

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

28 APRIL 2015

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**CITY OF ARMADALE**  
**Chief Executive Officer's Report**

**Mayor and Councillors**  
**City of Armadale**

Following is my Report for the period  
ended 28 April 2015

**1.1 - 2015 STATE ELECTORAL REVIEW**

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WARD : ALL  
FILE No. : M/392/15  
DATE : 10 April 2015  
REF : JM  
RESPONSIBLE : Chief Executive Officer  
MANAGER

**In Brief:**

- A review of Western Australia's State electoral boundaries is being conducted by the Office of the Electoral Commissioners
- A Confidential Draft submission has been prepared urging the Commissioners to consider a fundamental change in district and regional electoral boundaries recognizing the population growth in greater metropolitan Perth and increasing the number of metropolitan districts.
- Submissions close on 29 April 2015
- This report recommends authorizing the Mayor and CEO to finalise and make submission after receiving any comments Councillors may wish to make on the Confidential Draft forwarded under separate cover.

**Tabled Items**

Nil

**Officer Interest Declaration**

Nil

**Strategic Implications**

Advocating for fundamental change to district and regional electoral boundaries aligns with the City's Community Vision:

By 2028 Armadale will be:

*"A liveable city for future generations that is responsive to community values, appreciative of our exceptional environment, providing a choice of lifestyle, supporting opportunities for education and employment, and a strategic metropolitan centre respected by the wider Western Australian community".*

It will also ensure alignment with the following Outcomes and Strategies:

*3.4: Local, national and international recognition*

*3.5: A well developed relationship with industry, commerce and government*

*4.1: Good governance and leadership*

*4.2: Effective strategic and business planning.*

### **Legislation Implications**

Nil

### **Council Policy/Local Law Implications**

Nil

### **Budget/Financial Implications**

Nil

### **Consultation**

Nil

## **BACKGROUND**

The *Electoral Act 1907* (WA) (The 'Act') requires that Western Australia's electoral boundaries be reviewed at regular intervals so that the numbers of electors within electoral districts remains within the permissible enrolment variations.

The last review occurred in 2011 where the number of districts within regions remained as for 2007 (i.e. 42 across the three metropolitan regions; 17 across the three country regions). Boundaries were adjusted within regions to better align elector numbers with the average district enrolment (ADE).

The Office of the Electoral Commissioners is calling for public submissions on proposals for the review between 30 March and 29 April 2015. In considering the proposals, the Commissioners must give consideration to:

- Elector numbers
- Community of Interest
- Land use patterns
- Means of communication, means of travel and distance from the capital
- Physical features
- Existing boundaries of regions and districts
- Existing local government boundaries
- The trend in demographic changes.

The City's submission will recommend that the Commissioners make a fundamental change in their review of both district and regional boundaries in order to reflect the changes in demographics that are evident for all Western Australia, and to ensure effective representation for electors.

In urging this change, the submission will further advocate strongly that there is no basis for a change to the existing boundary of the Armadale district, on the basis of strong growth rates.

## COMMENT

The Office of the Electoral Commissioners has released a Preliminary Observations Paper, which indicates that the Commissioners are open to change to electoral boundaries in this review.

A Confidential Draft submission has been prepared that is believed to best represent the interests of the Armadale district. This Report proposes that the Mayor and CEO be authorized to finalise and forward the submission, taking heed of the Council's views by 29 April 2015.

The bulk of recent population growth in WA is occurring in metropolitan Perth, with the fastest growing areas being Piara Waters/Harrisdale, Butler and Baldivis. The State Electoral Commission has indicated it is not inclined to increase the number of districts in WA. This means that, if fundamental change is to occur, it will be to increase the number of metropolitan seats, at the expense of country seats. The City's submission will recommend that outcome as the only means by which its rapidly growing population will have equitable representation. It will also recommend no change in the existing Armadale district boundary.

The state review is the ideal opportunity for Armadale to consolidate its position as a significant growth area and the primary South Eastern Strategic Metropolitan Centre. Continued dedicated representation at State level will ensure the City's plans for continued growth and development in the region will be supported through closer relationships with government.

## ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

## RECOMMEND

### That Council:

- 1. Authorise the CEO and Mayor to make submission to the Office of the Electoral Commissioners on the forthcoming 2015 State Electoral Review, proposing that a fundamental change be made to district and regional boundaries.**
- 2. Note that the Confidential Draft Submission has been circulated enabling all Councillors to forward comments, prior to the CEO and Mayor formulating and forwarding the final composite submission to the Office of the Electoral Commissioners.**

**1.2 - COUNCILLORS' INFORMATION BULLETIN - ISSUE NO. 7/2015**

WARD : ALL  
FILE No. : M/415/15  
DATE : 20 April 2015  
REF : CT  
RESPONSIBLE : Chief Executive Officer  
MANAGER

**In Brief:**

- Councillors' Information Bulletin – Councillors are advised to take note of the information submitted in Issue No. 7/2015 to be received by Council.

**Strategic Implications**

The following general information and memorandums were circulated in Issue No. 7/2015 on 23 April 2015.

**COMMENT**

**Correspondence & Papers**

- **Correspondence**
- **WA Local Government Association (WALGA) News**
- **Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) News**  
17 April 2015
- **Media Releases**

**Information from Human Resources**

- Employee Movements

**Information from Technical Services**

- **Outstanding Matters and Information Items**  
Various Items
- **Monthly Departmental Reports**  
Technical Services Works Programme

**Information from Community Services**

- **Outstanding Matters & Information Items**  
Report on Outstanding Matters – Community Services Committee
- **Monthly / Quarterly Departmental Reports**  
Community Development Report –Community Development Report April 2015  
Leisure Services Report –March 2015  
Manager Library & Heritage Services Monthly Report – March 2015  
Manager Ranger & Emergency Services Monthly Report – March 2015  
Tourism/Events & Visitor Centre February 2015
- **Minutes/Notes of Occasional/Advisory Committee**  
NIL

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.

**RECOMMEND**

**That Council acknowledge receipt of Issue No 7/2015 of the Information Bulletin.**

### **1.3 - FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

WARD : ALL  
FILE No. : M/422/15  
DATE : 21 April 2015  
REF : JM  
RESPONSIBLE : Chief Executive Officer  
MANAGER

#### **In Brief:**

- Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) from the Australian Government are made available to fund essential community infrastructure and services ranging from local roads and parks to swimming pools and libraries.
- Councils across Australia will receive \$2.3 billion in funding in 2014-15 under this program.
- The Government decision in the 2014 Federal Budget to freeze the indexation of FAG's for three years beginning in 2014-15 and ending 2017-18 means FAG funding is not keeping pace with demand for services and infrastructure.
- This report recommends that Council acknowledges the importance of FAGs in assisting Council to provide important community infrastructure and services and to acknowledge receipt of FAGs from the Commonwealth in media releases and council publications.

#### **Tabled Items**

Nil

#### **Officer Interest Declaration**

Nil

#### **Strategic Implications**

The Australian Government's decision to freeze indexation of Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) for three years, commencing 2014-15 impacts on Council's ability to meet a range of strategies identified under the Strategic Objectives of Community Wellbeing and Enhanced Natural and Built Environments. It represents a potential loss in funding of up to \$300,000.

#### **Legislation Implications**

Nil

#### **Council Policy/Local Law Implications**

Nil

#### **Budget/Financial Implications**

Armadale will receive \$3.07million in FAGs in 2014-15. This is a significant source of revenue for Council, equating to approximately 4% of total revenue. At current inflation rates, a freeze in these grants represents a loss of approximately \$90,000 p.a.

## **Consultation**

Executive Director, Corporate Services

### **COMMENT**

The City of Armadale, along with local councils across Australia, recently received the third quarterly payment of Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) to local governments for this financial year. FAGs are an important untied payment to councils and are invested in essential community infrastructure and services. Armadale will receive \$3.07million in 2014-15.

The road funding portion of the FAG's grant (\$1,238,264) funds 16% of the City's roads capital expenditure budget.

The general purpose portion of the grant (\$1,830,419) helps fund a range of council services and facilities, e.g. funding for library services is \$2.4m; funding for leisure services like the aquatic centre and Arena is \$744,000.

The implications of the freeze mean that Council, in determining the budget for 2015-16 and beyond, must consider the balance between supplying services and infrastructure to meet the community's needs as opposed to desires, against those of seeking alternative revenue sources i.e. through increased rates.

FAGs are a vital part of the revenue base of all councils and this year Council's will receive 42.3 billion from the Australian Government.

The Government's decision in the 2014 Federal Budget to freeze the indexation of FAGs for three years beginning in 2014-15 is estimated to have a \$925 million impact nationwide by 2017-18.

ALGA and state local government associations are seeking the support of Council for advocacy to have the Federal Government reverse the decision to freeze the indexation of FAG's. As such, every council in Australia is being asked to pass the following recommendations acknowledging the importance of the FAG program in assisting Council to provide important community infrastructure.

Council is also being asked to acknowledge the receipt of FAGs from the Commonwealth in media releases and publications to ensure that the importance and impact of the grants can be more broadly appreciated.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.

### **RECOMMEND**

**That Council:**

- 1. Acknowledges the importance of federal funding through the Financial Assistance Grants program for the continued delivery of Council's services and infrastructure; and**
- 2. Acknowledges the receipt of \$3.07 M in FAG funding in 2014-15; and**
- 3. Will ensure that this federal funding, and other funding provided by the Federal Government under relevant grant programs, is appropriately identified as Commonwealth grant funding in Council publications, including annual reports.**