



TOWN OF EAST FREMANTLE

The Municipality of East Fremantle was created in 1897, when it separated from the Town of Fremantle to become an independent local authority. The Town has a population of approximately 6,500 and is 3.2 square kilometres in area. It is bounded to the north and west by the Swan River, across which many properties enjoy expansive views. To the east it shares a common boundary with the City of Melville, to the south and west with the City of Fremantle. It is a few kilometres from the centre of Fremantle and other major retail areas and is well served by public transport.

The Town has a rich history. The local Aboriginal tribe known as Nyungar obtained food and drinking water from the river edges and open grassy areas. The track that linked the fledgling Swan River Colony based in Fremantle to the future city centre of Perth in 1831 is documented traversing along the East Fremantle cliff edge finishing at the river ferry crossing at Preston Point. Early settlement of the area consisted of large farm holdings, however as the colony prospered during the 1890s gold rush the nature of settlement altered dramatically, rapidly changing to a residential area.

The Plympton precinct today consists of charming worker's cottages which were established largely between 1890 and 1910. The annual East Fremantle Festival is held in historic George Street, the main street of Plympton. Riverside was established by the merchant elite of Fremantle and is perched high on the cliffs overlooking the River. Gracious homes of the goldrush era are dotted along the escarpment. Further northwards, the Preston Point area was developed in the 1950s with houses typical of the period also enjoying the expansive views over the river.

The Woodside and Richmond precincts contain many homes dating from 1900–1940. Described as 'sweetness and light' this area is characterised by its fine brick and tile bungalows on generous (quarter acre block or similar) sites with mature garden settings.

The Town of East Fremantle has strongly resisted the push for infill development and encouraged the retention of the many heritage homes, gardens and streetscapes in the municipality. Whilst pressure from various sources to increase densities may ultimately prevail, in East Fremantle the community and families currently enjoy the standard of amenity of their forebears, with space for children to play and a sense of history and community unparalleled elsewhere.

The Town At A Glance

THE TOWN AT A GLANCE

Established as a municipality:	2 April 1897
Population:	6,871 (2004 Bureau of Statistics)
Number of dwellings:	2,911
Number of rate assessments:	3,350
Area:	3.2km ²
Area of parks & gardens:	65ha
Location:	25km from Perth GPO
Length of roads:	40km
Annual Operating Expenditure:	\$5,822,640
Rate revenue:	\$3,805,097
Employees:	44
Principal Officers (at 30 June 2006)	
Chief Executive Officer	Stuart Wearne
Executive Manager Finance & Admin	Tony Brown
A/Town Planner	Beryl Foster
Works Supervisor	Paul McGinty
Office location:	135 Canning Highway East Fremantle
Telephone:	(08) 9339 9339
Facsimile:	(08) 9339 3399
Email:	admin@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au
Office Hours:	8.30am-5.00pm Monday-Friday

Annual Report 2005/2006

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Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2006

Mayor & Councillors

Mayor & Councillors

(as at 30 June 2006)

Mayor:

2005-2009

Mayor James O'Neill

72 Allen Street

East Fremantle WA 6158

9339 2425

Councillors:

Plympton Ward

2003-2007

Cr Peter Le May

31 Duke Street

East Fremantle WA 6158

9319 2689

2005-2009

Cr Stefanie Dobro

90 King Street

East Fremantle WA 6158

9339 8775

Woodside Ward

2003-2007

Vacant

2005-2009

Cr Jennifer Harrington

31 Allen Street

East Fremantle WA 6158

0418 911 278

Richmond Ward

2003-2007

Cr Alan Ferris

1 Polo Way

East Fremantle WA 6158

9339 0595

2005-2009

Cr Richard Olson

4/46 Alexandra Road

East Fremantle WA 6158

9339 6681

Preston Point Ward

2003-2007

Cr David Martin

1 Chauncy Street

East Fremantle WA 6158

9339 7179

2005-2009

Cr Alex Wilson

46 Locke Crescent

East Fremantle WA 6158

9339 1156

Mayor & Councillors



East Fremantle Town Map

Mayor's Report

I have great pleasure in presenting the Annual Report for 2005-2006. Whilst many achievements were accomplished it was also a year of financial consolidation. The Town has shown that it is not only socially viable but economically as well.

The Town was recommended for amalgamation with neighbouring City of Fremantle by the Structural Review Board. This board was set up by the former Minister for Local Government John Bowler. The Town was quite shocked by this recommendation given the following.

The recommendation was based on little tangible evidence. In fact the Board gave the Town a very high score of 2 for its financial viability, the same as the much larger City of Rockingham. At the same time it gave the City of Fremantle a low score of 4. Local residents overwhelmingly want the Town to remain independent and it was with a great deal of agreement that the new minister has reassured us that there will be no forced amalgamations. The Town of East Fremantle has always held the view that it is up to the local residents to decide whether amalgamation should take place.

FINANCE

The Town has adopted a more transparent financial and annual reporting system. The Town aims to eliminate all current debt by 2015.

Infrastructure works are to be funded from Council's own resources. The 2005-2006 Budget included large amounts directed to footpath works, park upgrades, traffic treatments, road resurfacing, foreshore erosion to name a few.

Mr Brown and his team have really worked hard and I recognise their efforts.

The budget also included three general verge mows, and bulk waste and green waste collections. Council's commitment to recycling is also evident and I would like to

acknowledge Cr Peter Le May's efforts to ensure that recycling and the SMRC operates effectively in all domains.

SWAN RIVER

The Town, under the supervision of Mr McGinty and with the Swan River Trust, has continued to rectify erosion and degradation of vegetation.

The Town has given priority to remediating foreshore areas and providing safe thoroughfare for pedestrians.

The Swan River Trust should be recognised for the commitment they have given to our Town in jointly maintaining the foreshore of the Swan River.

The Swan River is the integral part of Perth and Western Australia. We must ensure its survival for present and future generations.

TRAFFIC

The traffic calming for the intersections of Moss and Fletcher Streets and Saint Peters Road and May Street demonstrates our commitment to improving the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. The Town will continue to monitor traffic and work on an overall strategic plan for the Town.

RETICULATION

The Town has continued to finetune the reticulation program and adopted a water smart approach to save as much water as possible. All major parks, reserves and playing surfaces have been reticulated and hopefully the playing surfaces and parks will continue to improve.

SPORTING CLUBS

The Town has continued to support all our sporting clubs and maintain the reserves to a high standard to ensure that residents can participate in many sporting activities.

The East Fremantle Bowling Club, East Fremantle Lawn Tennis Club and East Fremantle Croquet will all celebrate their

Mayor's Report

centenary in 2006 and the Town recognises their contribution to the social fabric of our Town. It is due to this recognition of their importance that the Town continues to support them to ensure their continuing viability.

The East Fremantle Tricolore Soccer Club and Croquet Club have carried out minor renovations.

The Town also help fund lighting for the East Fremantle Bowling Club. This was a joint project between the Town, Club and Department of Sport and Recreation. This has allowed the Club to increase its financial viability in increased membership and playing fixtures.

We have also funded improvements to the embankment at Henry Jeffery Oval, playground equipment in John Tonkin and Raceway Parks

We do need to find a balance in maintaining our reserves and protecting our river as many of our reserves are in close proximity to the river.

DRAINAGE AND WORKS

The Town has continued to concentrate on rectifying our drainage system. This has been largely neglected over the decades. This year we have resolved to adopt a financial plan where works are funded from our revenue and not from loan funds.

RECYCLING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Councillor Le May has represented Council on the SMRC as mentioned earlier. This is a difficult portfolio as recycling and processing organic waste is a complicated and evolving process. However the Town has again demonstrated its commitment to recycling and the amount of rubbish recycled is a credit to all residents.

TOWN PLANNING

The Town continues to fine tune our new scheme. This year Council decided to do further work on our Draft Heritage List and Residential Guidelines. This reflects our commitment to protect our built heritage and also ensure that new developments and restoration works complement this.

I would also like to recognise the efforts of Cr Le May as Presiding Member of Town Planning, Councillors Dobro, Martin, Ferris, Olson and Harrington and the planning staff Mr Oliver, Ms Foster, Mr Warrener and Ms Cooper. Town Planning is always a difficult job but all staff and councillors have worked hard and diligently.

GLYDE-IN, HACC AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Glyde-In continues to thrive, celebrating 25 years this year. Ann Reeves and the committee need to be recognised for the contribution to our Town. With over 600 members it demonstrates what can really be attained by a hard working team. Its courses are second to none and the Council sees it as a vital part of our community.

I should recognise the important part that Cr Wilson has played in the Glyde-In, from a Council perspective and also given she is willing to assist with various projects.

Ms Sue Limbert and her helpers continue their fine work in Home and Community Care, HACC. At the moment they are in the process of shifting to Dovenby House at the rear of Council. This move will further improve the ability of HACC to address the needs of our elderly residents. This sums up what East Fremantle is really about and it is held up as an icon in community care. This of course would not be possible without the tremendous energy and determination of Sue Limbert.

Mr Noel Nimmo and his volunteers continue their excellent work in Neighbourhood Watch. Few people are aware of Noel and his

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volunteers yet these unsung people continue to protect both our safety and property. On behalf of the Town thank you.

A big thank you to Mr McGinty and the works team, Mr Brown and the finance team, Ms Foster and the planning team.

I would like to recognise the work of our Principal Environmental Health officer Shelley Cocks and Senior Ranger Andrew Driver. This has included food premises and swimming pool inspections, noise and air pollution monitoring, recycling and implementing the Cities for Climate Protection Program. Also in assisting with the Sumpton Green Facility provided by Council that accommodates the East Fremantle Play Group and Child Health Clinic.

Furthermore our rangers and in particular Andrew Driver provide more than just the normal services. Not only do they investigate such things as dog attacks and ensure compliance with parking regulations they have been involved in the recovery of stolen vehicles and the apprehension of offenders who are then placed into police custody. Their diligence and commitment to our Town makes East Fremantle a safer place for all of us.

Recognition also to Mr Wearne and Ms May for their dedication and commitment to our Town.

Thank you to:

- Deputy Mayor Stefanie Dobro for her support and ability to take over in my absence.
- Councillors Peter Le May, David Martin, Jennifer Harrington, Richard Olson, Alan Ferris and Alex Wilson for their hard work and commitment to the Town of East Fremantle.

Welcome to Councillor Maria Rico whom I am sure will make a significant contribution to our Town.

Lastly, again thank you all for the great privilege to serve you as your Mayor. I am truly proud to ensure all people in our Town have a voice in what happens and our direction, and that our Town continues to protect our built and social heritage. That we maintain our community care for others and remain a truly inclusive society.

JAMES O'NEILL
Mayor

Chief Executive Officer's Report

PREAMBLE

In 2005-2006 Council continued to provide good governance and improved Council services and facilities.

The more noteworthy outcomes are reflected in the reports from the Mayor and Departmental heads, which I commend to you.

My report deals mainly with the most critical issue which the Town faced during 2005-2006.

This was the issue of amalgamation.

AMALGAMATION

In the last Annual Report I discussed this issue in response to an ongoing campaign by City of Fremantle Mayor Tagliaferri (although not, it should be noted, by the City of Fremantle itself), to promote a takeover of the Town by the City of Fremantle. In that regard, I expressed the view that such an amalgamation should only occur if this was the wish of *East Fremantle* electors, and no one else, and if the Town of East Fremantle were ever to be amalgamated, against the wishes of the East Fremantle community, this would be a travesty of the very principle of **local** government and a breach of the Government's previously stated policy on the issue of "forced amalgamations".

I concluded as follows:

*"By definition, local government is the tier and form of government that is closest to the people, it is vital in building, empowering and maintaining strong communities, and there is no issue which should be **more** dependent on the community's wishes than the issue of how and from where that local government should be provided.*

*Council will continue to oppose the principle of forced amalgamations and continue to argue the fundamental principle that amalgamations, in respect of any **local** government, should only occur if this is the*

wish of the majority of a local government's electors."

Mayor Tagliaferri's campaign was confronted head on, and it was reassuring to observe an increasing number of City of Fremantle Councillors emerge to also publicly criticise Mayor Tagliaferri's campaign.

Cr Les Lauder, for example, was quoted in the "Fremantle Herald" as follows:

"I am strongly opposed to the idea of mega-councils because I believe it is essential that councillors can actually get to meet their electors and vice versa".

I understand the mayor's desire to be the supremo of a giant council but this would not be in the real interests of local communities.

Boundary reform should only happen if East Fremantle people pushed it.

The sensible thing to me is to push for resource-and service-sharing by groups of councils to effect cost savings but to leave the elected structure basically unchanged."

Whilst Mayor Tagliaferri's campaign ultimately faltered, as he failed to win support even from his own Council, let alone attract any interest from the East Fremantle community, the Town came to face a much stronger challenge from another quarter, to the point that the Town may well have soon ceased to exist, regardless of the wishes of the East Fremantle community.

The context of the challenge was a review of the current and future sustainability of local government in Western Australia, which was initiated by the former Minister for Local Government and Regional Development, John Bowler. In a press release, issued in October 2005, the Minister announced Cabinet had approved that the Local Government Advisory Board conduct a Review into

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“structural and electoral reform” of local government in Western Australia.

As there had been no prior discussion, this was the first that the local government industry in WA, or the public, knew of the Review.

The Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB) is a statutory body established under the Local Government Act to provide advice to the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development on “local government constitutional matters”, which effectively refers to boundary changes between local governments (which includes local government amalgamations) or internal boundary changes (ie revised ward boundaries within an existing local government).

At the time of the Review, the members of the Advisory Board were:

- Mr Charlie Gregorini OAM JP (Chairman)
– Mayor, City of Swan
- Mr Quentin Harrington (Deputy Chairman)
– Department of Local Government
- Mr Ron Yuryevich – Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Ms Helen Dullard – Councillor, Shire of Mundaring
- Mr Eric Lumsden – CEO, City of Swan (although selected as CEO of the City of Melville in December 2005, prior to the Board completing its report).

The Minister stated the Review would consider a variety of matters, with the primary objective being “to enhance and secure the future economic, environmental and social sustainability of communities in WA”.

The Minister further stated that the Review would identify approaches that the councils could adopt in achieving structural reform, *the first mentioned example of which was amalgamation.*

The Minister advised that the overriding view expressed to him by local governments throughout the State had been the need for such structural reform, in order to ensure the future viability of local governments in this State.

In this regard, not only had the Town of East Fremantle not been one of the local governments the Minister had consulted with, there was particular grounds for concern by the Town of East Fremantle. This was because Minister Bowler had earlier bluntly stated, at a meeting involving a number of local governments which the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer had attended shortly following the Minister's appointment, that in his view the Town of East Fremantle should not continue to exist. It is acknowledged the Minister had stated this was a personal view, based, apparently, simply on the size of the Town. It is also acknowledged that the Minister had stated that it was government policy to not implement forced amalgamations. The concern nevertheless was that the Minister, newly appointed to the portfolio and knowing *nothing* about the Town of East Fremantle, could have even adopted this position, personal or otherwise, in the first place. The Minister had never visited the Town of East Fremantle, had any discussions with elected members or officers of the Town of East Fremantle and at no point had sought, or heard, the views of the East Fremantle community. In short, the Minister's position appeared to be a simplistic, ideological position, based on size alone and, ultimately, with little apparent regard for the principles of local democracy involved.

For the record, the Minister also expressed his personal view that the western suburbs councils should also cease to exist, via all being combined into one large council.

The Town also had another cause for concern. A number of parties, including CEOs of other local governments, had advised the CEO that the Chairman of the Local Government

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Advisory Board was well known to have a pronounced and long standing bias in favour of large local governments and was thus an enthusiastic supporter of small local governments being amalgamated.

In fact it could be argued that, as the Advisory Board's primary statutory purpose is to recommend boundary changes involving local governments, to the Minister, the Board has an inherent predilection towards this option of local government reform.

It was with this background of potentially pre-determined views on amalgamation in mind, that it was noted one of the terms of reference for the Review was the

"identification of local governments where amalgamations may be the most effective and efficient method of achieving future economic, environmental and social sustainability"

and another term of reference was the

"identification of procedures and processes (legislative or otherwise) which needed to be adopted to facilitate the implementation of the above changes".

There was little doubt what this meant.

Currently, relevant legislative provisions effectively give local electors a power of veto over any proposed amalgamation of their Council. This is known as the "poll provision" and since coming into force in the mid 1970's (in fact following the last serious attempt to forcefully amalgamate the Town of East Fremantle) had appeared to be a significant factor in the Town of East Fremantle's ongoing survival as an independent local government. Thus this term of reference was taken to refer to legislative amendments which would repeal, or somehow circumvent in some other way, the existing poll provision legislation.

All of the above was notwithstanding a letter from the Minister to the Chief Executive Officer in which he stated in part:

"It is...appropriate that local governments should have a significant role in determining what reforms are appropriate to their situation."

This advice was soon followed by a letter from the Chairman of the Local Government Advisory Board containing a copy of an Issues Paper which the Board had compiled and also announcing that public hearings would be held in November and December.

In the Chief Executive Officer's view, the Issues Paper very much flagged the philosophical position which the Board had adopted, even before the consultation process had commenced. For example one of the first questions asked in the Issues Paper was

"Is there a need for larger, stronger local government entities, with bigger populations and larger budgets to deliver more and better services?"

Obviously what was being implied here was that larger local governments, were by definition, more able to deliver better services.

Also in the Issues Paper, under the heading "Constraints to Reform" was this statement:

"The poll provision in the Act effectively enables a relatively small number of electors in one affected local government to defeat a broad proposal that could involve a number of districts with tens of thousands of residents. Historically this provision has included boundary changes and could be argued to be not in the interests of the wider community."

That statement was followed by this question:

"Is the approach of 'no forced amalgamations' an impediment to structural reform?"

That was then followed by this question:

"Should the legislation be changed to make boundary changes easier,

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particularly when a majority of affected electors support a proposal?"

This was followed by this statement:

"The Board is charged with identifying specific local governments where amalgamation may be the most appropriate way forward."

The statement went on:

"But it is not just about size, there may be other parts of the State, such as parts of metropolitan Perth or around some of the regional centres, where the number of local government entities is not conducive to the efficient governance and sustainable development of the greater region. The Board will have to consider whether this level of duplication is sustainable."

Local governments and the public were then asked to state:

"Which specific local governments should be considering amalgamations?"

The WA Local Government Association (WAGLA), the peak body for local government in Western Australia, opposed the Review being carried out at this time. WALGA considered that it was premature and should be preceded by more substantial investigation into the systemic sustainability of local government in WA, from which a more targeted and appropriate reference could be developed for the LGAB. WALGA also suggested that such a study could also identify other terms of reference or actions which needed to be addressed by State and Federal departments and agencies to enhance the sustainability of local government in WA. WALGA concluded that only with this legitimate research base could valid actions be taken by the three spheres of government in addressing the structural reform of local government in WA.

The Town of East Fremantle agreed with this position.

WALGA specifically considered that it was impossible, in fact inappropriate, for the Board to be setting out to identify local governments where amalgamations were being recommended, in the absence of the research which WALGA was now calling for.

Neither Minister Bowler nor the LGAB accepted this view. In respect of the clearly rushed nature of the Review, the word around the industry was that after the recent debacle involving the City of Joondalup, together with other recent enquiries involving other large local governments, the Minister felt compelled to be "seen to be doing something about local government". If so, this was particularly ironic since these were the very large sized councils which both the Minister and the LGAB, appeared to be favouring as models of local government.

Although the Review was only announced in October 2005 and despite its enormous significance and very broad terms of reference, the deadline for responding was very short, being December 2005.

An equally unrealistic timeframe was the period allowed for the Advisory Board to report to the Minister, this originally being February 2006 (although later extended to March).

Similar reviews in other States had allowed six months or so, and in some of those States, local governments were also financially resourced by their State Governments, in respect of assisting with their research and submissions.

Despite the short time frame allowed, the Chief Executive Officer completed a comprehensive response, on behalf of Council, by the deadline.

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Just prior to the response deadline WALGA announced it was commissioning a major research project into the future sustainability of the local government sector in WA. Consistent with the views earlier expressed to the Minister, WALGA stated that the basis of this decision was the lack of a well informed assessment of the capacity of local government to deliver upon its current responsibilities and on any preferred future role in the local governance of the Western Australian community. WALGA considered that in the current climate of the debate on matters relevant to this issue, such as State and Federal government cost shifting and related local government funding issues, this was a significant and fundamental gap which had been identified and remained unaddressed.

In respect of the LGAB's Review, WALGA reiterated their position that this study was both premature and inadequate, as the terms of reference and resources allocated to the Review would not, in WALGA's view, enable significant issues to be identified and given the consideration that was required. WALGA noted that in other states this compelling need for sophisticated research to inform government on the adequacy of local government resources and practices, in order to deliver on reasonable service expectations, had been recognised, but not apparently in Western Australia. Hence in order to address this deficiency, WALGA had decided to fund an independent study into the systemic sustainability of local government in WA. WALGA advised that the purpose of the study was to enquire into, report and provide recommendations to the Association and the state government on the following:

- *Contemporary social communities of interest, environmental catchments and economic clusters to help define the local government arrangements (both structural and functional) that would best facilitate sustainable service delivery;*
- *Local government infrastructure assets, including compilation of a state-wide*

inventory of all such assets, their gross value, method of depreciation, replacement timing, cost of maintenance and other relevant matters identified by the Inquiry;

- *The adequacy of existing local government funding mechanisms identified from other jurisdictions, such as developer levies, produce sales, business activities or other mechanisms or trends identified by the Inquiry;*
- *The economic capacity of the existing local government structure to fund the service and infrastructure obligations it currently has and to recommend how any deficit might be addressed;*
- *Current and expected future labour market issues impacting on the sector and what strategies might be adopted to address these issues; and*
- *Recent and expected future demographic trends and their likely impact on the local government sector and associated strategies to deal with them.*

WALGA advised the research project was to be undertaken by an independent Systemic Sustainability Governance Panel and that Panel members would be drawn from outside of the local government sector and have appropriate academic, business and public policy skills and knowledge.

WALGA advised the role of the Governance Panel would be to oversee the research project and prepare a report containing findings addressing the Study's Terms of Reference, with recommendations for consideration by WALGA and all spheres of government. The research itself would be conducted by a specialist research body. The Governance Panel would be required to report its findings within six months of the Study's commencement date.

Noting the proposed Study would be the first of its kind in Western Australia, WALGA reiterated its belief that a deeper review of

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issues affecting the financial and economic sustainability of the sector needed to occur before any further reforms were progressed.

However since neither the Minister nor the LGAB accepted that advice, there remained the issue of the Advisory Board's Review.

The CEO attended Public Hearings held by the Board at the City of Canning and City of Melville. The CEO spoke at the City of Canning Hearing, with the comments made reflecting those made in the Chief Executive Officer's subsequent written response.

Also in attendance at the City of Melville Hearing was the Mayor, Cr Dobro, former Deputy Mayor Marjorie Green, former Cr Alan Fenna and long term resident Tony Paino.

In the CEO's view the two Public Hearings which he attended, in respect of which there was no reason to think any of the other Hearings were different, that whilst conducted courteously enough, had the air of a Board "going through the motions" and did not seem to be a serious vehicle, for the Board, to obtain information. Further, some members of the Advisory Board were present at neither Hearing and others left before the Hearings were complete. In addition, proceedings did not appear to be subject to recording, at least in full.

Whilst publicly advertised, the Hearings were very poorly attended by general members of the public.

The CEO witnessed one very pro amalgamation CEO receive public praise from the Chairman, Mr Gregorini, for the "courage" of his remarks, whilst Mayors and CEOs who questioned aspects of the Review and in particular the apparent pro amalgamation bias of the Issues Paper, and the pros and cons of different sized local governments, were heard in relative silence.

The CEO acknowledges verbal submissions made at the Melville Hearing by the Mayor, Cr Dobro, Marjorie Green, Alan Fenna and Tony Paino.

The CEO also acknowledges (what the Board termed) private written submissions made to the Inquiry by Tony Jones, Damien Flynn, Alan Fenna and Cr Dobro.

In respect of the CEO's written submission to the Advisory Board on behalf of Council, this can only be briefly summarised in this report.

At the outset the Chief Executive Officer noted that the Issues Paper produced by the Advisory Board had a "bigger is better/pro amalgamation stance", at least in respect of metropolitan local governments. (In the latter regard, it was noted that in respect of this issue, distinctions had been made by the Minister, even before the Review commenced, and in other aspects of the Review process, between metropolitan area local governments and local governments in rural or regional areas.)

In context of the Advisory Board's apparent philosophical stance, the significance of the Town of East Fremantle being the second smallest metropolitan local government was noted. It was also noted that no scope had been provided for a comprehensive and meaningful position of local residents/electors to be ascertained and incorporated into the Review process. It was also noted in the report that the LGAB Issues Paper had canvassed legislative amendments designed to allow forced amalgamations. In this regard the Chief Executive Officer documented a number of undertakings from previous Local Government Ministers and others, on both sides of politics, in which they gave undertakings that forced amalgamations would *not* be employed.

The Chief Executive Officer noted that the existing evidence did not support the proposition that size and efficiency were

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inextricably linked. The Chief Executive Officer noted the strengths of small councils which included being "closer to the people" and comparatively responsive. The Chief Executive Officer noted research which suggested that small local governments, being closest to the people, were often best placed to facilitate the development of a community identity and civic spirit, ie better placed to enhance social sustainability, which was one of the objectives of the current Review. The report stated that Council supported the WALGA initiative to develop a far better framework for allowing local governments to review their current structures and future sustainability.

The very short time frame and lack of resourcing for the Review was noted. It was also noted that in other States, for example Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia, their state governments had made significant funding commitments to assist their local governments to investigate and pursue structural reform, whereas no such funds had been provided in WA.

The report stated Council considered there was nothing narrow or self-serving in focusing on the amalgamation issue, as, whenever faced with amalgamation (the report provided a detailed history of previous attempts to take over the Town), the East Fremantle community had, in terms of an overwhelming majority, consistently expressed its opposition to amalgamation. The report noted there was nothing to suggest that community sentiment had changed, in fact recent community surveys confirmed that community sentiment had *not* changed. Thus the report indicated that the East Fremantle community would expect Council to oppose any move to force an amalgamation on the Town and to concentrate on this issue.

In this regard the report noted that local residents were now circulating anti amalgamation petitions to both Houses of

Parliament and these were being signed by a significant number of local residents.

The report stated that, in short, the overwhelming majority of the ratepayers and residents of East Fremantle had consistently opposed amalgamation on numerous occasions in the past, continued to do so and continued to express the view that any action to amalgamate the Town or alter its boundaries should be subject to a binding poll of the local community. After all, it was these citizens, and no one else, who would be affected.

Since the Local Government Advisory Board was conducting the review, and since there were statutory criteria which the Board was obliged to consider in regard to any amalgamation proposal, the Chief Executive Officer's report systematically addressed each of the eight criterion involved, which were as follows:

- (a) community of interest;
- (b) physical and topographic features;
- (c) demographic trends;
- (d) economic factors;
- (e) the history of the area;
- (f) transport and communication;
- (g) matters affecting the viability of local governments; and
- (h) the effective delivery of local government services,

With respect to "Community of Interest" the Chief Executive Officer sought to demonstrate the extent to which the Town of East Fremantle, which already had a distinct history prior to splitting from the City of Fremantle in 1897, had further developed its own identity, character and sense of community since that split.

The report noted that contributing to this sense of separate identity had been the development of the Town's numerous facilities, which included primary and pre-schools, two hospitals, a child health centre, playgroup facility, two midwifery centres and a day care facility. The report noted that

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the Town also contained numerous sporting, recreational and community facilities, many of which had been built by and were owned by the Council, and which included:

- A WAFL football oval (East Fremantle Oval) and clubrooms. In addition to the WAFL competition the Oval was made available and generally without charge, to schools and related competitions from both within and outside the district.
- Junior football oval and clubrooms.
- Bowling Club and clubrooms.
- Croquet Club and clubrooms.
- Tennis Club and clubrooms.
- Combined lacrosse, hockey and cricket grounds and shared clubrooms.
- Two soccer grounds and clubrooms.
- Two large yacht clubs and a range of other boating facilities.
- Rowing clubrooms.
- A private indoor heated swimming pool with an annual attendance of approximately 150,000.
- Its own boat launching ramp and associated parking facilities, with a Council owned café alongside.
- Its own jetties which it leases out.
- Extensive parks and reserves.
- Numerous playgrounds – nearly all remodelled over the last few years and recognised as so innovative they had been visited by representatives of a number of other local governments.
- The Tricolore Community Centre which was largely used for respite care services for the frail aged, but also used by many other groups and organisations for various activities.
- A community centre (Glyde-In) offering a large range of adult education and recreational activities.

- Two youth halls for sea scouts.
- Royal George Arts & Community Centre offering an art gallery and low rent space for a range of artists.
- Five Council owned houses, with priority use for lease to Council “works” employees.

It was noted many of these facilities, services and sporting or community organisations had existed in the Town for decades, in some cases almost as long as the Council itself, and were important elements of the Town's social sustainability and sense of separate identity.

The Chief Executive Officer noted that a number of past amalgamation attempts had all failed due to that strong sense of separate identity held by East Fremantle residents, with this identity involving a character and ethos which some commentators had likened to a “country town” and others had referred to as an “urban village”.

With respect to “Economic Factors” the Chief Executive Officer noted that under existing inquiry processes, what normally occurred when there was a proposal to amalgamate two local governments, was that the specifics were known, ie what districts or part of districts formed the subject of the proposal, and it was thus possible to carry out a meaningful financial analysis of the impact of the proposal on the two local governments involved.

However there was no such specific proposal before the Council. The Chief Executive Officer noted one could, theoretically, have carried out research into the financial impact of an amalgamation with the City of Fremantle and the City of Melville, as the two neighbouring local authorities concerned, however this would raise the question as to the *purpose* of such research, given the Town of East Fremantle was clearly financially viable; neither of the local governments concerned were seeking such an

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amalgamation; and the Council and an overwhelming majority of the local community were opposed to amalgamation.

In respect of the "History of the Area" the Chief Executive Officer noted that since 1897, being the year a very large portion of East Fremantle residents (with the suburb of East Fremantle at that time being part of the Fremantle Municipal Council) had successfully petitioned the Premier, Sir John Forrest, for a separate municipality, East Fremantle residents had steadfastly indicated their wish to remain separate during numerous subsequent amalgamation attempts, which the Chief Executive Officer's report detailed.

In respect of "Financial Viability" the Chief Executive Officer initially noted that the Board had stated this would be a paramount consideration in their deliberations.

Nevertheless, in this regard it was noted that neither Minister nor the Board had provided any definition or criteria in respect of the terms "financially viable", "economically viable" or "economically sustainable".

After discussing this issue in some detail, the Chief Executive Officer advised that notwithstanding the Town had no doubts regarding its current and future financial viability, for the purposes of the Review, the Town had commissioned an independent report from a financial consultant with recognised expertise and experience (including relevant high level experience with the Department of Local Government) in the local government industry.

The consultant, Mr John Crothers, subsequently produced a report, the key conclusions of which were as follows:

- the Town was following good financial practices and was in a healthy financial position.
- the Town had an adequate financial base and general purpose grants did not represent a major source of revenue.
- the Town had a relatively low and more than manageable level of debt and had the capacity to fund all necessary asset maintenance and replacement.
- the Town had been assessed as being efficient and effective in providing services, and carrying out its functions under the Local Government Act. The Town had shown that it is prepared to consider and embrace alternative forms of service delivery, and had been flexible and responsive in exercising its functions, powers, operations, and provision of works, services, and facilities.

Mr Crothers concluded that the Town's finances were such as to be "enviable to that of a number of other councils in WA".

The Chief Executive Officer noted, in his comments on this issue, that in terms of asset maintenance and replacement:

- The Council had underground power throughout the Town.
- A large proportion of the Town's footpaths had been renewed or replaced in the past 5 years and the remainder which required renewal or replacement were all expected to be renewed or replaced in the next 15 years.
- All of Council's roads were in a relatively good condition, with progressive resurfacing being carried out where required.
- In the past 12 months Council had commissioned a comprehensive review of its drainage infrastructure and was currently preparing a 5 year drainage upgrade program, which would be funded under Council's normal budget processes.
- Over the past 5 years Council had carried out comprehensive foreshore erosion protection works. These works were

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expected to be completed in the next 2-3 years.

- Over the past 5 years all the Town's parks had been converted from manual watering to automatic irrigation, which in addition to reducing the Town's labour requirements, had also allowed for significant water saving practices to be implemented.
- Over the past 5 years a number of traffic treatments have been installed and Council continued to progressively address outstanding traffic management issues.
- the Town had its own Works Depot, extensive plant and equipment and its own, well maintained, vehicle fleet.

The Chief Executive Officer concluded it was quite clear that Council has a sufficient economic base to be able to efficiently and effectively carry out its proper functions and delegated powers and operate all necessary and appropriate facilities and services.

The Chief Executive Officer noted, however, the Town was not complacent and was always prepared to explore opportunities to further improve Council's economic performance, including through outsourcing some functions to other local governments or the private sector, resource sharing and collectively negotiating services in partnership with other local governments, in addition to other forms of regional cooperation.

Such form of regional cooperation had included being a founding member of the South West Group, a voluntary regional organisation of councils of the South West metropolitan region, which was formed during the early 80's, with the primary objective being a regional approach to facilitating sustainable economic development in South West Metropolitan Perth.

Council was also involved in resource sharing with neighbouring local governments, eg

- The Town of East Fremantle/City of Fremantle joint Library.
- Southern Metropolitan Regional Council – comprising East Fremantle, Fremantle, Melville and Cockburn as full members and undertaking a range of waste management, recycling and other environmental initiatives.
- Utilisation of engineering staff of the City of Fremantle and City of Melville.
- Home and Community Care services delivered from East Fremantle to City of Melville and City of Fremantle residents, and vice versa.
- Utilisation of the City of Melville's plant maintenance services.
- Emergency management arrangements (including mutual aid provisions).

In respect to this criterion, the report concluded there would be no basis for the Board to recommend an amalgamation of the Town on the basis of an assessment of financial viability.

The Chief Executive Officer's report similarly comprehensively addressed the issues of Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability and the Effective Delivery of Local Government Services.

In regard to the last mentioned criterion, in respect of the Advisory Board's suggestion that "a united local government would ensure there is a consistent approach to planning and development in the (combined) area" the Chief Executive Officer advised this very prospect which was a primary concern of East Fremantle residents and ratepayers, who expected the Town to continue with its strong and resident amenity focussed approach to town planning issues, including a strong focus on heritage protection. The Chief Executive Officer noted concerns were often expressed regarding planning approaches and outcomes in regard to neighbouring local governments.

Considerable attention was given in the report to questioning and debunking the "bigger is

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better" and pro amalgamation biases in the Advisory Board's Issues Paper, in particular the fact the Issues Paper appeared predicated on a view that there was a correlation between the size of a local government and financial viability.

Research which concluded there was no such correlation was cited in the CEO's report.

The report noted that in fact available empirical evidence on amalgamation, derived from Australia and abroad, suggested that not only did municipal consolidation fail to yield any significant economic benefits, but that larger local governments were inherently less efficient and thus more expensive.

The report noted a recent study by the South Australian Financial Sustainability Review Board also found that Council size was not correlated with financial sustainability and concluded that further amalgamations would not be a panacea in this regard.

It was also noted that the Advisory Board's Issues Paper contained not a single suggestion of any potential *merits* of small local governments, such as greater community connectedness, an increased capacity to influence Council decision making, higher levels of elected member representation etc.

In addition to the above, the report noted that whilst the Paper was headed: "Local Government Structural and Electoral Reform in WA: Ensuring the Future Sustainability of Communities", it seemed extraordinary that there was not even an acknowledgement in the LGAB Issues Paper of the major external factors impacting on the future sustainability of WA local governments such as:

- cost shifting by Federal and State governments.
- inadequate financial assistance grants and the refusal of the Federal Government to replace financial assistance grants with a fairer mechanism, which would give

councils access to increased funds that grow as the economy grows, such as a fixed percentage of Commonwealth taxation revenue.

- ageing infrastructure, particularly in the case of older local governments.
- pressures on local governments to depress rates, despite ever increasing community expectations of increased Council services and improved or new infrastructure.
- legislative constraints in terms of revenue raising capacity.
- whilst not relevant to the Town of East Fremantle, rapid population growth in some areas, particularly "sea change" local governments.

In terms of the issue of the financial viability of local governments, the above issues were considered to be far more significant factors than any benefits which might be gained from structural reform initiatives taken at a local government level.

For example, despite extensive amalgamations in Victoria and South Australia, Victoria has recently found that a large number of the State's councils were financially unviable and in South Australia a similarly high proportion was found. NSW was at that time expecting a similar outcome from its inquiry into the issue (and later found to be the case).

The Town thus considered that boundary reform should only be considered when there had been a proper and comprehensive review of *all* relevant aspects of structural reform ie including issues not covered by this Review such as the issues referred to above.

Finally the Chief Executive Officer concluded that in addition to all of the abovementioned concerns, there were also these concerns:

- insufficient consultation period
- inadequate consultative processes including lack of resourcing

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- inadequate public consultation and public education
- lack of empirical evidence and inadequate definitions and criteria in respect of economic, environmental and social sustainability, including base line data and benchmarking.
- inadequate research regarding what factors contribute to economically, environmentally and socially sustainable local government and thus inadequate Terms of Reference and an extremely inadequate Issues Paper.
- inadequate research into the relationship and ranking of economic, environmental and social sustainability goals and the aspect of trade offs in respect of these three criteria. For example recycling initiatives of local government which contribute to environmental sustainability however have an adverse impact on economic sustainability.

As another example, what increased economic sustainability *may* be gained through amalgamations would almost certainly result in reduced social sustainability for the local governments concerned.

The Advisory Board's initial response to the Town's submission was to express thanks for "your detailed and information submission in relation to the review.

The Board's Report on the Review was due to be presented to Minister Bowler by March 10 2006.

However on 1 February 2006 a new Local Government Minister, Jon Ford, was appointed.

Meanwhile on February 15 WALGA officially launched its Systemic Sustainability Study.

There were thus two reviews happening in parallel.

The Terms of Reference of the Sustainability Study (chaired by Professor Greg Craven, Executive Director of the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy) were as follows:

The Systemic Sustainability Study Panel is to inquire into, report and provide recommendations on:

- *Generally, the adequacy of Western Australia's local government system and its operations, its strengths and weaknesses, and means by which it might be improved.*
- *The structural, financial, administrative and other principles upon which Western Australia's system of local government should be based.*
- *Contemporary social communities of interest, environmental catchments and economic clusters to help define the Local Government arrangements (both structural and functional) that would best facilitate sustainable service delivery;*
- *Local Government infrastructure assets, including compilation of a state-wide inventory of all such assets, their gross value, method of depreciation, replacement timing, cost of maintenance and other relevant matters identified by the Study;*
- *The adequacy of existing Local Government funding mechanisms, such as rates, debt, fees and charges, fines and the desirability of mechanisms identified from other jurisdictions, such as developer levies, product sales, business activities or other mechanisms or trends identified by the Study;*
- *The economic capacity of the existing Local Government structure to fund the service and infrastructure obligations it*

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currently has and to recommend how any deficit might be addressed;

- Current and expected future labour market issues impacting on the sector and what strategies might be adopted to address these issues; and
- Recent and expected future demographic trends and their likely impact on the Local Government sector and associated strategies to deal with them.
- Any proposals, initiatives or directions which might significantly improve the operations of Western Australia's system of local government.

In respect of a primary objective of the Study, Professor Craven (incidentally, an East Fremantle resident) stated the key was to find the balance between economy and community and in this regard commented:

"There's no point in having a local government that has great connection with the community but is bankrupt and there's no point in having a council that's financially solvent but no one knows the name of the mayor",

Meanwhile Minister Ford again declined to suspend the finalisation of the LGAB Review until the WALGA review was complete.

In a report at this time to Council, the CEO noted that similar studies to that of the WALGA Commissioned study had, over the last year or so, been carried out in several other States, on a collaborative basis with the relevant State Departments of Local Government. In some cases, eg Queensland, the State had also provided considerable financial support for the study and related projects. Only in Western Australia was no cooperation between the State and peak local government body (in this case WALGA) occurring, a fact which was reinforcing previously widely expressed concerns that the

Advisory Board and/or the Minister had a predetermined agenda.

Whilst the Advisory Board's Report was awaited, "anti amalgamation" petitions continued to pour into the Town.

Council was very grateful for this support received from a significant number of the Town's population.

Petitions were continuing to be received, even when the Local Government Advisory Board's Report was released on 29 April 2006.

The Report came as a shock. The Advisory Board recommended, amongst other changes, that the Government legislate, *as soon as possible*, for the Town of East Fremantle to be subsumed by the City of Fremantle (ie a "forced" amalgamation).

In hindsight this recommendation should not have been a surprise. Noting the Report also recommended the forced amalgamation of the western suburbs local governments, it was observed that, with East Fremantle, these were *exactly* the metropolitan local governments which former Minister Bowler had stated should be amalgamated, even before he commissioned the *independent* Advisory Board's report.

Also coming as no surprise was the fact the Board recommended the removal of the "poll provisions" (discussed earlier) and rural local governments (despite many being in serious financial difficulties) were left largely unscathed.

In a report to Council the Chief Executive Officer noted the following aspects of the LGAB Report:

- Whilst the Report noted the Town had made *"an extensive submission to the Board"* (in fact of 233 submissions received, the only submission so described) (it might also be noted 53 local

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governments, representing over 1/3 of the State's local governments, made no submission at all) there appeared very little comment regarding the *content* of that submission.

- The CEO found it extraordinary that the Board listed, amongst the supposed benefits of the Town being taken over by the City of Fremantle, "a reduction in the number of elected members" who would represent East Fremantle residents. Equally surprising, in reference to planning applications, was the Board's stated view that amalgamation would provide assistance to "businesses and developers", by these parties having only one town planning scheme to deal with.
- Although the Report stated the Board also considered the option of excising Palmyra and Bicton from the City of Melville and amalgamating these suburbs, along with the Town of East Fremantle, with the City of Fremantle, they did not recommend this option. This was despite stating in their Report:

"The Board believes the Bicton (population of 5,860) and Palmyra (6,097) areas of the City of Melville would also have strong community of interest linkages with Fremantle, and consideration should be given to including these areas in a possible amalgamation/boundary change."

No reason was given for not choosing this option, which at least would have been consistent with the apparent rationale for amalgamating the Town of East Fremantle with the City of Fremantle, which was presumably to make the City of Fremantle larger and thus supposedly more financially viable.

However it may have opened up an issue the Board appears to have gone out of its way to avoid, namely the issue of local governments which have grown so big that their ability to connect with their communities is significantly handicapped.

There was also the issue of research findings which have found, in a number of cases, an association between waste and inefficiency and large local governments.

- The Board also considered the option of amalgamating the Town of Kwinana with the City of Rockingham however also chose not to recommend this option. This was despite a financial consultant's advice in the Report regarding the financial viability of local governments in the Region, which categorised the Town of Kwinana as "financially unsustainable".

Yet the Town of East Fremantle, which *had* been recommended for amalgamation, had been given a financial viability rating of category 2. This was the second highest rating possible and was categorised in the Report as "substantial margin of comfort". This could be compared with the City of Fremantle's rating which was category 4, defined as "*minimum* margin of comfort".

There was no justified rationale given in the report for the conclusion that the Town of East Fremantle should be amalgamated. Numerous conclusions appeared largely ideologically driven, subjective and certainly not based on empirical evidence. For example the Board made the following series of claims regarding the benefits of larger local governments:

- higher standards of governance
- higher calibre of staff
- greater equity of service provision
- more effective planning and development
- more effective lobbying and greater access to grant funds
- more effective environmental services

in each case without a single piece of empirical evidence to back up any of the statements.

Almost the only attempt in the report to vindicate its recommendations regarding the Town of East Fremantle was its recourse to a

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1999 study by Murdoch University academics Chia & Newman, entitled "Strategic Factors in Local Government Performance: The Effect of Council Population Size and Density". This report claimed the Town of East Fremantle, and a number of other small local governments, whilst successful in achieving high financial autonomy, had only achieved this through a combination of high residential rates and a lack of community service provision.

The Chief Executive Officer had seen the report shortly after his appointment in 1999 and written a strongly worded letter to Chia and Newman citing inaccuracies in respect of comments in the report about the Town of East Fremantle, and other concerns regarding the report, in particular its unsubstantiated and simplistic "bigger is better" ideology. This letter had never received the courtesy of a response.

It could also be noted the report appeared somewhat out of date when it was written (using 95/96 rates data for example). And it was now another 6-7 years further out of date.

In respect of a central tenet of the report that small councils "have generally achieved financial autonomy through high residential rates, restricting the level of local government services, or a combination of both" Chia & Newman attempted to demonstrate that the Town of East Fremantle offered a low level of service provision, compared with neighbouring local governments.

As a measure of community services they surveyed day care, out of school care, vacation care, aged services, disability services, the existence of community centres, a library and whether the local government held any festivals or not.

In this regard the report advised that East Fremantle offered no form of day care, offered only shared "aged services" (ie shared with other local governments), had no disability services, had no community centre,

only had a shared library and did not operate any festivals.

The City of Fremantle on the other hand was rated positively in all of these areas.

In fact, as the Chief Executive Officer had pointed out to Chia & Newman at the time:

(i) Privately operated child day care services *were* provided in the Town and there was no need for Council to initiate such services.

In addition Council had built and previously operated (although now leased to the Education Department) two pre-school facilities. At one level these provided a form of day care.

(ii) Council provided vacation care to highly disabled teenagers (the "Teen Holiday Program")

(iii) Council's HACC Program offered a range of aged and disability services. These were not shared in the sense suggested in the Chia & Newman report, rather there were stand alone services managed and operated by the Town of East Fremantle, which Council also offered to residents outside of its boundaries.

(iv) There *were* Council community centres eg Tricolore Community Centre and Glyde-In.

(v) Council *did* share a jointly funded library with the City of Fremantle, however, extraordinarily, the City of Fremantle was not shown in the report as sharing a library.

(vi) Council *did* hold an annual festival.

It was not surprising, given its apparent reliance on Chia & Newman's "findings" in this regard, that the LGAB concluded the Town of East Fremantle offered a low level of community service provision.

It was not surprising that, by contrast, the LGAB concluded the City of Fremantle

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offered a *high* level of community service provision.

Ironically, at around the same time as the Advisory Board, which had enthusiastically embraced Chia & Newman's findings, was completing its report, the City of Fremantle was transferring responsibility for a number of its community services to outside agencies such as Silver Chain.

Returning to the LGAB Report, other than citing the Chia & Newman report, making some general comments and noting the Town's low staff:population ratio (see below), there was no other comment about the Town of East Fremantle at the point that the following recommendation appeared:

"That the Minister legislate for the amalgamation of the City of Fremantle and Town of East Fremantle as soon as possible."

This was on page 118 of a 488 page report. It was almost as though the authors wanted to get this completely unwarranted (to the point of suggesting it was pre-determined) recommendation down on paper as soon as possible.

It is not until page 301, in the Appendices, that any further comment could be found in terms of an attempted justification of the Board's recommendations. This was in the form of a comment by Ron Back, a financial consultant engaged by the Advisory Board, to review financial data from local governments throughout the State.

Mr Back concluded:

"It would appear that there are financial benefits in larger local governments as they can deliver the economies of scale and provide facilities to their own district that are funded from within the district. The economic structure (revenue and rating) of the local government district is a critical issue in determining viability."

Yet this conclusion was immediately preceded by this comment:

"There is an increased use of debt within this group of inner metropolitan local governments. The local governments that have not used debt in a material way in the past few years are Bayswater, Belmont, Canning, Claremont, East Fremantle, Melville, Peppermint Grove and Stirling."

Further, Mr Back went on to apply the rankings referred to earlier in this report. These rankings were based on the net operating results, using the following categories:

Category 1: very substantial margin of comfort

Category 2: substantial margin of comfort

Category 3: moderate margin of comfort

Category 4: minimum margin of comfort

Category 5: vulnerable

Category 6: unsustainable

As already indicated, the Town of East Fremantle's ranking was category 2, whereas the City of Fremantle was ranked as 4 and Kwinana as 6.

With respect to the planning arena the Board wrote:

"In the case of Fremantle and East Fremantle, sources in the Department of Planning and Infrastructure informally advised the Board that it was difficult to justify having separate planning controls in such small areas. A single planning authority for the combined area would bring more balanced and consistent planning to the area."

and went on to conclude:

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"In the case of the smaller local governments, it is difficult to justify having separate planning controls in such small areas."

This was because

"There are multiple planning schemes with different requirements, which impact on the landscape and amenity and make it difficult for businesses and developers who operate across different local government areas."

Of some interest was the Report's findings on the ratio of local government population to the number of full time employees (which, incidentally, Chia & Newman had cited as a key indicator of local government efficiency).

Other than the City of Perth, which has one employee for every 18 residents, the next highest staffed metropolitan council was the City of Fremantle, which has one employee per 58 residents. This conclusion by the Board completely fails to acknowledge the significant role a local government can play in engendering a sense of community.

One of the lowest staffed local governments was the Town of East Fremantle, with one employee per 191 residents. This was very similar to the City of Melville's figure of one employee per 216 residents.

Nevertheless the Board recommended the Town of East Fremantle, which, on the face of it, was the more financially viable and efficient entity, be taken over by the City of Fremantle, with this recommendation based, in the Chief Executive Officer's view, on poorly researched arguments and highly dubious conclusions.

Thus the LGAB recommended the Town of East Fremantle be (immediately) amalgamated on the basis this action would deliver economic, social and environmental benefits to the East Fremantle community.

Yet the Board did not explain how it reached these conclusions, let alone attempt to justify them in other than a subjective and unsubstantiated manner. There was no empirical evidence offered in support of the claimed benefits of amalgamation. How could one, for example, conclude that amalgamating the Town of East Fremantle with the City of Fremantle would deliver economic benefits to the East Fremantle community without an examination of the cost structures of every one of the services provided by the Town of East Fremantle and a subsequent examination of how their services would be provided, and funded, by the City of Fremantle.

As another example is the following extract from the LGAB report on "Sense of Community":

"The Board acknowledges that a sense of community and belonging are important characteristics for a local government."

The Town of East Fremantle made an extensive submission to the Board, and sense of community was a key point in that submission, as well as in a number of comments made by participants at the Melville public hearing. The following comments in the Town's submission are of particular note:"

- *"It is highly obvious that the 'small village' size, identity and ethos of the Town is integral to issue of healthy community spirit and sense of social inclusiveness which is characterises East Fremantle."*
- *"The positive benefits for the East Fremantle community of a small responsive council are considered to far outweigh any possible disadvantages associated with its size."*
- *"The size ensures the elected members are able to be in touch with the aspirations and concerns of the community in a way which is not generally possible with larger councils."*

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- *“The City of Fremantle’s residential areas are well separated from East Fremantle and thus there is no community of interest between the residents of the areas.”*

The Board’s response was:

“No other local government in the area made similar such claims to the Board about the sense of community. In this vein, the Board believes that sense of community is likely to be well developed in Fremantle as well. The Board believes an amalgamation of local governments is likely to have negligible effect, because that sense of community will not necessarily change because of a change in local government area. Residents will still primarily identify themselves with the suburb of East Fremantle.”

This casual and highly presumptuous conclusion by the Board on such a significant matter completely fails to acknowledge the significant role the local government can play in engendering a sense of community.

The Report was also noteworthy for what it *didn’t* discuss. For example resource sharing received relatively little comment in the LGAB Report, despite the Board noting that in submissions to the Board, this approach received substantial support.

Despite the relative flexibility of resource sharing and other significant potential benefits, compared with the complete inflexibility of amalgamation, the Board ruled that any research on the potential cost benefits of resource sharing was “out of scope for the current study and is in any event up to individual or groups of local governments to consider on a function or service basis in the context of their relative circumstances”.

Thus a significant option of local government reform was ruled “out of scope” for proper examination.

It should really have come as no surprise that the Board’s report was so poor. As the CEO had attempted to point out at the City of Canning Public Hearing, whilst the LGAB was charged with assessing how structural reform could enhance the future economic, environmental and social sustainability of Western Australian communities, there were no concrete definitions give for these criteria, only loose or subjective criteria at best, hence there was little capability for the LGAB to carry out an objective analysis of advantages and disadvantages of various policy alternatives.

One thing is certain. Regardless of the quality of the research, the views of East Fremantle residents were obviously regarded as completely irrelevant.

Had the Board had the courage of its convictions, it presumably would have supported putting its views to the East Fremantle community and recommending any amalgamation be subject to a poll of East Fremantle electors. After all, this was the position which the Board effectively adopted in the case of a number of other local governments throughout the State, where their recommendations on amalgamation were subject to the poll provisions being applied.

However in East Fremantle’s case, such a scenario would have meant the Board would have had to demonstrate the veracity of its conclusions and be subject to proper transparency and accountability measures.

Instead the Board recommended that the *Minister* legislate the Town of East Fremantle out of existence, and quickly at that, with no voice, let alone a power of electoral veto, given to the East Fremantle community.

Fortunately Minister Ford quickly proved to have a fairer sense of justice and local government democracy.

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In the Minister's first press statement regarding the Advisory Board's report, the Minister stated he was now seeking feedback from ratepayers and individual local governments to the Report. Noting however there was no statement by the Minister on his or the government's position on forced amalgamations, the Chief Executive Officer contacted the Minister's office to point out that the Minister's three predecessors – John Bowler, Ljiljana Ravlich and Tom Stephens had all stated it was the policy of the government that there would be no forced amalgamations and the Town's submission to the Review had documented these specific undertakings, including the dates when they were made. The CEO was advised that whilst various parties, including WALGA, had expressed concerns regarding the issue of forced amalgamations, the aspect of previous government commitments on the issue had not been raised by those parties.

The Chief Executive Officer was informed his comments in respect of the government's previous undertakings would that day be referred to the Minister.

The next day the Minister issued a media statement which included the statement:

"The Carpenter Government has no intention to forcibly amalgamate any local government."

WALGA backed the Minister's position on forced amalgamations, stating

"it is the non negotiable position of the Association that change should not be forced on local communities but rather that councils give due consideration to any need for change and enter into the process voluntarily".

Press comment was of interest. Former Victorian Premier Jeff Kennett was reported as urging the Minister to "move fast to cut councils" and Fremantle's Mayor Tagliaferri was reported as urging Minister Ford "to bite the bullet and act" on the Report's

recommendations (notwithstanding the City of Fremantle, in their submission to the Review, as with the City of Melville, had not supported East Fremantle's amalgamation).

A lengthy article in the "West Australian" whilst noting there appeared to be a good case for amalgamating some rural local governments, was far less sure in the case of the metropolitan local governments named in the Report. The journalist wrote, in part:

"In the case of urban and suburban councils, the case for amalgamation is less clear. Most of those mentioned – Claremont, Peppermint Grove, Cottesloe, East Fremantle and the like – seem to be doing quite adequately without the need to amalgamate; their viability is hardly in question; all of them are opposed to the idea."

There are, of course, arguments about economies of scale in both capital-intensive and labour-intensive services, but the force of those arguments is diminished somewhat by privatisation or contracting out.

And the "big is beautiful" argument is hardly supported by the history of our very big councils, such as Joondalup or Stirling or Wanneroo.

Indeed, there is almost a rule of thumb applying, that the bigger the council the more prone it is to be used as a training ground for career politicians, and the more prone it is to various degrees of corruption. And in any case, amalgamation can take place voluntarily and by a reasonably open process."

By 30 June 2006 the situation was as follows:

- (i) Minister Ford, reiterated, on 19 June 2006, that he wished to "make it clear that the Carpenter Government has no intention to force amalgamation."

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(ii) The Minister in fact also stated, at a Parliament House meeting which the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer attended, together with Mayors and Chief Executive Officers from a number of other local governments, that whilst local governments were encouraged to read the Report of the Local Government Advisory Board and examine their operations in light of his recommendations, he did not consider local governments should be devoting too much time or resources into responding to the Report.

(iii) WALGA's Systemic Sustainability Study was continuing, with an Interim Report due to be delivered in August 2006.

That report was expected to identify how many of the State's local governments were considered to be financially unsustainable in the long term and an estimate of the size of local government's infrastructure backlog.

The Town was aware that whilst Council had received a positive financial viability rating in the LGAB study, the WALGA sponsored research by Access Economics would be far more rigorous and comprehensive and it was always possible a different rating may result.

Council was also aware that at a State Government level, Ministers, policies, indeed governments, can all change and there is no doubt that given East Fremantle's small size, the issue of East Fremantle being amalgamated with a neighbouring local government will always be waiting in the wings and will periodically emerge.

However there is also no doubt that as long as the majority of East Fremantle residents continue to oppose amalgamation, so will the Council. The Council will never support the East Fremantle community's right of self determination on this issue being taken away from them.

This does not mean Council will not continue to explore any positive and feasible structural reform initiatives which have the potential to increase Council efficiency and lead to improved services to the existing East Fremantle community and the enhancement of community infrastructure to meet the needs of future generations of East Fremantle residents.

Council must also continue to manage its finances and assets carefully, if it is to retain the positive financial viability ratings which it has achieved to date, through the hard work of Council officers and good governance by elected members.

Council is aware how difficult this process is, in the context of what is being termed a local government funding crisis – found not only in WA but in every State and Territory in Australia.

The general causes are well known and were referred to earlier in this report and in my last two Annual Reports.

It is hoped that in my 2006-2007 report, I can report progress on the issue of fairer funding for local government.

Meanwhile the support for Council which was shown by the East Fremantle community during this difficult period, is warmly acknowledged.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the year Council had the pleasure of welcoming three new staff members – firstly Town Brown, as Executive Manager Finance & Administration; secondly Shelley Cocks as Principal Environmental Health Officer and thirdly, Tony Monteleone as Principal Building Surveyor.

All three appointees had considerable local government experience and are well known in their respective professions. In the context of skills shortages across Australia and with

Chief Executive Officer's Report

local government as one of the most severely affected sectors, Council did well to recruit these staff, particularly given the uncertainty regarding the Town's future which the LGAB Enquiry engendered and which inevitably had an adverse effect on applications.

Tony Brown replaced Mike Costarella who had achieved much in his time on Council (eg a number of improvements to computer, records and financial management systems) and Tony Brown was expected to build on this work.

Already under Ms Cocks, the quantity and quality of food inspections has increased as has the standard of investigations into noise and other environmental issues. There have also been increased environmental initiatives arising out of Shelley's appointment, which is commendable and reflects well on Council.

I am similarly pleased with Mr Monteleone's performance. Mr Monteleone is very professional, with a commendable work ethic and very good attention to detail.

Beryl Foster, as Acting Town Planner and Chris Warrener, as consultant Town Planner, have worked hard and a number of planning initiatives, in addition to statutory planning tasks, have been progressed. These include the development of design guidelines, local planning policies, the Municipal Inventory and related matters.

Particular thanks also to Peta Cooper whose dedicated work in the Planning Department; including its day to day organisation and operation, is invaluable. Mrs Cooper has extensive experience in the position and despite the fact a number of planning assistants have come and gone in this high pressure environment, Mrs Cooper has remained, as a calm and committed stalwart whose focus is always on the customer. Mrs Cooper is a highly valued employee and her hard work is gratefully acknowledged.

Paul McGinty, the Operations Manager of Works & Reserves, also continues to exhibit a high level of commitment, loyalty, hard work and considerable initiative.

Mr McGinty has been very successful in reforming and multiskilling his workforce, too successfully in many respects, as a number of his best trained staff have been poached by other local governments and the private sector in the last several years. Council recently fought off yet an attempt by another local government to recruit almost all of the existing "outside" staff.

It goes without saying that, generally speaking, small local governments such as East Fremantle have particular difficulties in attracting and retaining staff – it is not only salary levels but also the lack of career paths and support staff in key areas (eg engineering and technical officers, human resource personnel, IT staff etc). Given the above I believe Council has done well to attract and retain the competent, multiskilled and loyal staff which it has.

As the Chief Executive Officer I wish to thank *all* of the employees of the Town of East Fremantle for their service, dedication and professionalism throughout the year.

On many occasions employees work under considerable stress and I acknowledge this and thank all staff for their respective contributions to the successful year.

Once again, I also thank the Mayor and Councillors for their continued commitment, hard work, support and dedication to the Town.

The Mayor has detailed examples of that commitment and hard work by the Councillors in his report and his comments are warmly endorsed.

Modestly the Mayor made no mention of his own achievements however. As the leader of the team, the Mayor deserves special praise

Chief Executive Officer's Report

and particularly for the fact, that since his election in 2001, Council has not had a more harmonious and hard working team of elected members, all displaying a resolute sense of purpose and unwavering focus on common goals.

The East Fremantle community should feel very fortunate to have such an able and dedicated group at its helm and led by such a committed, creative and hard working Mayor.

As always, and as always deserved, a special thank you to my Personal Assistant, Ms Janine May. Janine has given another year of outstanding service, often working beyond the call of duty and always thoroughly dependable and committed to Council.

As the Town's second longest serving employee, Ms May has an invaluable knowledge of the Town's history – dating back over 30 years, to Merv Cowan and all of Merv's successors.

There is no better example, either for East Fremantle residents or for new Council staff, of a Council officer who understands and strives to maintain the Council ethos of community care, and through her dealings with East Fremantle residents and other members of the public, enhances the very sense of community and identity which Council and the East Fremantle community value so highly.

Janine, thank you once again.

STUART WEARNE
Chief Executive Officer

Finance & Administration

The function of the Finance and Administration staff of the Town covers a broad range of activities from Council support, financial reporting, rating and debt collection and administrative services. These include asset management, records management, human resource management, payroll, accounting and information technology.

Its primary focus is on financial management and statutory compliance in terms of transparency and disclosure. To this end, the Town prepares a Plan for the future of the district, an Annual Budget and audited Annual Financial Statements each year. During the year regular financial reporting assists the Council in its role of the management of Council's financial and physical resources.

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE DISTRICT

In 2005, the Local Government Act was amended replacing the requirement for councils to prepare "Principal Activity Plans" with a "Plan for the future of the district".

The Town of East Fremantle prepared a Plan for the future covering a ten year period from 2006 to 2015. The highlights of the Plan are as follows:

- Elimination of all current debt by 2015;
- Funding of future infrastructure works from Council's own resource funding;
- Provision of a plant replacement program provided through annual cash reserve transfers from Council's own resource funding;
- Annual funding allocations for:
 - roadworks
 - footpath improvements
 - kerbing replacement
 - drainage improvements.

A copy of the plan can be obtained from Council's Administration Centre.

2005-2006 ANNUAL BUDGET

The Town of East Fremantle's 2005-2006 Budget was adopted at Council's Ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 5 July 2005.

The 2005-2006 Budget provided for a number of significant items for the benefit of the community including:

- Footpath Works \$255,000
- John Tonkin Park Upgrade Work \$68,000
- Traffic treatments \$100,000
- Parks Irrigation Upgrades 41,000
- Road resurfacing works \$135,000
- Foreshore erosion \$95,100
- Henry Jeffery Oval Embankment \$50,000

The budget also provided for the mowing of Council's parks and ovals, provision was made for three (3) general verge mows and four (4) arterial roads verge mows.

In addition to Council's waste management and recycling services, two (2) bulk rubbish and three (3) green waste annual collections continue to be provided.

Continued support provided for community services such as Glyde-In (\$48,000), Infant Health Clinic, Community Midwifery Program and Council's Home and Community Care services.

Council continued with the restoration and fit out of the heritage property, "Dovenby House", situated at the rear of the Council Chambers, which is estimated will cost \$503,800. The restored building will provide a superb facility for the administration of Council's Home and Community Care service "Neighbourhood Link", which assists many of the aged and disabled residents of the Town, as well as a meeting place for the carers, volunteers and staff associated with the service.

Finance & Administration

It will also serve as a tangible example of Council's strong commitment to the protection of the Town's heritage buildings and heritage areas.

Particular emphasis was given to further strengthening Council's Town Planning. Town Planning Scheme No 3 was adopted in December 2004. To support the Scheme, Council has commissioned consultants to formulate and adopt design guidelines, related policies and a new Municipal Inventory of heritage properties.

Council allocated funds for town planning consultants to assist these processes and also for legal expenses associated with town planning appeals.

All of the above measures are designed to ensure the best possible direction and outcomes for town planning and heritage protection within the Town of East Fremantle.

Total expenditure allocated for Town Planning Control was \$339,516.

Over \$31,000 was allocated by Council for the East Fremantle Festival, which was a quality event and very enjoyable for residents.

Council budgeted for an overall rate income increase of 4.9% for residential and commercial rates.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Annual Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2006 has been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and complies with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* and regulations under that Act. The audit was conducted by Barrett & Partners - DFK and their Audit Report was presented to Council at its meeting held on the 21 November 2006. Copies of the Audited Financial Report are included in this document.

Operating Statement

The Operating Statement shows a surplus of \$593,508 compared with budgeted loss amount of \$53,631. The increase in the operating surplus was mainly attributed to additional budgeted income from rates, additional income from fines and penalties and a number of projects delayed to 2006/07.

Consolidated Surplus

The consolidated surplus consists of Municipal and Reserve funds for the Town of East Fremantle. The Financial Position Statement for the year ended 30 June 2006 shows a surplus of \$1,823,107. This includes Restricted Cash and Reserves funds of some \$1,273,251 held by Council (see note 3 of the Annual Financial Report) for the future development of assets of the Town of East Fremantle. The amount also includes the balance of estimated costs associated with the Supreme Court case for No 91 Preston Point Road.

Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Financial Position

This statement provides for the assets, liabilities and equity for the Town of East Fremantle. The net equity increase from the 2004-2005 financial year Financial Position Statement to the 2005-2006 year is represented by the operating surplus of \$593,508.

Council invests surplus funds in term deposits with banks, building societies and property trusts to provide a positive return on its investment. The interest received for the 2005-2006 year was \$130,641 and included \$35,132 transferred to Council's Reserve Funds.

Council continues to monitor its debt service level and maintains a reduction debt strategy. Council had budgeted to raise loans totalling \$710,000 however reviewed this decision during the year and resolved to not borrow funds. Council reallocated funding priorities and saved on operating expenditure to eliminate the requirement to borrow funds.

Finance & Administration

Financial Ratios

In assessing the performance of the financial resources, Council statements include ratios which provide a comparison between the three financial years. This report details a comparison between the 2003-2004 financial year, 2004-2005 financial year and the 2005-2006 financial year. The ratios include:-

	2005/06	2004/05	2003/04
Current Ratio equals Purpose: To assess adequacy of working capital and the ability to satisfy short term obligations. <i>The figures shows a decrease in the current equity which is mainly due to the reduction on the payments for Underground Power project.</i>	1.07	1.08	1.40
Debt Ratio equals Purpose: To identify exposure to debts by measuring the proportion of assets funded by creditors. <i>The figures show a reduction in the debts outstanding which is mainly due to the Underground Power project loans outstanding.</i>	12.61%	12.07%	11.50%
Debt Service Ratio equals Purpose: To assess the degree to which revenues are committed to the repayment of debt. <i>The figures show a reduction in the amount of Loan repayments from income which is also mainly due to the Underground Power project loan repayments decrease ie Stage 1 repayments ended in 2001/02 financial year</i>	3.85%	3.84%	11.23%
Rate Coverage Ratio equals Purpose: To assess the degree of dependence upon revenue from rates <i>The figures show a decrease in the income received from rates</i>	62.11%	65.73%	66.48%
Outstanding Rates Ratio equals Purpose: To assess the impact of uncollected rates on liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts. <i>The figures show a reduction in outstanding rates and charges which have been levied</i>	3.53%	4.32%	4.34%

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The Town of East Fremantle has demonstrated its ongoing commitment to good and compliant record keeping practices by continuing to adhere to its Record Keeping

Plan which was endorsed by the State Records Commission in September 2004.

As a component of the approval of the Town's Record Keeping Plan the Town was set a timeline by the State Records Office to become compliant with the *State Records Act 2000*. As part of the actions necessary to meet those requirements the Town adopted record keeping guidelines to assist elected members to manage the official records created or received by them in the course of their work for the Town of East Fremantle.

All correspondence is registered in Council's electronic document management system records system (Synergysoft) and stored electronically for distribution and archive purposes.

For the year ending 30 June 2006, 6995 individual items of correspondence were recorded, scanned and processed through this system. This is a reduction of 9.34% on last year.

Induction training for all new staff is conducted and follow up training is provided on an "as needed" basis. A recent version upgrade of SynergySoft has resulted in a greater level of integration with already existing software. This required all staff to be retrained to use the system to their best advantage.

To ensure Council's continued compliance with the *State Records Act* and procedures, Council is an active member of the Local Government Records Management Group which consists of member councils from the 144 councils within Western Australia. The group liaises with the State Records Office to ensure compliance and clarification of current issues.

Town Planning/Public Domain

2005/06 financial year budget provided many opportunities for improvements to footpath, roads, playgrounds and recreational facilities within the Town of East Fremantle. The following items were completed providing valued improved and new infrastructure.

FOOTPATH PROGRAM

Footpath resurfacing and reconstruction with a cost value of some \$226,107.00 have been carried out this year to the following sections of paths.

Street	From	To
Woodhouse Rd	Locke	Locke
Parker St	Woodhouse	Pier
View Tce	Parker	Easton
Preston Pt Rd	Hillside	Bolton
Fortescue St	Fletcher	Millenden
Salvado Rd	Alexandra	Staton
Gill St	Fraser	Canning Hwy
Fletcher St	Hamilton	Moss
Oakover St	Canning	Millenden
Surbiton Rd	Reynolds	Angwin
John Tonkin Park	Path connecting new shelters and play equipment	
George St	Glyde	Hubble
Fletcher St	Hamilton	Moss
Canning Hwy	East	Stirling Hwy

The above works are part of the Councils commitment to the ongoing upgrade of footpath facilities throughout the Town of East Fremantle and a commitment to the goal of provide safe and enjoyable travel to pedestrian facilities in the Town.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Council endorsed traffic treatments for the intersections of Moss Street and Fletcher Street and Saint Peters Road and May Street. The treatments to be applied involve the installation of traffic islands to prevent vehicles cutting corners and to cannulise traffic to prevent accidents. These works are part of the ongoing commitment by Council to the investigation and rectification of traffic issues within the Town and a commitment to a goal of improving the safety of travel within

the Town of East Fremantle. Costs associated with these works are in the order of \$50,000.

RED HERRING CAR PARK – PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

River foreshore restoration works were approved by Council in an ongoing program of restoring and protecting the natural environment. This project involved extensive consultation with the indigenous owners of the river in accordance with the Department of Indigenous Affairs' requirements. On ground works involved the removal of foreign materials used in the past to stabilise the embankment of the foreshore and the construction of revetment wall to prevent further degradation of the foreshore line. The main car park was also resurfaced in the process of carrying out the works and a pedestrian footpath was installed to assist pedestrians travelling through the car park. These works were approved by the Swan River Trust. Costs associated with this project were \$105,000. This represents the first stage of the provision of pedestrian facilities through the car park on both side of the restaurant located in the middle

DOVENBY HOUSE

The Dovenby House restoration has progressed this financial year with construction works completed on the building and only landscaping works to be carried out. The restoration of this building has been funded by the State Government Home and Community Care program, Lotterywest and Council. The building will be used by the HACC program and house the coordinator's offices and training centre.

SUMPTON GREEN BUILDING AIR CONDITIONING

This project was finalised and has provided satisfactory comfort to the users of the facility during the summer months. The project was completed on time and within budget with a contribution from the playgroup.

Town Planning/Public Domain

CROQUET CLUB

The flooring to the Croquet Club has been completed providing additional amenity to the users of the building. Other maintenance works were carried out including painting of the internal of the building. This project was completed on time and under budget producing savings to Council.

IRRIGATION REPLACEMENT (MAIN LINE PRESTON POINT ACTIVE RESERVES)

This project has been completed with the level of expensive main line breakage eliminated in the area. This project has increased the reliability of Council's irrigation system to provide water to the active playing grounds and hence improve the standard of the playing surfaces and also fulfil Council lease agreement obligations for supply of irrigated water to the East Fremantle Lawn Tennis Club. This project has also been a water smart project in that the line leaks have been removed by the replacement and thus significant amounts of water has been saved from being wasted.

JOHN TONKIN RESERVE EROSION CONTROL MEASURES

Beach sand replenishment and sedge planting were carried out near the car park and along the foreshore at this reserve in an effort to eliminate erosion. This work was carried out some six months ago and it would appear that the measure will mostly be as successful as the plantings at Norm McKenzie Reserve. There has been a small loss of sedges, with the majority of sedges having established a good root base, for the onslaught of the winter season. This winter will be a major test for this area and if the sedges survive the season it is anticipated the project will have had 100% success in establishing soft engineering erosion control of the area. This project, if successful, will not only stop erosion but will provide habitat for fauna, increase the amenity of the foreshore in this vicinity and protect hard assets along the foreshore area, for example the pedestrian path that runs around the foreshore providing excellent

amenity for pedestrians accessing the river foreshore.

FORESHORE EROSION CONTROL

This project was funded by the Swan River Trust under the Riverbank erosion program to the tune of \$36,000 with Council providing the remainder of the funding for the project. The purpose of this project was to remediate the foreshore area and to provide safe thoroughfare for pedestrians through the launching ramp car park area. This project has been successful on both counts. The car park has been remarked for parking and the car park area resurfaced, extending the life of the facility by a substantial number of years.

Approval for funding has been sought and Swan River Trust approval, subject to Ministerial approval, has been granted for funding of further works to the foreshore area between East Street and the Council boat pens in the 2006/07 financial year. Funding to the value of \$95,000 is at stake with this project and will provide for the repairs to the river wall and replacement of the footpath along this section of river. This is a significant amount of funding by a small funding program from the Swan River Trust and demonstrates the Trust's commitment to providing assistance to the Town in jointly maintaining the foreshore of the Swan River.

NIERGARUP TRACK PROTECTION

This project was included in the budget as a measure to provide for the protection of flora along the Niergarup Track. There has been extensive damage to vegetation over the years in this area in the pursuit of views with no consideration to resulting effects on the limestone embankment of the area. Unfortunately this project has not proceeded for various reasons including the contentious issue of installation of high fencing that would interfere with views and amenity of the track. The allocation for these works has been carried forward into the operational area of the budget in next financial year's budget.

Town Planning/Public Domain

JOHN TONKIN RESERVE SHELTERS

This project is currently under construction and will be finished by the end of the financial year, with expenditure fully expended. The project was delayed by some three months awaiting Swan River Trust planning approval. The project will provide increased amenity to the park and playground and increase the provision of shelter and seating in this highly utilised area.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT – RACEWAY PARK

This project has been completed on time and within the allocated budget with a high level of satisfaction by the ratepayers of the area. The project included the provision of additional seating around the playground and the project has complemented a successful rejuvenation process of the turf and the control of weeds in the park. Over the last few years the amenity of this park has improved significantly.

JOHN TONKIN PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Funding for renovation of the playground equipment at this reserve was sought from and approved by the Independent Living Centre to renovate the existing playground equipment and include disabled features. Funding to the amount of \$20,000 was provided with Council allocating the remainder of the funding from the reserves capital program. An audit was carried out by the Independent Living Centre and recommendations for inclusion into the project were conditions of funding. All the recommendations have been implemented and the project has had a very high level of success. This is visible by the number of people accessing the play ground equipment and the reserve facilities adjacent to the newly constructed Zephyr Café. The pedestrian path around the river has also complemented this project extremely successfully. When the remaining shelters are completed the project will have provided significantly for the disabled and able bodied community.

LOCKE PARK AUTO IRRIGATION & GOURLEY PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Locke Park was not on auto irrigation and installation of an automated system has now been completed at minimal cost. This has resulted in improved irrigation procedures for this reserve and removed the practice of using the reserve as a pressure relief point for the irrigation system when using the bore for water tank filling. This has removed the perception that Council is wasting water. The existing playground equipment has been repaired and additional equipment installed. This now provides suitable equipment for users of the park and eliminates the risk exposure to Council.

EAST FREMANTLE BOWLING CLUB LIGHTING

This project has now been completed on time and within budget. Funding of one third was provided through the Department of Sport and Recreation with the Bowling Club providing cost of one third and Council providing the remainder of the cost. This project has given the Club the opportunity to increase memberships due to being able to hold night fixtures.

HENRY JEFFERY OVAL EMBANKMENT RESTORATION

This project was necessary due to the heavy erosion of the embankment putting the road at risk of catastrophic collapse. The essential part of the project has been completed with only landscaping left to be carried out. This has been delayed due to a Council resolution to investigate the possibility of the retaining area being used as a viewing platform for spectators. Investigations have revealed that the costs associated with making the area suitable and safe for users of the ground would be in the vicinity of some \$35,000 which entails the provision of access stairs and safety railing to each level and crash barrier railing to the road side of Preston Point Road. As the investigation has revealed extensive cost factors in providing this viewing platform it has been recommended

Town Planning/Public Domain

that the area not be made available for this purpose and that the landscaping be allowed to proceed in order that the project can be completed.

RACEWAY PARK IRRIGATION

In the process of rejuvenating the turf at Raceway Park the irrigation was identified as inefficient and needing to be rectified. This work was done earlier in the year and the improvement evident by good regeneration of the turf and hence the lock out of weeds. This has been assisted by the regular mowing of the turf.

DEPOT AIR CONDITIONER

The purchase and installation of the air conditioner has improved amenity for staff at the depot from the extremes of weather. Cost savings were produced from this, coming in under budget.

DEPOT SHED DOORS UPGRADE

The replacement of the shed gates with electronic roller shutters has been completed. The new doors have eliminated the risk of tools and small plant being stolen during working hour as the doors can be closed during operating hours. The door also prevents Council plant and machinery from being on display to members of the public who use the depot as a thoroughfare. Overall depot security has significantly increased as a result of this project.

DRAINAGE UPGRADES

Funding for this project was the subject of loan funds and Council have resolved to follow a financial plan that does not include the raising of loans for this type of works. There is also still a significant amount of investigation and design works to be finalised prior to implementing a drainage program although, notwithstanding this, it is anticipated that some on-ground works will definitely occur next financial year.

DRAINAGE WORKS (63 PRESTON POINT ROAD)

This project was completed during the summer months last year and has resulted in a more aesthetically pleasing landscape to the front area of the Tingira development site. The works have been done in accordance with the engineering specification and recommendations provided by consultant engineers and will prove to be a worthwhile investment in drainage infrastructure. Costs associated with this project were in the order of \$15,000.

NO 32 SEWELL STREET - STREET TREE

This tree was saved from removal by Council resulting in the amenity of the area being maintained. The tree will be subject to an annual inspection and report with recommendations for action on perpetuating the tree for as long as the tree is viable.

EAST STREET CONTRIBUTION

East Street was resurfaced during the year with line marking being reinstated. This is part of the management of Council roads and commitment to maintaining safe travel in the Town.

BUS SHELTER MARMION STREET

A new bus shelter has been installed on Marmion Street near Stirling Highway. This project was carried out using funding from the Public Transport Authority funding program and the remainder from Council.

Health Services

HEALTH SERVICES

The role of Principal Environmental Health Officer at the Town of East Fremantle encompasses the enforcement of legislation including Health Act 1911 (as amended), Environmental Protection Act 1986 (as amended), Disability Services Act 1993, Emergency Management Act 2005, Tobacco Products Control Act 2006, regulations made pursuant to those Acts and Health Local Laws. Changes to legislation have typified the 2005/6 financial year including work commencing on a new Public Health Act, a new Food Bill now in Parliament, and most recently, changes to the Smoking in Enclosed Public Places Regulations prohibiting smoking in all enclosed public places from 31 July 2006.

Food Premises & Food Surveillance

Food premises inspections are undertaken periodically to ensure hygiene standards, product quality and compliance with FSANZ Food Safety Standards. Food law is set to change in Western Australia with the Food Bill currently being considered before Parliament.

During the period June 30 2005 to July 1 2006 a total of 42 food premises inspections were undertaken comprising 30 routine inspections, 3 settlement inspections, 3 complaint inspections, 1 final inspection, 3 re-inspections and 2 Foodsafe audits of Pilgrim House and Braemar House.

Food Recalls

A total of food product recalls were recorded for 2005/6 comprising:

- Class Nil 28 (information only)
- Class One 34 (immediate action)

Council's Principal Environmental Health Officer ensures all food recalls are brought to the attention of supermarkets and delis, and that foods are removed from sale, where required.

Food complaints

A total of 4 food complaints were received including out of date foods, overlabelling and weevil infestation. All complaints were investigated and resolved by working closely with food handlers, taking bacteriological samples and arranging food safety training for food handlers.

Food Sampling Programme

A total of 10 samples were taken for chemical analysis in accordance with procedures established by the Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee.

Public Swimming Pools

Water sampling of public pools is carried out to determine water quality and contamination by bacterial and amoebic pathogens. Where problems are detected immediate action is instigated to ensure public health is not compromised.

The Town of East Fremantle currently has 7 pools at 6 premises which constitute public swimming pools as per the Health (Swimming Pool) Regulations 1964, as amended. 2 of the pools had not previously been sampled on a routine basis, and 1 of these pools is currently closed following failure to pass an audit of the facility. All pools are sampled monthly, when open, to ensure compliance with bacteriological and amoebic standards.

During 2005/6 a total of 37 samples were taken, of which 30 were routine samples, 4 samples were non-compliant and 3 samples were for re-testing following a non-compliant result. Where non-compliance was detected, the pools were voluntarily closed for disinfection and superchlorination in accordance with Health Department of Western Australia policy.

Environmental River Sampling

Monthly samples are taken of river water near Zephyrs café at John Tonkin Park. These samples are taken to boost the Department of Health sampling schedule which comprises

Health Services

water samples being taken on a fortnightly basis during the summer season (November to April). The Department has asked for local government assistance to help achieve 100 samples within a 5 year period in accordance with the 2005 Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Waters. The results of this sampling are utilised for the development of a website titled "Healthy Swimming in Western Australian Waterways" found at www.healthyswimming.health.wa.gov.au

Sites within the river are provided with a Grade of A,B,C or D (green, amber, red) denoting safety for swimming. The area in front of Zephyrs Café is currently graded green.

Private Swimming Pools

During the 2005/6 period a total of 7 private swimming pools were inspected for compliance with the Australian Standard AS1926.1-1993, as amended. Of these 4 were new pools and 3 were existing pools requiring works to comply with new isolation fencing requirements which come into force on 16 December 2006. All private swimming pools were inspected in 2004 as per the 4 yearly inspection program. At that stage there were 330 private swimming pools in the Town. The next bulk inspection round will be in 2008.

Notifiable Diseases

For the period under review five cases of notifiable diseases were recorded. Each patient was interviewed to try and determine the origin of the disease and the information passed onto the Health Department of Western Australia for further analysis.

The diseases reported were:

Campylobacteriosis	2
Salmonellosis	1
Giardiasis	1
Ross River Virus	1

Pollution.

Council's Principal Environmental Health Officer is available to provide advice in relation to most environmental matters, and

can investigate complaints relating to noise, air and water borne pollution.

Noise Pollution

A total of 17 noise complaints were received and can be classified as follows:

Pool pump noise	2
Air conditioner noise	2
Early morning deliveries	4
Early morning building noise	3
Loud music/party noise	4
House alarms	2

Noise complaints are investigated under the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997. All complainants are asked to put their complaint in writing, either by writing a letter or completing a noise complaint form. The owner of the premises in question is then advised that a complaint has been made and notified of their obligations in regard to the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations, and the various penalties which may apply. Councils Principal Environmental Health Officer has recently completed a Noise Refresher course with the Department of Environment and thereby has fulfilled the criteria to borrow a DOE Sound Level Meter and undertake noise readings when required.

Air Pollution

Many complaints regarding air pollution relate to the burning of material. The burning of rubbish or the use of incinerators is not permitted within the Town of East Fremantle. Wood burning fires are a major source of pollution during winter in Perth as smoke particles from wood smoke contribute up to 40-6-% of winter haze. The Department of Environment distributes information in relation to the correct storage and fuel burning techniques to minimise smoke production. Smoky chimney complaints are investigated from the view point of education not enforcement.

Health Services

A new initiative by the Department of Environment and Conservation entitled "Halt the Haze 2006" offers a one-off \$600 rebate to eligible households willing to remove a wood burning heater, or permanently disable their fireplace and replace it with a flued or ducted gas heater. Currently four applications have been received from the Town of East Fremantle for wood heater replacement. Council's Principal Environmental Health Officer has information on optimal home heating options from the Sustainable Energy Development Office.

Air pollution from traffic may be investigated in conjunction with the Department of Environment and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

Asbestos and dust complaints are occasionally received, often in conjunction with demolitions, renovations or building related activities. All complaints are followed up with the contractor or owner and guidelines in relation to the safe handling and removal of asbestos, and the disposal of asbestos at an approved site are forwarded to the relevant person. The Principal Environmental Health Officer and Principal Building Surveyor liaise to try and prevent hazardous situations occurring and to investigate complaints and take the appropriate action to prevent a recurrence.

Waste Management & Recycling

Council continued its participation in the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council (SMRC), in respect of its refuse and recycling removal kerbside collections, and green waste verge collections held 3 times per year. Presently, one recycling bin is provided for each premises, both residential and commercial.

Mixed Solid Waste – tonnages received at the Composting Facility totalled 2,319.38 tonnes - (2004/5 1,657.72 tonnes)

Recycling – Tonnages received at the Materials Recovery Facility totalled 896.48 tonnes - (2004/5 829.43 tonnes)

Green Waste Processing – Tonnages received at the RRRC totalled 322.16 tonnes - (2004/5 331.60 tonnes)

Tip passes – 1 for general waste and 2 for green waste are distributed to ratepayers each year.

Recycling initiatives which reduce the landfill of hazardous household wastes include drop off points at the Town Hall for:

1. Mobile phones and associated batteries via the Mobile Muster,
2. Rechargeable batteries via the Cleanaway program,
3. Printer cartridges via the Planet Arc program, and
4. Needles and syringes into dedicated sharps containers.

Cities for Climate Protection Program

The Town of East Fremantle continued with *Cities for Climate Protection Australia (CCP)* to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Council officers regularly attended regional CCP meetings to help develop a regional approach to cross border issues. A regional CCP officer has been engaged and assists the Town with Regional CCP initiatives. These issues include street lighting, energy consumption in the business sector, transportation (including alternative fuels), green purchasing policy and education/promotion.

Council achieved Milestone 5 during the 2005/6 year which entails the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Corporate Action Plan. Council's Principal Environmental Health Officer held a presentation of CCP to update Councillors and officers and keep them informed with the progress of which we can be justifiably proud. Measures are to be taken within the next month, and a follow up presentation will be arranged.

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Dr Stefanie Jennings of the SMRC undertook the following project within the Town of East Fremantle over the previous financial year. The project has just been completed and has been presented to Council in early July. The Targeted Action Campaign project has been developed to build a new strategy to engage the wider community in greenhouse gas reduction. A number of strategies were tested in a pilot project in East Fremantle to identify what steps most residents can readily do, what they need to take the step and how to reach most residents in a community program.

Using community-based social marketing principles, several energy actions were explored, being actions which residents could adopt at no cost and make a significant difference to greenhouse emissions. Two hot water actions were researched with community focus groups and phone survey to identify why residents were not undertaking these actions and what was needed to support them to take the action.

One action – lowering the hot water thermostat in summer - was targeted in the pilot implementation with 250 households identified to approach. East Fremantle residents were above average in the SMRC region in taking action on energy saving initiatives involving hot water. Within this pilot program many had already lowered their thermostat or had solar hot water systems. Only 35% of households could lower their hot water thermostat in comparison to 56% of people identified in previous surveys. In the evaluation many people gave unprompted positive feedback about the program with many saying it was a great initiative. People also requested other information such as energy saving pamphlets from the Sustainable Energy Development Office.

Conclusion

The project has been a great success in raising awareness of simple steps achievable in regular households demonstrating measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. The flyers associated with the project are worthy

of further distribution within the Town of East Fremantle so that all householders can benefit from this information.

Pest Control Services

Council's Environmental Health Service provide a range of miscellaneous products including Racumin sachets for the control of rodents in residential areas and Talon wax baits for the Town of East Fremantle rodent baiting program. A total of 363 residents collected free rat baits over the financial year. Advice and information is also given to the public in relation to pest control with most queries relating to rats, mice, ants, bees, paper wasps, European wasps, cockroaches, head lice, mosquitoes and others. Information and advice is also available on a wide variety of garden pests, weeds and noxious plants.

Child Health Centre

The Sumpton Green facility provided by Council hosts the East Fremantle Playgroup and the Child Health Clinic.

Over the past 12 months the Child Health Clinic has provided enormous assistance to residents and their young families. The service has had over 1435 appointments including group sessions. This figure is reduced from the 1994 appointments of 2004/5, however the closure of Fremantle's Child Health Clinic has seen an increase in the number of customers over the past couple of months. Clinic nurses deal with a number of issues including post natal depression, developmental screening and nutrition. Other services include

- weekly new parent groups "Sleep Programs" which assists parents with settling and communication with their newborns,
- "Introduction to Family Foods" around the 6 months of age.

These services are available on a regular basis through appointment by contacting the Community Nurse on 9319.2384. Home visits are also undertaken by the Nurse.

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Disability Access and Inclusion Plans

The Disability Service Act has been amended and now requires councils to develop a new Disability Access and Inclusion Plan by 31 July 2007. In the meantime, they require that Annual Reports outline activities that support the six DAIP outcome areas and that a draft DAIP be submitted to them by 31 July 2006. This is to be the basis for the new DAIP, following the community consultation which is required.

The 6 outcomes of DAIPS are:

1. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **access the services** of, and any events organised by, a public authority.

Town of East Fremantle Library Services are now shared with the City of Fremantle which has completely disabled access facilities and is on the ground floor of the Fremantle Council Building.

2. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **access the buildings** and other facilities of a public authority.

Further capital works have been undertaken within the Town of East Fremantle in the last financial year including the restoration of Dovenby House for the Home and Community Care Service. These premises have been restored with an emphasis on disabled access and the provision of disabled access toilets. As these premises also contain room for a training facility, it may serve as an alternative venue to the Council Chambers which are on the first floor of the Town Hall.

The footpath replacement program augers well for disabled residents as slab footpaths are replaced with smoother concrete paths, and paths are created where previously there were none. The previous

years capital works include the following paths:

Street	From	To
Woodhouse Rd	Locke Cres	Locke Cres
Parker Street	Woodhouse Rd	Pier St
View Tce	Parker St	Easton St
Preston Pt Rd	Hillside Rd	Bolton St
Fortescue St	Fletcher St	Millenden St
Salvado Ave	Alexandra Rd	Staton Rd
Gill St	Fraser St	Canning Hwy
Fletcher St	Hamilton St	Moss St
Oakover St	Canning Hwy	Millenden St
Surbiton Rd	Reynolds St	Angwin St
George St	Glyde St	Hubble St
Fletcher St	Hamilton St	Moss St
Canning Hwy	East St	Stirling Hwy
John Tonkin Park	Path connecting new shelters and play equip	

3. People with disabilities receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to **access the information** as readily as other people are able to access it.

Council provides extensive coverage of services and activities on its website. Minutes of meetings, elected member information, services provided and general advice on most Council related activities are available at www.eastfremantle.wa.gov.au. It is anticipated that this information will also be linked to FreoInfo, as we contribute to the shared Fremantle-East Fremantle library facility.

4. People with disabilities **receive the same level and quality of service** from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of that public authority.

There is a strong emphasis on customer focus at the Town as there is a small population compared with other councils therefore more opportunity for personalised contact. Additionally there is an aged population which enjoy good relationships with staff who make every effort to personally ensure satisfaction of

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their customers. This is part of the ethos of working at the Town of East Fremantle.

5. People with disabilities have the **same opportunities** as other people to **make complaints** to a public authority.

Complaints are welcomed from anyone, as this gives the Town the opportunity to receive feedback and make positive and affirmative decisions regarding the governance provided to the community. Occasionally complaints have been received from people with disabilities, however, the Town of East Fremantle treats these complaints with the same degree of attention that able bodied complainants receive. It should be noted that any Council decision may be appealed through legal means such as the State Administrative Tribunal.

6. People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to **participate in any public consultation** by a public authority.

Public consultation is often sought from members of the public, and there is no restriction on where that consultation emanates, provided they are residents of the Town of East Fremantle. There is no discrimination in respect of the health or mental status of the participant.

Physical Activity Plan

The Town of East Fremantle endorsed the "Physical Activity Strategic Plan 2006-9" (PASP) at its Council Meeting of 7 March 2006. A further grant application was successful for funding from the Premiers Physical Activity Task Force in May 2006.

This current project seeks to utilise grant monies to assist in the implementation of the Plan generally, and in particular, specific strategies to support an increase in physical activity. The selected strategies include:

1. the activation of 3 existing walking trails by the provision of minor infrastructure

along strategic points such as street seating, bike racks and new signage;

2. the development of Council's website to promote these walking trails and to further develop a database of physical activity information and services within the Town, including the promotion of state government physical activity programs and initiatives by way of an E-Calendar
3. promotion and involvement in the Just Walk It campaign by encouraging walking groups to utilise the 3 walking trails that have been revitalised by this project and
4. the creation and printing of a detailed local recreation map indicating parks, sporting bodies, bike paths, walking trails, historical and natural points of interest, and associated facilities such as water fountains, street furniture and bike racks.

The Just Walk It campaign has already had a success with a Parents with Prams walking group walking every Monday afternoon from 3 pm along Riverside Drive, meeting at the Left Bank. Spring will see further promotion of Just Walk It.

Emergency Management

The Emergency Management Act came into effect on 24 December 2005. It provides for prompt and coordinated management of emergencies in WA. It formalises WA's ability to mitigate or prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from incidents of a large scale or catastrophic nature. The legislation requires the establishment of State Emergency Management policies and plans in relation to all hazards, including acts of terrorism.

Proclamation of the Act has brought some aspects into operation immediately, but remaining provisions require the development of regulations and administrative arrangements. Aspects of the Act which are to be addressed immediately include the functions of local governments and the requirement to have local emergency management arrangements in place.

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Specific local government responsibilities under the Act are:

1. The establishment of an active Local Emergency Management Committee which meets on a regular basis.
2. The formulation and establishment of Local Community Emergency Management Arrangements and a Local Recovery Plan.
3. The management of recovery activities within their local government district and the appointment of a Local Recovery Coordinator.

Section 38 of the Act requires that a local government establish one or more local emergency management committees (LEMCS) for its local government district. The primary function of a LEMC is to assist the local government in ensuring that local emergency arrangements are established for its district. The chairman and other members of the LEMC are to be appointed by the local government subject to any procedures, terms and conditions determined by the State Emergency Management Committees. Section 34, however, allows a local government to combine with one or more local governments and have one LEMC for the combined local government district. The City of Fremantle has formally requested that the Cities of Fremantle and the Town of East Fremantle combine for the purposes of emergency management in accordance with Section 34 of the Act.

Community Arts

The 2005 East Fremantle Fiesta was held on Sunday December 4th from 3pm - 10pm. Celia Cheffins was contracted by the Town of East Fremantle to coordinate the event. Celia was assisted by the Stalls Coordinator – Lyn Harris, the Festival entertainment assistant – Kai Kaempf and the Glasson Park facilitator, Sarah Wilkinson. The Festival was a success, even though for the first time in 11 years bad weather affected the event. Throughout the day there were rainy patches and sudden squalls – with the crowd coming and going in response to the weather. This affected the

attendance numbers, although at the earlier part of the day it looked as though the Festival would attract the usual crowd of 9,000 people. This year the estimated attendance was 6,000 people, but the crowds were very resilient and most people stayed on and both enjoyed and appreciated all the elements of the Festival. Many of the stallholders from previous years were booked for the Festival and there were a number of new arts/craft and community stalls as well. Most of the stall holders were fairly pleased with the day, although no doubt the weather did affect the level of sales. The restaurants along George Street were busy all day, and Limones and the George Street Bistro had busy food kiosks in front of their shops.

Program

The entertainment was especially good this year, the notable performances on the Sewell St. main stage were the Flairz, the young band of 11 year old rockers, who drew a huge crowd and seemed to bring along their own fan base as well. The Lindy Hop Dancers and Adam and the Velvet Playboys introduced a whole new element to the Festival and was the most commented upon and popular act throughout the day.



The Glasson Park Stage featured local school talent this year; the young dancers from East Fremantle Primary School presented a great performance. The young Jelly Belly dance group bravely battled the rain, their veils flying about in the wind while the crowds enthusiastically applauded their dramatic show. At the end of the day, the magic show thrilled families with his spectacular act, but sadly the last torch in his fire juggling routine was put out by rain.

The Duke Street Stage did not have a cover, so the three performances were shorter than

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hoped, but the sound quality was much better this year and the performers drew many appreciative music lovers. There were about 5 busking acts from 3 'till 7 featuring a great variety of musical cultural diversity which added a real international flavour to the event. There were drummers from Africa, a dulcimer and didge duo, a local 10 year old rock band and a great sax blues player. Most of the buskers performed near King Street, but later in the day others set up their pitches wherever they could find shelter from the intermittent rain.

The WASAMBA Parade was as energetic as ever, with other performers and the crowd joining in all the way up and down George Street. The evening performance by the Dyslexic Fish kept people around until about 9:00, but the crowds left earlier than usual, so that the street was fairly clear by 10PM.

For the most part the crowd were well behaved and there were no major incidents during the Festival. There was some illegal street drinking on the day, notably involving a small group of George St. shopkeepers. Even with warnings from the rangers and the security officers they continued to ignore the regulations. There were a few young people who were drinking alcohol whilst on site, however the rangers confiscated their liquor and gave them a number of warnings which seemed to discourage this behaviour.

Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator Noel Nimmo and Area Managers Barrie Renouf and Rod Francis, bring together 78 street representatives, 51 volunteers and an estimated 2100 Neighbourhood Watch members. Volunteers and representatives contribute to the distribution of Neighbourhood Watch newsletters, crime alerts and graffiti reports, on a continual basis. Approximately 500 phone calls (on graffiti, stealing, car theft, suspicious persons and other worries people have) were recorded on our Neighbourhood Watch phone over the last twelve months.

Meetings of the East Fremantle Neighbourhood Watch Committee are held every second Thursday of the month at the East Fremantle Council office and are attended by Neighbourhood Watch committee members, volunteers, Fremantle police and Councils Principal Environmental Health Officer.

A total of 3300 Neighbourhood Watch newsletters are delivered to all homes in East Fremantle every second month. The newsletter is an opportunity to provide relevant information, reduce the fear of crime, provide a course of action if a crime has been committed or witnessed and create opportunities for residents to join Neighbourhood Watch. For example, if members advise Neighbourhood Watch they will be away, other members will regularly check the front of the house. Engraving of valuables can be arranged and those items that cannot be engraved can be photographed for members.

When a member informs Neighbourhood Watch that they have been a victim of crime, or when Police provide details of crime, volunteers deliver crime alert forms to surrounding homes with a record of the street, day, time and a general description of the crime.

When graffiti is reported to Neighbourhood Watch, a photo is taken and the details recorded. This information is then passed on to the Police and the graffiti removal contractor. During 2004-2005, 1288 photos were taken at 74 sites, resulting in 912 formal reports. During 2005/6 a total of 1,555 photos were taken and reported.

A tour of the entire East Fremantle district is carried out 4 to 5 times per week to take photos of graffiti and to check Main Roads WA and Western Power infrastructure to ensure those Departments are contacted to arrange their own graffiti removal. Some graffiti is obscene or contains phone numbers.

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A photo is taken and the graffiti reported and removed as soon as possible.

RANGER SERVICES

Overview

For the year ending 30 June 2006, ranger services were manned by one full time Senior Ranger and two casual rangers working an average of 10 hours per week.

Services and Responsibilities

Rangers are authorised officers under the following Acts and Regulations:

- Dog Act
- Litter Act
- Bush Fires Act
- Off Road Vehicles Act
- Local Government Act
- All Town of East Fremantle's Local Laws

Council's ranger services are also responsible for:

- Assisting with road closures
- Parking
- Mooring pens / Launching Ramp
- Cash collections and banking
- Courier duties
- Community education programs
- Insurance applications
- Safety and security of Council property
- Emergency management response
- Liaising with emergency services
- Liaising with school authorities
- Liaising with business holders
- Liaising with residents and community members
- Liaising with community youth groups
- Liaising with Defence Department

Dog Statistics

Infringement notices

From 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 Rangers issued six (6) infringement notices for contraventions of the West Australian Dog Act.

Cautionary notices

From 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 Rangers issued one thousand four hundred and twenty nine cautionary notices (1429) for contraventions of the West Australian Dog Act, 87% of cautionary notices were issued to non residents of the Town of East Fremantle. The face value of these cautionary notices had they been issued as infringements was \$142, 900.

Attacks

From 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 two (2) dog attacks involving actual injuries to humans occurred and in both cases the injuries sustained were of a minor nature needing minimal medical attention such as a precautionary tetanus injection.

These files have now been closed with the medical costs reimbursed by the dog owners to the injured parties.

There were a further three (3) dog attacks involving injuries to other animals. These files have also been closed with the veterinary costs reimbursed to the injured dogs' owners by the owners of the attacking dogs.

On average rangers attend four (4) minor dog incidents per week, with numbers increasing during the summer months. These minor incidents usually involve a dog's alleged intimidating and aggressive behaviour or general nuisances. In all cases where the dog's owner can be identified, a ranger is allocated to work with the owner to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities under the Dog Act and to assist the owner with advice on behavioural control techniques available to them to train their dog safely and correctly.

Education

Ranger services have conducted an extensive "Dog Awareness" program in the Town of East Fremantle.

This included rangers being rostered on duty between the hours of 6.30am and 8pm and

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working a substantial number of hours on a voluntary unpaid basis in areas of high dog usage (ie foreshore areas, Raceway Park, Preston Point Road).

Numerous dog owners were spoken to for various offences with verbal and written cautions being issued on each occasion. During the educational phase of the “dog owner awareness education programme” rangers suspended the issuance of infringement notices in general but did issue infringements to repeat offenders.

Rangers also issued leads to owners who were found to be walking their dog without a lead at the time of their cautionary notice for the Dog Act contravention.

Having given significant thought to both the apparent lack of visiting dog owners’ awareness of their responsibilities under the Dog Act in general and to dog owners’ feedback, the ranger services team designed a new style Dog Act cautionary notice that is both easier and quicker to issue to members of the public, while at the same time advises dog owners in an educational manner of all of the offences that they may contravene in relation to the Dog Act.

Also due to the educational programme the ranger services team designed two (2) informational brochures and distributed a total of four thousand (4,000) brochures to dog owners to raise the levels of voluntary compliance with the Dog Act.

As part of the educational phase, rangers also conducted puppy socialisation and basic behavioural training classes free of charge to residents and regular visitors. These classes were of one (1) hour duration per session, held twice a week for a ten (10) week period and proved to be a popular way to train residents’ dogs as well as form a new social network.

Rangers conducted these courses by volunteering and attending/conducting the sessions in their own off duty time

Rangers also delivered educational programmes to Richmond Primary School students based on the “Delta Dog Safe Program” and these appear to have been enjoyed by the participating students and teachers.

Ranger services team members also attended the City of Fremantle’s Dogs Day Out, at which dog owners were encouraged to register their dogs and provided with information on animal welfare issues, Dog Act requirements and animal behaviour and training methods and issues. Ranger services team members attended this event on a voluntary unpaid basis and have already volunteered to continue to attend this event on this basis as the event allowed a significant number of both East Fremantle and Fremantle residents, who walk their dogs within East Fremantle, to further interact with the ranger services team and become acquainted with both the Town of East Fremantle rangers and the requirements of the Dog Act.

Barking Complaints

Rangers have investigated two hundred and thirty two (232) official dog barking complaints (official complaints involve at least three complainants, two from different residences for each complaint). All of these complaints have now been resolved and closed to the satisfaction of both the complainant and the barking dog’s owners.

However, Rangers receive on average five (5) barking dog complaints a week with most resolved by verbal interaction between the owner and a ranger services team member. In general most owners are not aware of the dog’s nuisance barking before the ranger brings the matter to their attention.

Rangers endeavour to provide the owners of barking dogs with advice and practical help in relation to the many alternatives to enable the

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owner to successfully modify the animal's behaviour.

The number of barking dog complaints received by ranger services is expected to increase each year as larger blocks are subdivided with property lines drawn closer together and the number of small "house" dogs increasing.

Stray/Impounded Dogs

Total dogs collected	239
Returned to owners	203
Total dogs impounded	36
Dogs reclaimed by owners	32
Dogs unclaimed and re-homed	4
Dogs destroyed	0

Registrations

For financial year 2005/2006 Council received \$8586 in dog registration fees.

A total of 982 dogs were registered with the Town, 804 of these dogs being sterilised.

Ranger services staff conducted an extensive dog registration program, which included conducting a door knock to follow up expired dog registrations, canvassing dog owners in the streets and local parks, and the use of cautionary notices for follow up action.

Fire Breaks

Fire breaks were checked in the first week of December 2005 with twelve (12) properties requiring attention. Two (2) of these properties did not comply with the November 30 deadline resulting in these two (2) properties receiving fire warning notices and accounts from Council for charges associated with clearing their blocks to ensure that the blocks complied with the requirements of the Bushfires Act.

Bush Fire Act infringement notices were not issued to these two (2) property owners as there were mitigating factors and the owners of each block authorised Council to carry out the work at the owners' cost.

Parking

Launching Ramp

Income from the two (2) parking ticket machines located at the launching ramp totalled \$87,108.35.

The significant rise in revenue gained from these machines since the 2003 to 2004 period can be contributed to the fact that launching ramp users have become aware of both the requirements to purchase a ticket and the higher level of presence and enforcement by ranger services team members, better standard of signage within the car park and ranger services staff monitoring the machines and attending to repairs quickly.

Council issued 55 permits to ratepayers wishing to utilise the Leeuwin launching facility reflecting a decrease from the 69 permits issued in 2004/2005.

Parking Infringements

In financial year 2005/2006, Council raised an amount of \$160,460 in parking infringement penalties.

This can be attributed to the higher level of training and awareness by ranger services staff in relation to both the Town of East Fremantle's Parking Local Laws and the Road Traffic Code, combined with higher levels of physical presence of ranger services team members on the Town's streets and parking areas outside previously standard working hours.

Another major contributory factor is the heightened awareness of the residents in relation to parking offences and this has led to a significant rise in calls from the public direct to Rangers to report contraventions such as parking within 6 metres of an intersection which hampers drivers' vision of oncoming traffic and raises the potential for a collision.

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Parking Cautionary Notices

After careful analysis of drivers' stated reasons for contravening both Local Parking Laws and relevant sections of the Road Traffic Code of Western Australia over a period of six months, the ranger services team redesigned the style of parking cautionary notices which made it both easier and quicker to issue to members of the public, while at the same time advises drivers of the thirty five most common parking offences committed by drivers within the Town of East Fremantle.

Ranger services audits all cautionary notices and infringement notices issued during each four (4) month period to identify which thirty five (35) offences should be included in each reprint of the parking cautionary notice books.

An example of where these cautionary notices have been used with great success is at both Richmond Primary School and East Fremantle Primary School. It is essential, in these areas, to ensure that traffic flows safely and continuously through the "kiss and drop" lanes to ensure that both adjacent parking areas and carriageways are kept free of traffic congestion.

There were a total of three thousand six hundred and ninety four (3,694) parking cautionary notices issued by rangers in the 2005 to 2006 period. The face value of these cautionary notices had they been issued as infringement notices was \$221,640.

Local Laws

As most residents and visitors to the Town of East Fremantle are generally unaware of the various Local Laws and penalties applicable within the Town of East Fremantle, ranger services employs a policy of "inform rather than infringe" in relation to contraventions of Local Laws.

Rangers issued a total of one thousand nine hundred and fifty nine (1,959) cautions for contraventions of various Local Laws. Upon issuance of each cautionary notice, Rangers advise the offender of the relevant Local Law,

the reason for the Local Law and the potential penalties for future contravention of Local Laws.

In all but eight occasions the issuance of the first cautionary notice was sufficient to rectify the contravention within the time frame set by Rangers.

Of the remaining eight (8), these were rectified as soon as practicable after the issuance of the cautionary notice, taking into account mitigating factors such as a resident's inability to comply as a partner was away in hospital or an elderly resident with no immediate family assistance.

In each of these cases rangers arranged for assistance via either through other Council staff or from State Government agencies.

The face value of these cautionary notices if they had been issued as infringement notices was \$195,900.

Litter Act

Rangers issued a total of eight hundred and ninety seven (897) cautions for contraventions of the Litter Act. The face value of these cautionary notices was \$53,820.

Abandoned Vehicles

There were a total of one hundred and thirty (130) cars abandoned within the Town of East Fremantle during the 2005 to 2006 period.

Rangers continued the policy commenced during 2004 to 2005 of attempting to locate the vehicle owners prior to impoundment and advise them of both the penalties/costs and alternatives available to them.

Rangers identified the owners of one hundred and twenty eight (128) of these vehicles and advised them that should the rangers be required to impound the vehicles that the owners would then become liable for the cost of impoundment, towing and storage for a minimum amount of \$400 and that Council

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would seek to recover these costs via court action.

Owners were also advised that scrap dealers would generally pay the owner \$40-\$80 and would also arrange to have the vehicle removed at no cost to the owners.

Had Council been required to impound all 130 vehicles the cost to Council would have been \$52,000.

Of the remaining two (2) vehicles rangers were able to ascertain that the owners had left Australia and therefore had no choice but to impound the vehicles and sell them by tender.

The months of December through to early February saw significant rises in levels of abandonment.

Stolen Vehicles

There were a total of thirty seven stolen vehicles located and recovered by rangers within the Town of East Fremantle during the 2005 to 2006 period. On one occasion the offender was present in the vehicle when it was located by the ranger and was detained until police arrived and placed the offender into custody.

Detainment of Offenders Until Placed Into Police Custody

During the 2005 to 2006 period rangers detained a total of eleven offenders until placed into police custody. The offenders were detained for committing a range of offences such as indecent exposure, trespassing, burglary and drug related offences.

Ranger/Police Cooperation And Liaison

During the 2005 to 2006 period Rangers and police assisted each other on forty six (46) occasions and this ranged from assistance from police as listed above to rangers assisting police in the service of search warrants and containing unregistered dogs located on the premises to deter police entry.

The police air wing helicopter provided direct assistance to rangers on three (3) occasions and the police mounted section visited the Town during the 2005 to 2006 period.

Rangers and police officers conducted dual manned patrols utilising the ranger vehicle on fourteen (14) occasions during the 2005 to 2006 period.

Response to Burglar Alarms

Rangers responded to one hundred and seventy nine residential (179) active burglar alarms during the 2005 to 2006 period and all of these active alarms were located by rangers during routine street patrols. When Rangers located the active alarm, they requested administration staff to check Council data bases to identify the owner and contact telephone numbers.

Where owners can be identified and contacted via telephone, rangers ascertain whether the resident wishes to have a security check of the premises conducted by rangers.

In cases where the owner can not be contacted, rangers conducted a visual security check of all visible windows, doors, walls and roof lines and a ranger's attendance notice is left for the resident advising of time of attendance, limits of security check conducted and result of the limited check.

Work Place Experience and Training

The rangers department continued the work experience and training programme commenced in September 2004 for people wishing to enter the ranger services profession but who were unable to do so due to their lack of work experience.

There have now been a total of twenty-nine rangers trained under this programme, since its inception in 2004, and all rangers trained by the Town of East Fremantle have successfully gained employment with other councils at the completion of their training.

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Applicants are required to study the following modules of the Certificate Four in Local Government (Governance & Administration) Ranger Services and receive practical field experience with the Town of East Fremantle's ranger services department:

- (1) PSPREG401A - Exercise Regulatory Powers
- (2) LGACOM406A - Investigate Alleged breaches of Legislation and prepare documentation
- (3) PSPREG403A - Assess compliance with Legislation
- (4) PSPREG405A - Act on non-compliance
- (5) LGAGOVA 412A - Prepare Council for legal proceedings
- (6) LGACOM408A - Represent Council at legal proceedings
- (7) BSMFX1402A - Provide leadership in the workplace
- (8) BSFXM1404A - Participate in, lead and facilitate work teams
- (9) BSFXM1405A - Manage operations to achieve planned outcomes
- (10) LGACORE105A - Work with others in Local Government
- (11) LGACORE104A - Work effectively in a Local Government context
- (12) LGACOM403A - Conduct public educational presentations
- (13) LGACORE102A - Follow defined occupational health & safety policies and procedures
- (14) LGAEHRR202A - Operate and maintain Council pound facilities
- (15) LGAEHRR202A - Provide animal care and control
- (16) PUAFIR510A - Inspect for legislative compliance
- (17) PUAFIR301A - Undertake community safety activities.

All applicants are initially trained and given work experience on an unpaid voluntary basis and as the candidate's understanding and experience of the requirements of the role of a municipal ranger develop to a satisfactory level, they are moved to a short term paid

casual ranger status with the Town of East Fremantle.

These candidates have been instrumental in the success of the ranger services team's efforts in promoting a higher level of community awareness of and compliance with the relevant Acts, legislation, regulations and Local Laws.

These trainees have also been instrumental in providing a high level of ranger presence at school sites each morning and afternoon and raising community awareness and community compliance with parking regulations in the areas surrounding the schools. This is equally true in relation to community awareness and compliance with the Dog Act.

All candidates from the 2004 to 2005 and 2005 to 2006 programs have successfully gained full time employment as rangers with other councils

Town Planning/Private Domain

The general purpose of Town Planning is to ensure development meets the existing and future amenity needs of the Town. Amenity relates to pleasantness and is defined as the sum of the expectations of the residents concerning the character and quality of their environment.

Town planning has two discreet but interrelated themes, referred to as Orderly Planning and Proper Planning.

Orderly Planning, based on procedural theory, relates to the processes involved in assessing development, making Policy, Scheme amendments etc. Examples of Orderly Planning include:

- Seeking neighbour comment on a boundary wall; and
- Seeking public comment on Policies and Town Planning Scheme amendments.

Proper Planning is based upon substantive theory, and relates to the impact (now or in the future) of a development upon the environment. Examples of Proper Planning include:

- Height controls to ensure solar access and views are conserved;
- Density controls to ensure the retention of open space;
- Setback, fenestration, roof pitch controls and the like to ensure streetscape harmony; and
- Location of trip attractors within easy walking distance of a bus stop.

The aims of the current Town Planning Scheme No 3 include:

- To recognise the historical development of East Fremantle and to preserve the existing character of the Town;
- To promote the conservation of buildings and places of heritage significance and to protect and enhance the existing heritage values of the Town;
- To provide a variety of development to meet the needs of the community with regard to housing, employment and services;

- To facilitate and encourage effective public involvement in planning issues of significance to the character, amenity and environmental attributes of the Town.

The Town employs a Town Planner and Senior Planning Officer to assist residents and developers with these matters. The Planning Department liaises with Building and Environmental Health Departments, via the weekly Development Control Unit meetings.

During the year Mr. Kelvin Oliver resigned as Town Planner and Ms Beryl Foster is currently the Acting Town Planner. Mr Chris Warrener, a Consultant Town Planner, has been employed on a temporary basis during this staffing transition.

Mr Tony Monteleone has been employed as the Town's Building Surveyor.

Development and activity in 2005/06 included:

- A Residential Design Guidelines Steering Committee has been established to assist in the formulation of Residential Design Guidelines that reflect both the Residential Design Codes of WA and the local character of the Town.

This steering committee consists of Cr Peter Le May as Presiding Member, Mayor Jim O'Neill, Cr Alan Ferris, Cr Alex Wilson and Cr Jenny Harrington.

- To assist in the protection of the Town's historic built environment a draft Heritage Survey has been completed and draft heritage areas have been identified. These documents will be available for public comment in due course as required under the Town Planning Scheme.
- The refurbishment of Dovenby House adjacent to Council offices is at its final stages prior to completion.

Membership of the Town Planning & Building Committee (Private Domain) as at 30 June 2006 consisted of Cr Peter Le May as Presiding Member, Mayor Jim O'Neill, Cr Stefanie Dobro (Deputy Mayor), Cr David Martin, Cr Jenny

Town Planning/Private Domain

Harrington, Cr Richard Olson and Cr Alan Ferris.

Building

Building Fees Received \$ 79,808.52

Building Licences Issued:

Class 1 (Single House)	31	\$ 10,943,428
Mixed Use	1	2,221,439
Doctors Surgery	1	780,451
Nursing Home	1	1,333,171
Additions/Alterations	42	6,585,406
Patios/Pergolas	17	88,207
Garages	5	67,450
Carports	6	59,173
Outbuildings	5	99,850
Swimming Pools	13	264,751
Balcony/Verandah	4	60,900
Fences/Retaining Wall	13	107,900
Roof Alterations	2	13,275
	<u>141</u>	<u>\$22,625,401</u>

Demolition Licences Issued: 23

<i>Residences</i>	14
<i>Partial Demolition</i>	3
<i>Shop/Residence</i>	1
<i>Other</i>	5

Town Planning

Town Planning Fees Received \$ 92,132.50

Approval to Commence Development: 162

<i>Discretionary Approval</i>	78
<i>Approval</i>	19
<i>Delegated Approval</i>	65
<i>Applications Deferred</i>	5

Applications Refused: 12

Change of Use: 2

Home Occupations: 2

Planning Consents Appealed: 7

<i>Brought Forward</i>	2
<i>Upheld</i>	1
<i>Dismissed</i>	1
<i>Withdrawn by Applicant</i>	3
<i>Awaiting Determination</i>	2

Scheme Amendments 3

Subdivisions: 2

<i>Approved</i>	1
<i>Refused</i>	1