



ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Electors Meeting to Receive the City's Annual Report, Financial Statements and Auditors Report for the Year Ended June 2007 held in the Council Chamber on Monday 19 November 2007 commencing at 7.00pm

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Mayor declared the meeting open at 7.00pm, welcomed everyone in attendance, in particular Cr Peter Best to the 'table' for his first meeting, as he was absent overseas for the Swearing-In Special Council Meeting. He then ran through the 'order of business' stating that the meeting would be run in accordance with Standing Orders and that the public present would have the opportunity to ask questions relating to the business of Council or to propose Motions under 'Other Business' on the Agenda.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES

Present:

Mayor J Best

Councillors:

I Hasleby	Civic Ward
P Best	Como Beach Ward
T Burrows	Manning Ward
L P Ozsdolay	Manning Ward
C Cala	McDougall
R Wells, JP	McDougall
R Grayden	Mill Point Ward
S Doherty	Moresby Ward
K R Trent, RFD	Moresby Ward

Officers:

Mr C Frewing	Chief Executive Officer
Mr S Cope	Director Planning and Community Services
Mr G Flood	Director Infrastructure Services
Mr M J Kent	Director Financial and Information Services
Ms D Gray	Manager Financial Services
Mrs K Russell	Minute Secretary

Gallery

There were 14 members of the public present

Apologies

Cr G W Gleeson	Civic Ward
Cr D Smith	Mill Point Ward

3. PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

The Mayor requested the CEO present an overview of the Annual Report for the year ended June 2007.

The Chief Executive Officer reported that there were two documents produced, the Community Annual Report which is an abridged version and the Annual Report which contains a full set of financial statements. He said that the Community Annual Report has been circulated to residents within the last couple of weeks and that there were copies of both reports available in the foyer and on the City's web page. As both of the reports are fairly detailed he stated that it was not his intention to go through the Annual Report as the main focus of the meeting is to 'receive' the Financial Statements and Audit Report. The Chief Executive Officer then asked the Director Financial and Information Services to present a brief overview of the Annual Financial Statements and the City's financial position together with an interpretation of what these figures mean.

Annual Financial Statements/Audit Report 2006/07 Presentation

The Director Financial and Information Services gave a presentation on the following topics:

- 2006/2007 Financial Highlights
 - Key Financial Indicators
 - Overall financial position improved by 6.4% - Net Assets \$181.5M
 - Total Revenue was 1.2% **above** budget at \$32.1M
 - Rates Revenue was \$18.4M (budget \$18.3M)
 - Non Rates Revenue of \$13.7M from other sources (fees, grants, interest, asset trade-in proceeds etc)
 - Operating Expenses were 1.0% under budget at \$29.8M
 - \$8.1M worth of Capital Expenditure was completed
 - Cash reserves are in place to support future financial sustainability
 - Best ever year in terms of rates collections (outstanding debts)
 - Net cash from operations was \$7.6M against \$6.8M in prior year. (contribution towards Capital Works)
- Financial Ratios and Trends 2006/2007
- Financial Sustainability
 - Major Achievements**
 - Assessed as 'Sustainable Council' by Access Economics
 - Fully funded 5 year financial strategy for City initiatives
 - Best Practice Risk Management Strategy
 - Timely and accountable financial management reporting
 - Very effective debt collection/treasury management practices
 - High quality, well documented financial systems and procedures
 - Ongoing funding of City Cash Reserves for future projects
 - \$370K dividend to City from Collier Park Golf Course
 - Improvement in financial position of Collier Park Village complex
 - Well placed to keep delivering on Council's 'Vision for the Community'

The Mayor thanked the Director Financial and Information Services for his presentation on the City's financial position.

MOTION

Moved Sheila Perrot (Collier Park Village), Sec June Davis (Collier Park Village)

That the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2007 be received.

COMMENTS FOR / AGAINST MOTION - QUESTIONS / POINTS OF CLARIFICATION : ITEM 3

Mr Geoff Defrenne, 24 Kennard Street, Kensington

Recommend residents do not accept the Annual Report as I doubt many have seen the full report. The report circulated does not contain a full set of financial accounts or the audit report. If the current Motion is lost I foreshadow moving an alternative Motion that the Annual Report and Financial Statements not be received because they have not been circulated to residents and that a 'true' copy of the Annual Report be circulated.

Director Financial and Information Services - stated that the City has for a number of years opted to publish and distribute a 'narrative' Community Annual Report to residents and to make the complete document available to those who require it online. This is consistent with the practice used by most corporate entities and is both financially and environmentally responsible. He further stated that the day after the Financial Statements and Audit Report for the 2006/2007 financial year were presented to the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 3 October 2007, that a full copy of the Annual Report was available on the City's web site. The document was also presented to the October Ordinary Council meeting for adoption.

The Mayor put the Motion.

CARRIED

4. PRESENTATION OF THE AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

The Chief Executive Officer stated that the Auditor's Report was considered at the last Council meeting and approved. He said that it is reproduced in full in the Annual Report and has been made available on the City's website as part of the annual reporting process. As previously advised there are copies available in the foyer and in the City's Libraries and the Auditor's Report is presented tonight to be 'received'.

MOTION

Moved Brian Handcock, 2 Crowley Vista, Salter Point, Sec John Stewart, 7 Keaney Place, Waterford

That the Auditor's Report for the year ended 30 June 2007 be received.

COMMENTS FOR / AGAINST MOTION - QUESTIONS / POINTS OF CLARIFICATION : ITEM 4

Jan Semple, 80 Monash Avenue, Como - everyone is thinking 'computers' - there are no hard-copies of the Annual Report available in the libraries.

Mayor Best stated this matter would be followed-up in ensuring open and accountable governance is maintained.

Chief Executive Officer stated that the documents presented tonight are treated the same way as any Council Agenda ie they are not provided in hard-copy form in advance of the meeting to all residents of the City. The Agenda 'table of contents' page is placed on the City Administration / Library noticeboards with the full Agenda (ie reports) available on the internet or by coming into the administration office for copies. Hard-copies are made available on the night of the Council meeting very much the same way as the documents which have been provided tonight.

Mr Geoff Defrenne, 24 Kennard Street, Kensington

Disagree - hard copies not available as for the Council Agenda.

The Mayor put the Motion.

CARRIED

5. OTHER BUSINESS

The Mayor advised the gallery that he would accept questions / statements at this point in the meeting.

Barrie Drake, 2 Scenic Crescent, South Perth - I have attended the last 4/5 Annual Electors Meetings and at every one the City's funds keep looking better all the time. Is there going to be a time when rates plateau, or are they going to continue going north? Do not consider rates should go up every year because it is a fashionable thing to do.

Chief Executive Officer said that one of the most important tasks Council performs each year is adopting its Budget for the financial year. This process will continue early in the new year when consideration is given to the level of service provision and future assets/infrastructure. Every effort is made to minimise the rates. He said that from his own experience the public want an improvement in services for a level of rates and do not mind paying levels that are consistent with CPI increases as they know everything else has increased. One of the major costs relates to staffing where generally the City need to pay the market rate to attract and attain staff. He said he believed that ratepayers reasonably expect to pay increased rates to CPI level and that if we do not increase for one year then the following year the increase is likely to be double.

Diane Cheong, 18 Murray Street, Como - the Graffiti Plan was passed in April with a view that the State-wide Graffiti Strategy was going to be drawn up in May and a draft made available. Would like to see a report on a draft Plan - are there any developments?

Mayor Best acknowledged the report was tabled in April and that there was an indication from the Government of a State Graffiti Plan, however not sure where that is currently at.

Chief Executive Officer stated he was also not sure where the State Graffiti Plan is at, however confirm that Council adopted in April 2007 a Graffiti Management Program for the City which brings together existing practices as well as additional initiatives based around the six key focus areas of Communication, Deterrents, Reporting, Removal, Networking and Early Intervention. In relation to those 6 strategies there were something like 18 actions and the City has made considerable progress towards implementing those actions. Regardless as to whether the State has progressed its plan, the City is achieving its own 'actions' in this regard as set by the City.

Diane Cheong, 18 Murray Street, Como - following the adoption of the City plan, initially the graffiti seemed to be disappearing rapidly when reported, however, of late it has become bad again. These days it seems to take several weeks before reported graffiti is removed. Graffiti, in a playground area reported last week (including messages of death) still has not been removed - would have thought areas where children go would receive urgent attention. We have also been told of late we need to provide more detail when reporting graffiti. Believe this needs to be looked at in relation to providing some guidelines.

Director Infrastructure Services - stated that the issue would be investigated. He acknowledged that currently Infrastructure Services are experiencing some resource issues which have impacted on this area.

Diane Cheong - as Council has a Graffiti Trailer, why not employ someone instead of putting out to an external contractor?

Director Infrastructure Services - responded that the smaller graffiti jobs are handled internally with the larger jobs being put out to external contractors which means we compete with others waiting to have jobs done.

Mayor Best confirmed that he would discuss the issue of graffiti management further with Ms Cheong.

Roger Atkinson, 5/2 Coode Street, Como - expressed his disappointment in Council in the managing of the Como Beach Project which is incomplete and stated that ratepayers do not seem to find out how Council is going to finish this project in relation to the beach front erosion/trees etc and what is being changed. Disappointed Council is not keeping people informed on this type of project.

Mayor Best - confirmed that he would take the points raised on board with possibly better use of the Southern Gazette newspaper and City's website to keep residents informed with more detailed information.

Director Infrastructure Services - acknowledged there had been many changes to this project which had been put out to tender three times, due to lack of interest from tenderers. Cost issues and storm damage issues had impacted on the original project with the scope of work having to be scaled back to reflect the higher than expected tenders received. He said that every endeavour had been made to communicate this through the press to the residents and stated that the comments raised in this regard would be taken on board.

Jan Semple - in the first instance I extend thanks to the Council in relation to the school issue. Secondly, in relation to Neighbourhood Watch suggest that at the City of South Perth Fiesta we have an advertising board to try and rejuvenate the Neighbourhood Watch program.

Mayor Best - stated that the City was certainly keen to rejuvenate the Neighbourhood Watch program and have been liaising with the local police to ensure we get the resources back in a partnership approach.

Janet McMullen, 15 Salter Point Parade, Salter Point - received assurances that Parks and Gardens have acted together in relation to Salter Point Parade and the issue of wild oats and also the problem with winter weed in Sandon Park. If they were sprayed they may not be such a problem as every year the problem seems to get worse. Would also like to know more about what work is happening in Sandon Park before the work commences.

Mayor Best - responded that in terms of information provided to ratepayers that it was difficult for the City to provide information to certain segments of the City. He said that currently the City is looking at setting up options where ratepayers can access technology to provide them with more information on particular projects. The City do put out Press Releases in relation to projects but have to rely on the Southern Gazette newspaper to pick up the particular story. It is hoped that early in the new year we can progress the technology in this regard.

Director Infrastructure Services stated that each year there is a complete review of the mowing program with the intention of improving the service / frequency etc. He acknowledged that recently this has been difficult due to staff resources and the constant battle to retain staff at this level and confirmed that he would take the issue up again with the manager for this area in an attempt to try and improve matters.

Mayor Bests - stated it was a matter of equity and trying to spread limited resources across the City.

Roger Atkinson - who signed off on lower Ednah Street being bituminised?

Director Infrastructure Services - advised that this particular project started out with trees, however following community consultation the outcome resulted in all of the plans for trees being compromised for crossovers. He said that it is always the City's intention to 'green' streets where possible but this was not accepted by the community.

Lyn Giblett, 17 Amery Street, Como - earlier in the meeting Mr Kent spoke about the cost in printing / providing large reports to householders - what about this? (Mrs Giblett held up a private advertising Business Directory).

Director Financial and Information Services - confirmed that the City does not contribute to the particular publication referred to.

Lyn Giblett - what happened to the old front counter where you could actually talk to somebody behind the counter in regards to issues?

Mayor Best stated that the Concierge in Reception is there to 'field' questions to better identify the nature of the issue and call upon an appropriate officer qualified to answer the specific questions which is a more efficient way of managing staff resources.

Brian Handcock - concerns in relation to cost shifting from State to Local Government, such as the Neighbourhood Watch issue, which will continue to come forward.

Mayor Best - acknowledged the issue of cost shifting from State to Local Government and said Council is trying to get as many 'friends' as we can through WALGA etc to raise these issues with the State / Federal Governments. If residents and ratepayers were also to put pressure on where they can we would have a better front in maintaining the pressure.

Director Financial and Information Services - stated that it certainly was an important issue and acknowledged that there has been a shift from State Government to Local Government in areas such as community policing etc. He said that the City's CEO has played a very active role in the industry in addressing that particular issue and more recently similar concerns have been raised in relation to services which is already presenting a challenge to resources.

Chief Executive Officer - said it is one of those on-going issues as cost-shifting can be done in a number of ways, some fairly discrete, for example the underground power project. Council previously only had to contribute 1/3 costs whereas that has now shifted and local government has to contribute 50% so technically the local government contribution has increased by 50% from 33.1/3% to 50%. There are a number of examples where the initial funding allocation has shifted, so if local government wishes to continue services it needs to bridge the gap. Where local government is restricted as the bulk of its revenue is raised through rates, then the next two large items relate to fees and charges and government grants. If government grants are not increased and less revenue is received from government controlled fees it gives less to resources for services. One of the better known areas is recreation where services were funded by the State 15/20 years ago this funding has now been withdrawn and the costs totally absorbed by local government and this tends to be increasing over time. Notwithstanding that there is currently a lot of lobbying going on and the battle is beginning to be won as a three tier government agreement has been signed limiting cost-shifting.

Mr Bob Simper, Sandgate Street, South Perth - the Bus Shelter at the corner of Canning Highway and Hensman Street has been a 'mess' with food/rubbish splattered about it since September with nothing having been done to clean it up. There are plenty of contractors out there who can do the work but the fault seems to be within the Department. This issue needs to be sorted out / the department needs a major shake up by this Council. Surplus funds need to be spent widely - use of funds appalling over the last three years

Director Infrastructure Services - responded that the complaint would be taken on notice, investigated and Mr Simper advised of the outcome.

Mr Simper - same answer as last time - nothing happens.

Mayor Best assured Mr Simper that the matter will be addressed and enforced the fact that resource issues are currently having an impact on the services provided by the City. He then requested that Mr Simper refrain from making personal staff attacks when stating his complaints.

Mr Simper stated that this is an Annual General Meeting where ratepayers get a chance to complain.

Mayor Best said he did not see this 'forum' as an opportunity to throw in personal complaints. Those opportunities are every day and these issues are better dealt with on a day-to-day basis. If not dealt with in a timely manner then this is not the way to progress the matter but rather to discuss with the officer as this Council wants to fix the problem.

Mr Simper - in April this year the Administration asked for ratepayers' opinions in relation to the library / main hall proposal. A group sat down with the consultants employed by the City in relation to the hall / library project and provided input. When are the consultants going to get back to us?

Mayor Best acknowledged the community consultation held in relation to the hall / library project and said he did not know why this has not been followed up.

Chief Executive Officer responded that the event referred to was held in the Council Reception Area where the community were invited to view and contribute to proposals for the new Council facilities and also provide any comments in relation to the community hall and library project in relation to the buildings. He said that the current buildings were constructed 50 years ago and obviously when they are redesigned/refurbished we want them to be flexible and durable for the next 50 years. The design has not yet been completed in order to get community input as to what they would like to see in those two buildings. Information is currently being assessed by Mr Kent, the Project Manager and the architects for the project.

Note: Cr Ozsdolay left the Council Chamber at 8.25pm and returned at 8.28pm

Director Financial and Information Services said that while it would have been nice to see this move more quickly this was a significant project for the City and it was important to get the best outcome. Over the last 2 years there has been significant consultation with Focus Groups, a Community Survey, Stakeholder meetings with prospective tenants, including with the South Perth Learning Centre and Department of Health (regarding playground facilities). This feedback has been consolidated and has provided valuable input to date in planning and sourcing funding for the project. The City's Strategic Financial Plan recognised that the incorporation of the child health centre allowed two aged and currently unsuitable child health centres to be sold to provide funding for community facilities whilst replacing them with a purpose built one. Also extensive negotiations have been held with Lotterywest regarding funding opportunities and they are keen to hear about the synergies of incorporating such facilities into the community centre. At the moment we are establishing the building footprint and allocating floor space but need more work to be done before getting down to design details in order to do this project justice.

Mayor Best - in terms of the next stage of consultation, are we going back to the 'groups' for further input and updates?

Director Financial and Information Services said that the process previously explained needs to happen before the conceptual drawing stage ie the need to establish funding options etc before more information is made available.

Mr Simper - it seems that the decision who is going to be in the new building has already been made. We have an excellent child facility in Coode Street but have heard that this facility will be shifted - once again ratepayers have been excluded in these decisions.

Note: Cr Grayden left the Council Chamber at 8.31pm.

Director Financial and Information Services responded that some 4 years ago we started describing the concept and possible inclusion in the facility in the City's Strategic Financial Plan. Following community consultation the concept of incorporating the infant health centre into the new facility was supported by both the community and the State Government. This is in keeping with the 'New Beginnings Program'. State Government is keen to see infant health clinics co-locate with library facilities. The other potential tenant, which again has been talked about is South Perth Learning Centre which again offers synergies with the Library but these are just a portion of the tenants. The upper level hall would still be available to the public and it is certainly not about doing 'special deals' or restricting access.

Mr Simper - how much money is the State Health Department prepared to pay towards costs of these alterations?

Director Financial and Information Services said that since the mid 1950's the provision of a facility for infant health services has been the responsibility of local government. This requires us to provide a building where these activities take place. As a consequence of this proposal ie the merger of two infant health facilities, this creates a purpose built facility and provides funding opportunities for the City through the sale of the old sites and from Lotterywest. The tenant provides their own internal fit out.

Note: Cr Doherty left the Council Chamber at 8.33pm
Cr Grayden returned to the Council Chamber at 8.33pm

Mayor Best suggested that perhaps before Christmas that we host a 'update' meeting to those ratepayers who provided input into the community consultation in relation to this project.

Note: Cr Hasleby left the Council Chamber at 8.35pm

Mr Defrenne - Rates Issue - net rates increased by 4.9%. Other issue - in 2005/06 Budget and following community consultation \$10,000 was allocated for work to the park at the corner of Gwenyfred Road and George Street but so far nothing has happened - surely the ideal time for planting would be May? - when will something happen at this park?

Director Infrastructure Services - acknowledged that the ideal planting time is before the start of the winter months.

Mayor Best - confirmed that the consultation in relation to the park referred to had taken place in July 2007 and said that he would investigate the matter.

Note: Cr Doherty returned to the Council Chamber at 8.38pm

Mr Defrenne In relation to the library upgrade, at the community consultation the plans were then already 2 years old. Also at that meeting we were promised feedback which did not occur.

Mayor Best suggested that perhaps the consultant, Catalyst could republish their report.

Mr Defrenne - approximately 2 years ago I provided a reasonably detailed report on six buildings throughout the City which exceeded their approved plot ratio. I was promised a report in relation to these six buildings exceeding plot ratio, however believe the report was flawed and never came back to Council. Has anyone done an audit of planning approvals given out, other than those reviewed by resolution of Council, as to whether we are doing it correctly - do not believe it is the case.

Chief Executive Officer - responded no, an audit of all planning development applications had not been carried out. He stated that when it is considered the amount of research and investigation that has occurred in this area over the last 2 - 2.1/2 years you would have to conclude it has been significant in terms of resources both human and financial. He said that he initiated the Belmont Report for an independent review following Mr Defrenne's claims to the Mayor that six buildings within the City were over built in relation to the approved plot ratio. Following that review this claim was not proven - apart from the issues relating to SAT regarding the way the Council was calculating plot ratios at the time. The variations were minor apart from one area. In addition to those 6 buildings there have been other major buildings that have undergone scrutiny by lawyers and other professionals employed by the City. There has been no random audit but a lot of money spent on legal advice, independent surveyors, temporary staff etc which has impacted on the City but has generally found in favour of the way assessments are performed and calculated. Obviously there have been a number of changes as a result in that the planning department has been restructured into two areas of policy and statutory planning and is working well.

Over the last 3/4 months it is the first time the Planning Department has had a full compliment of staff with planning assessments being carried out in a prompt and effective way so that any issues that did exist have now been put behind us.

Mr Defrenne - is the City aware that the Belmont Report refers to a whole floor being left out of the Rose Hotel?

Chief Executive Officer said no, but he acknowledged that the Belmont report did have some errors in it and they have been responded to by staff.

Mr Defrenne - a lot of trouble in this Council has been caused by disputes. If Council resolved a lot of planning issues it would address these disputes.

Chief Executive Officer acknowledged that there have been some issues which he stated have been identified and investigated and said he was satisfied that appropriate measures have now been implemented and was confident with the processes now in place in the planning department to address these issues.

Mayor Best also acknowledged there have been some planning issues in the past but that procedures are now in place for the 'planning team' to get it right in the future. He said he welcomed ratepayers advising Council if they spot something they are not happy about in order that the issue can be addressed. He said that in the past SAT have found specific issues in relation to this Council's calculations but that he was confident the new procedures that are in place will address this.

Mr Defrenne asked if the 'Belmont Report' (with corrections made) can be made public so it could be used as a reference document?

Mayor Best agreed that the report be made available.

Jan Semple extended a welcome on to Council the newly elected Mayor and Councillors and wished them a prosperous New Year.

Mr Simper - have spoken to Council Administration in regards to advertising / building signs being put up illegally on street verges and was given an assurance this will not occur in future but nothing has been done about this. The other issue relates to Coles Supermarket in Angelo Street and their rubbish bins obstructing the footpath again.

Mayor Best gave Mr Simper a commitment to follow up on the two issues raised with the relevant Council Officers in order to address the problems.

Chief Executive Officer - stated that he was not aware of any illegal signs on verges that have not been acted upon and that his officers take these issues seriously and act upon complaints received. He further stated that there is a process to go through of giving the parties concerned adequate notice to remove signs.

Mr John Stewart stated that on a positive note he wished to advise Council that he had made a number of inquiries to the Administration in recent months to which he had receive positive responses and all in all it was not a 'bad experience' at all.

Mayor Best stated that he recognised that there is always more we can do but that Council was about a continuous improvement approach during difficult circumstance in relation to attracting and retaining staff who take great pride in providing / maintaining services to the community especially with a resources boom on. He said that under the circumstance staff do a great job but that is not to say there is no room for improvement.

6. CLOSURE

The Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.07pm.

These Minutes were received at a Council meeting on 18 December 2006

Signed _____
Chairperson at the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed