are determined that it should remain so. However, that does not mean that some trees that pose risks to our people will not be removed as required. Finally I note with some regret that that may in the not too distant future involve one or two of the larger specimens in Minnowarra Park.

2.2.2 Questions received from the Floor

Mr Davis- 35 Bodicoat Drive, Brookdale

Question: On behalf of members and friends of the Armadale and Districts Brickworks Preservation Group we appreciate that Council and staff have put a huge amount of goodwill and effort in recent times in attempting to preserve the dust room at the Metro Brickworks site. Unfortunately all action has stopped due to new ownership but hopefully at some time in the future we can all work together to preserve an extremely important part of Armadale and Western Australia's industrial and social history

Has Council been given the management of the Coalmine reserve yet and if not, what progress is being made on it?

Do you believe that under the arrangement with the PCYC, the Recreation Centre is more likely pay its way than in past years?

Response: The Mayor advised that in regards to the Coalmine reserve that the transfer of stewardship from the State to Council was to occur after CALM had manufactured a grid that would go over the top to make it safe. However, he was unaware if this had been done yet and it is his understanding that it is still in the care and control of the Ministry for Planning.

The Mayor advised that the Armadale Arena epitomizes what this Council is trying to do – bricks and mortar alone would not make the City a wonderful place to live but needs a depth of community and feeling for one another. The Mayor advised that by inviting the PCYC to manage the Recreation Centre its immediately had a significant impact on the performance of the centre, and the reason for wanting the PCYC to run the centre was so that it became a whole of community approach to dealing with a raft of issues.. Currently, the centre is almost breaking even and any future profits will be put back into it so that the asset continues to grow. Cr Hodges added to the Mayor's comments by advising that the PCYC have put in place a plan on New Year's Eve for Seniors – so the use of the Centre is not intended entirely for the young people and a lot of extra activities are being planned at the Armadale Arena.

Mr David Cox-38 Sixth Rd, Armadale

Question: I refer to Page 7 of last year's meeting minutes. Notices sent out for rubbish collection stipulates that rubbish bins should be placed 1m away from the kerb – can the notice stipulate that this should be 1.5m where there are footpaths?

Response: The Mayor advised that officers will take a closer look at these notices to clarify where bins should be placed so that footpaths are not blocked.

Mr N Towle – 6 Wyee Place, Armadale

Question: Are lawnmower contractors now required to remove lawn clippings from reserves?

Response: The Mayor advised the contract does not require the removal of lawn clippings – such a service would be at a significantly extra cost.

Question: With regard to the water pipeline on Armadale Road – why is Council not responsible for putting this underground.

Response: The Mayor advised that as reported last year the shifting or undergrounding of the water pipeline will be at a significant cost to Council, in the vicinity of \$3

million which is not within Council's financial capability.

Question: With regard to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Electors, is there any consideration being given to a fixed date each year for this meeting. Previously this meeting has been held on 17 Jan 2001, 29 Nov 2001, 14 Nov 2003 and now 4 Dec 2003.

Response: The Mayor advised that the timing for the AGM is determined by preparation of the Annual Report. The AGM is scheduled according to when the final report can be submitted by the auditors. There are so many intangibles that Council would be reluctant to give an undertaking that the AGM would be held on a set date each year.

Question: With regard to the underground power, the City of Armadale didn't welcome that. What was the position there with the City of Armadale, why didn't they participate in this underground power program which the WA Local Government Association has really been welcoming and a number of other Councils, including our local one Gosnells has gone into that, yet the City of Armadale has not?

Response: The Mayor advised that not welcoming the program was an incorrect assessment of the City's position. Amongst all other expenditure requirements the City did not consider this one to be a high enough priority. With regard to funding for underground power one-third or if we're lucky half the cost comes from State Government and the rest from the Council and the residents. Most of the suburban areas that have been undergrounded to date, are ones where the household income can afford between \$4000-\$5000 to underground the power across the front of their block. Most of the parts of the City of Armadale are not however suitable for undergrounding of power at that price, due to the soil natures.

With all future subdivisions, there is the requirement for undergrounding of power and it is hoped that one day the City would be able to achieve this through the older suburbs too.

The Chief Executive Officer advised that a couple of year's ago Council completed a program in Kelmscott where the Council spent about \$700,000 undergrounding the power along Albany Highway without Government support. The rules have now changed and Gosnells have secured funds through their Town Centre program. Council would certainly be looking at securing similar funding for the redevelopment of Armadale and Kelmscott.

Question: With regard to the neighbourhood improvement program there is an amount allocated in this current year's budget of \$175000. Could you give some indication as to where that money is going to be spent and in regard to the Wyee Place reserve what was the cost of the improvements at that reserve and is the usage of the reserves one of the factors taken into account before expenditure is done on particular reserves?

Response: The Mayor advised that the expenditure of funds on Wyee Place reserve would need to be researched and as such would be taken on notice. The Mayor pointed out that there are three sources of income towards the NIP Program - Council, Armadale Redevelopment Authority and the Department of Housing and Construction.

The Neighbourhood Improvement Officer is out canvassing in the streets of areas being dealt with and talking to neighbours to see what they want done in their area to best improve it. Following completion of the survey, a report will be submitted to Council which will be discussed with the other partners to seek their approval to spend the funds, according to the wishes of the neighborhood.

Question: **In regard to the debt level of the City of Armadale, it was shown in the CEO's report that the Council for the first time in 2003 managed to achieve a debt free status. Yet in the new budget there is a provision there for \$1.2million that the Council's departed from its stated plan which was to maintain a debt free status to the City of Armadale.**

Response: The Mayor advised that while the plan was to achieve a debt free status, it wasn't necessary to stay that way in perpetuity. He advised that what the City had achieved was clearance of all of its loans consolidated in the early 1990s. Some loans remaining are self-supporting loans being paid by Clubs and Associations.

The Chief Executive Officer advised that the question may refer to the City's \$1.2M Budget deficit which is not a result of borrowings but Council's decision to manage its cash flow to make funds available for various works and projects.

Crs Munn, Hodges & Green retired from the meeting at 8.30pm

Mrs Doreen Southam-16 Morrell Way, Armadale

Question: **On Page 9 of last year's minutes it says that the financial audit cost for the 2001/2002 was going to be \$14700. On Page 25 of the Annual report booklet, the 2002 auditor's remuneration says \$6356 Does that mean that Council saved a lot of money last year?**

Response: The Mayor referred the query to Mr Maxwell for explanation. Mr Maxwell advised that this was due to the timing of when the interim and the final audit is done, and that the \$6000 for 2002 suggests that it only covered the interim audit fee and not the final audit fee that is done subsequent to 30 June. The Mayor advised that there was a 3 year contract with the auditor and that the cost is fixed. Mr Maxwell confirmed that the contract value is in the order of \$16000 per annum.



Question: Can I ask what the “other services” involve – this is mentioned in the Annual report (Page 25) under Auditor’s remuneration.

Response: Mr Maxwell advised that there are two parts to the auditor’s contract. The first part of the contract relates to the audit of the City’s financial records and the other services refers to where the City needs to provide audit reports for grants received from Government Departments, and that comes as a separate part to the contract, and at a separate fee.

It was pleasing to hear on the news that Armadale Council was the only one not to have budgeted for a public Christmas function and in this regard expressed a thank you to Council.

Response: The Mayor clarified that when Channel 7 contacted the City of Armadale they were advised quite correctly that the City does not have an invited Christmas “party” but only its annual Civic Dinner. The reporter was not interested in the Civic Function. The Mayor explained that the City hosts a Civic Function once a year to bring together senior politicians, senior members of State Government departments and few people of the community who the City wish to recognise for particular efforts over the previous year. The opportunity is taken at this Function to promote and encourage government support for the benefit of the City and its community.

Mr Dale Burns-25 Barellan Court, Armadale

Question: Was pleased to report that the vandalism in his area has ceased and it is now safe to walk around Green Avenue, Sixth Road, Seventh Road and Gwynne Park. Also expressed appreciation for the significant improvements being made around Coralie Court and Seventh Road. However, there is still a minor concern with regard to kids found inhaling substances around the area – is the Council able to assist?

Response: The Mayor thanked Mr Burns for his comments and said he would be very happy to pass the information on to Senior Sergeant Fergusson who has made a significant difference in the area. The Council is forging a very special relationship with the Police force and in addition to the Recreation Centre being managed by the PCYC there is also the Police Traffic branch permanently manning the Roadwise Safety Training Centre in West Armadale.

Mr Peter Bloomfield-40 Fifth Rd, Armadale

Question: I noticed in the latest annual report under “Developing a Vibrant City” it states that during the year the Council has worked in close co-operation with the Armadale Redevelopment Authority and the State Government to facilitate major development projects. I wonder whether the City Council has any view in approaching the State Government to seek perhaps the relocation of a major State Government Department or the

establishment of a tertiary educational facility within the City.

Response: The Mayor advised that the Armadale Redevelopment Authority and the Council have been working very hard in negotiating for the relocation of a major State Government Department. Prior to the last election, Council sought an undertaking from both the major political parties that there would be a review of the placement of a Government department in Armadale. Since then there has been considerable discussions with one department which are still continuing. A number of issues have required research and it was only recently that a meeting took place with the Minister responsible for that department during the Cabinet visit to Armadale. The next State election is fast approaching and Council will again ask both major parties to give a commitment as to where they stand vis-à-vis on bringing a large group of people into an employment complex here.

In terms of the tertiary education, the ARA is working hard with Curtin University and also TAFE in an attempt to put together a Centre of Learning Excellence in a building down by the railway station. The ARA have requested Council to consider relocating the Armadale Library to that complex so that a sharing arrangement can be developed with the tertiary institutions to provide more than just a lending library facility to the community.

The Mayor went on to say that the CEO and himself met with the Federal Minister for Education earlier this year who expressed a keenness to have any extra places for tertiary education allocated to States like WA and then to Universities like Curtin who would outpost them. During the Cabinet visit to Armadale this was the focal point of the Mayor's presentation which highlighted the unemployment statistics, school retention rates and the need for enhanced education facilities in the City of Armadale.

Prior to concluding the meeting, the Mayor advised that Council resolved to rationalise its meeting schedule and with effect from January 2004 both Committee meetings and Council meetings will commence at 7pm on the scheduled date.

MEETING DECLARED CLOSED AT 8.45 PM

MINUTES CONFIRMED THIS 19th DAY OF JANUARY 2004

MAYOR
