



**Annual General Meeting of Electors
Wednesday 27 March 2024**

MINUTES

OF THE **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS** HELD IN THE **FUNCTION ROOM**, ADMINISTRATION CENTRE, ORCHARD AVENUE, ARMADALE ON **WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024** COMMENCING AT **7PM**

PRESENT: The Mayor, R Butterfield Presided

Cr J Joy	River Ward
Cr K Busby	Minnawarra Ward
Cr G J Smith	Minnawarra Ward
Cr S Stoneham	Hills Ward
Cr S J Mosey	Hills Ward
Cr P A Hetherington	Palomino Ward
Cr L Sargeson	Palomino Ward
Cr M J Hancock	Heron Ward
Cr C Wielinga	Heron Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms J Abbiss	Chief Executive Officer
Mr J Lyon	Executive Director Corporate Services
Ms S van Aswegen	Executive Director Community Services
Mr P Sanders	Executive Director Development Services
Mr M Andrews	Executive Director Technical Services
Mr B Garvey	Coordinator City Governance
Ms E Stenhouse	Manager Communications and Engagement
Mrs A Owen-Brown	Executive Assistant Corporate Services

Public: 9

APOLOGIES:

Leave of Absence previously granted to Cr M Silver and Cr S Peter JP

Apologies received: Cr K Kamdar
Cr J Keogh
Cr S S Virk

Her Worship the Mayor, Cr Ruth Butterfield, welcomed those in attendance to the 2022/23 Annual General Meeting of Electors and addressed the meeting as follows:

Good everyone.

I will begin by paying my respects to the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet and their elders past, present and emerging. And that is the Wadjuk people of the Noongar Nation.

Thank you everybody for being here tonight and good evening to Councillors and Staff, thank you for all being here.

Welcome to the City of Armadale's Annual General Meeting of Electors, which I have declared open.

Firstly, I would like to introduce you to your Councillors (members please stand as I introduce you):

*Cr Jiby Joy
Cr Kerry Busby
Cr Gary Smith
Cr Sarah Stoneham
Cr Scott Mosey
Cr Paul Hetherington
Cr Laurence Sargeson
Cr Michael Hancock and
Cr Caroline Wielinga*

Apologies have been received from the Deputy Mayor John Keogh, Cr Keyur Kamdar and Cr Sam Virk. And we have Leave of Absence been approved for Cr Michelle Silver and Cr Shanavas Peter.

Also present are our Chief Executive Officer and Executive Leadership Team:

*Ms Joanne Abbiss, CEO
Mr Mike Andrews, Executive Director - Technical Services.
Mr Paul Sanders, Executive Director Development Services
Ms Suzette Van Aswegen, Executive Director - Community Services, and
Mr Jason Lyon, Executive Director - Corporate Services.*

Thank you for all being here.

I will conduct this meeting generally in accordance with the City's Standing Orders. There are copies of the meeting rules and procedures available on the seats around you. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with these rules and procedures.

If you have a mobile phone with you, I respectfully ask that you switch it off or switch it to silent mode for the duration of the meeting.

If there is a vote on anything, each elector is entitled to one vote.

Only electors of the City, and people who are eligible to be added to the electoral roll, are entitled to vote at this meeting.

Any decisions made by this meeting will be submitted to Council for consideration at either the next ordinary council meeting or, if that is not practicable, at the first ordinary council meeting after that meeting.

Could all speakers please state their name and address before they speak.

I also wish to advise that tonight's proceedings are being recorded.

1 BUSINESS OF MEETING

Presenting the 2022/23 Annual Report

1.1 2022/23 Annual Financial Report

The Mayor called for questions to be raised that specifically related to the Annual Financial Report.

No questions were raised.

Moved M Northcott
Seconded D Grimwood
that the 2022/23 Annual Financial Report be received
Carried

1.2 Auditor's Report

The CEO read the Independent Auditors Report (pages 60 to 63 of the Annual Report).

The Mayor called for questions to be raised that specifically related to the Auditor's Report (Page 60 of the Annual Report).

No questions were raised.

Moved M Northcott
Seconded P Davey
that the Independent Auditors Report be received
Carried

1.3 2022/23 Annual Report (Remaining Parts)

The Mayor read the Mayor's Foreward of the 2022/23 Annual Report.

The Mayor called for questions to be raised specifically related to the remaining parts of the 2022/23 Annual Report.

No questions were raised.

Moved D Grimwood
Seconded V Hansen
that the remaining parts of the 2022/23 Annual Report be received
Carried

2 GENERAL BUSINESS

The Mayor read:

A public notice was advertised in the Examiner on 7 March 2024 that persons seeking information which may require research were requested to give at least 2 days notice to the Chief Executive Officer.

2.1 Questions of which prior notice has been given

Nil.

2.2 Motions of which prior notice has been given

Nil.

2.3 Questions received from the floor

Mr Dennis Grimwood – 7 Sapphire Court, Mt Richon

The Mayor read the submitted questions from Mr Grimwood and responses were as below.

Q1:

Council, the City of Armadale Local Government recently completed rebuilding the road bridge over Neerigen Brook at Carradine Road, Mount Nasura to current road design and construction standards. The City also resolved to construct roadworks on Talus Drive using funding made available for roads and bridges.

When will you complete the Neerigen Brook bridge on Bedforddale Hill Road Mount Richon by installing a safety barrier to the north kerb?

Response:

The City will take this question on notice and refer to the Executive Director Technical Services.

Q2:

Council, advice provided to Electors at the 2021 Annual Meeting of Electors records "The City is systematically reviewing its policies and delegations through the Standing Orders & House Advisory Group (SOHAG) established by the Council. This Group provides guidance to Officers in drafting policy and reports to the respective Committees and consequently, the Council."

Q2a:

Did your SOHAG review your recently announced Policy "Engagement and Consultation with the Aboriginal Elders and community members" and did it "provide guidance to Officers in drafting policy and reports to the respective Committees and consequently, the Council?"

Response:

The CEO responded that the review did go to SOHAG and will confirm details.

Q2b:

If so why did it recommend payment "for the purpose of seeking advice and expertise on a range of issues and topics" at the rate of \$75 per hour to selected Aboriginal Elders and community members to represent their community interest when every other Elector and resident is subject to rigorous obstacles when seeking to question Council or a Committee and has no rights whatsoever for access to officers?

Response:

The Mayor rejected the premise made at the end of the statement "every other Elector and resident is subject to rigorous obstacles". The first part of the question was taken as being relevant. The Mayor confirmed it had gone to SOHAG; the minutes of that meeting will be reviewed and a response sent to Mr Grimwood.

Mr Phil Davey – 12 Lenore Street, Roleystone

Q1:

The Roleystone Theatre

With the theatre nearing completion and looking very good, do we have a planned opening date with past and present theatre members available? And will the community be invited along to be part of opening and festivities?

Mayor:

Yes we do have a date and an opening planned and there will be a community opening as well.

Q2:

Staff and Turnover

We've previously raised questions at the previous AGMs with a response that the City of Armadale was sitting just below the local government average, at that stage it was 22.9% for the government and about 20.1% for the City of Armadale back on the 2022 AGM. Can you please what turnover may have occurred over the last 12 months and what percentage level the City is currently sitting at?

CEO:

Currently for the 2023/24 financial year, the City is sitting at 17% and if there is a continuation of that trend, then that would put us at 22.6% by June 30. If we hit 22.6%, and given we don't have the whole of sector P50 for 2023/24 yet, but the P50 for last year 2022/23 for the sector was 25.1%, if that sector average is sustained for 2023/24 we would be sitting below it but we don't have that figure yet.

Mayor:

I might just add to your previous question about the Roleystone Theatre opening, the capacity of the building is such that we can't throw open the doors to everybody and there will be a specific list of people invited so that we don't exceed the capacity of the building.

Mr Dennis Grimwood – 7 Sapphire Court, Mt Richon

The Mayor continued to read aloud Mr Grimwood's questions.

Q3:

Council, your Policy "Engagement and Consultation with the Aboriginal Elders and community members" refers to "continuing cultural, spiritual and physical connection with particular land where their ancestors lived", however your recently released.

"Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan" informs "This form of religion and philosophy made the Noongar inseparable from the land. Any change in the environment meant a change in the lifestyle of the people."

Noting there is a profound difference between the terms "spiritual" and "religion", given your Action Plan has formally introduced "religion" into your formal official activities and you would be aware that the Noongar God "baal" is referenced in Jewish, Christian and Muslim scripture as "pagan", can you confirm your SOHAG group has cleared the way for the City to legally sponsor a "religion", and if so will other religions be able to access similar sponsorship?

Mayor:

The question was taken on notice.

Q4:

Council, what legislation authorises you to expend more than one million dollars per annum on providing dedicated officers, administrative costs and consultancy fees to implement your "Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025" and your "Engagement and Consultation with the Aboriginal Elders and community members" Policy process?

Mayor:

The question was taken on notice.

Ms Veronica Hansen – 8 Protector Grove, Roleystone

Q1:

Greenwaste at Springdale and Hopkins Road

Residents in the Hills Ward and beyond are really struggling to keep their properties bushfire ready so once the two tip passes are used and the two greenwaste pickups are completed there's still many months of leaf drops to deal with. With limited access to both facilities, looking at your website a 1.3m³ greenwaste costing \$48.50; plus many residents, myself included, don't have access to a trailer. Can the number of tip passes be increased to four per year and a third greenwaste pickup be introduced for the Hills area? This will greatly assist residents to keep their properties bushfire ready which is also very much a community thing because if your next door neighbor is not doing the job then your house is at risk as well.

Mayor:

I believe we are reviewing our Waste Strategy. We can take that question on notice and look at it during the review of our Waste Strategy.

Q2:

Adding Firebreaks

Various residents over time that I've been in touch with have mentioned that they are getting threats of fines prior to any warnings of issues that need rectification. This issue was also raised at the recent Bedforddale Residents Association which I attended on behalf of another group. I refer to the AGM of 11 May 2022, pages 10 to 13 with numerous questions raised about similar issues. It was recorded in those Minutes that Council was asked at the 2020 AGM to clarify the apparent conflict between the Bushfires Act 1954 notice for firebreaks and the requirements of the Planning and Development Act which I don't have the full details of, and the City's Town Planning Scheme. At the time of the 2022 AGM, a number of individuals were facing prosecution regarding failure to adhere to undefined elements that may be required. From the public perspective, it appears that there are contradictions either real or by interpretation, which are causing concerns and misinterpretations as residents endeavour to meet the correct requirements.

Will Council review and update the information in the various formats that are made available to the public and reissue so residents can ensure that they are meeting the correct guidelines?

Mayor:

We might need some more detail on the cases in point. The information that has been sent out to ratepayers with their rates notice has been updated in the last couple of years to make it clearer. So if there is still a misunderstanding and a misalignment in residents' minds, I'd really appreciate some further information and we can look at them case by case. And determine if it's a misinterpretation or unclear.

CEO:

If I recall there was a question from Mr Grimwood that we responded to, that he submitted on that evening.

Mr Dennis Grimwood – 7 Sapphire Court, Mt Richon

The Mayor continued to read aloud Mr Grimwood's questions.

Q5:

Council, in October 2023 the Commonwealth Government proposed a referendum for constitutional change to enable a "Voice to Parliament" body to represent indigenous interests when it already had the power to legislate its objective.

Knowing beforehand that the public vote on the proposal had already been rejected two to one against, why did you not seek extensive community consultation before resolving to implement your Reconciliation Action Plan notionally against the will of the people?

Mayor:

I reject that last statement "notionally against the will of the people". The two matters are completely separate and they are not connected in any way, other than they have the word Aboriginal or reconciliation mentioned. They are totally different, so I don't believe that we have gone against anyone's will and we are going with the will of the Council and our local Aboriginal Community and also many many others in our community. This is a very well supported plan.

Q6:

Council, the stated objective of your "Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025" is "UNITY".

How can you hope to achieve unity when the plan itself promotes division by favouring one section of the community over another and you have already damaged the **(the rest of the question was not read out by the Mayor)**

Mayor:

I reject the last part of your question there and I think that it's not appropriate even to read it out. So I don't believe that our Reconciliation Action Plan engenders any favouring of one section of the community over another. It aims to work with the community and provides detail on a path to better relations between our Aboriginal residents and the City of Armadale.

CEO:

And further to the Mayor's answer, there has been a change to the Local Government Act and the General Function requirements for local governments and they now require the general function of a local government must be performed having regard to the following and it lists there:

- 1. To recognise the particular interests of Aboriginal people*
- 2. To involve Aboriginal people in decision making processes.*

So the preparation of the Reconciliation Action Plan is consistent with the General Function requirements of the Local Government Act which were introduced in 2023.

Mr Ian Dunston – U19/24 Aragon Court, Armadale

Q1:

In relation to the increase in our rates that we had for the last rate increase, mine increased as far as the minimum payment went by some 9.1%. I know the valuations went up as far as the GRV went. The rate in the dollar has gone down from the previous one as well. Mine's offset because I got a pensioner rebate from the state government.

Why was it so high as far as the minimum amount went? I think the previous year was \$1242 minimum. This year, for this rates notice, \$1356. That works out to a 9.1% increase. How did we get such a high amount?

Mayor:

I will refer to the Executive Director of Corporate Services.

EDCS:

I just need to clarify a point of the question, there are different components that ratepayers will receive in their rates notice. So one charge for rates, one charge for rubbish, one charge for the emergency services levy; so what you're looking at is that just the rates component?

Mr Dunstan:

Purely for the GRV Residential Improvement and the rate in the dollar, minimum amount.

EDCS:

We will take that on notice so that we can look specifically at your particular rates. What I can advise is that the general increase last year, adopted by the Council, was 4.5% across the board. As you pointed out there was a general revaluation, so I would expect to see some variability between properties that are differentially rated. Those on minimum rate, I wouldn't ordinarily so I'd like to have a look into that one.

Mr Dunstan:

I'd like to elaborate. Back on the Council meeting on 26 April 2022 you had a four year business plan and in there you had rates index item 2, applying index across the board 4.5%. You've got here 4% and 3.1% for 2024, 2.7% for 2025 and 2.7% respectively over years in 2026. So I was looking at that and going back on those figures; and mine have gone up horrifically. So I just wondered whether that was across the board or whether I'm just lucky.

Mr Dennis Grimwood – 7 Sapphire Court, Mt Richon

In relation to question 2b, I said every other elector and resident was subject to obstacles. Perhaps if you change that to rigorous procedures, you would still get the intent of the question. The point being that this separate think tank group has direct access and doesn't have to go through the same procedures as the rest of us.

In relation to question 6 which you rejected, by not allowing the question, it puts that in my mind, that's just straight out political censorship because we have a lot of people here who might accept the question as valid but whether they do or not doesn't matter. But unless I put the question then it can't be considered or responded to. That still leaves you open to not answer it but by not putting a question, that is straight out censorship. Thank you.

Mayor:

Mr Grimwood, how about you come and read the question yourself?

Q6:

Council, the stated objective of your "Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025" is "UNITY".

How can you hope to achieve unity when the plan itself promotes division by favouring one section of the community over another and you have already damaged the unity provided by the "one nation-one flag" Australian flag by flying minority interest flags alongside it)?

Mayor:

So I will now say that I reject the premise of the question that we are damaging unity by flying more than just the Australian flag. We do of course fly only the flags that are in accordance with the Government's protocols and we follow the Government's protocols. It's not flag flying for flag flying's sake. We haven't got our own flags or private interest flags that we fly. We follow the rules set down by the Department.

Mr Douglas Healy – 11 William Street, Armadale

Q1:

I'm just querying within the Annual Report, Aboriginal Development takes up six pages, a large amount. And it has a whole lot of interesting things that the Aboriginal Development covers that the Council is involved in, without adding up the cost of everything else like that. I notice that there's nobody around representing this area at our meeting. Instead of just having negative comments, can Council make arrangements to have somebody from the Aboriginal area attend our electors' meeting and give us a bit of a rundown on how successful Council has been with all these projects? Because it's not just one off, they are projects that are going to be continuing for years and the other area is law and order. I also noticed that possibly the Council could invite somebody from the local police to come along and advise us what is actually happening. Because we are the electors as we don't get told the current situation with law and order. If you look at in future, that we have somebody come along and turn this meeting into an informative project as well as having the negatives come out.

Mayor:

That would be a great idea and I would love to be able to change the government's ideas about how we must run this meeting but it's run in accordance with the Local Government Act and they've said that we have to keep doing this meeting which can become quite a negative experience for people if it goes a certain way. It would be a great idea to be able to provide more informative and positive information so it's a two way information sharing experience but that's not what the state government says.

Mr Healy:

You don't have to make it compulsory but you can issue an invitation to these groups if they want to come along, because they're representing us and also some areas are taking our money as well.

CEO:

It may be that if it's not the Annual Electors Meeting, that we're able, particularly for the law and order element to bring the local police along with neighbourhood watch and actually have a community information session for rate payers. I know that the neighbourhood watch group would be really keen to partner with us on that. And we have a great relationship with the local police, so that's something that you don't have to wait a full twelve months for one of these meetings. We can do that and make sure an invitation goes out to you so you can come along.

Mr Healy:

The Aboriginal Development part is, just looking here, the involvement that Council has with all these, I think that meets your criteria that you are quoting that you must have with this reconciliation part, that you must have the reconciliation but you already have your involvement without that. There are some here not happy with the reconciliation part, so I just bring that to your attention.

Mr Phil Davey – 12 Lenore Street, Roleystone

Q3:

Net Zero by 2030

November 2021 saw the media release about the COA's ambitious carbon reduction target by the Corporate Greenhouse Action Plan of September 2021. It was reported that the COA were leading the way in these reductions. Can you give an overview of how the City is tracking currently towards 2030 and is there any reportable status available online or otherwise, to the residents of that progress?

CEO:

I hadn't prepared those figures for tonight but certainly very happy to assist with those. In terms of some of the major means by which we've been addressing those, is the installation of a significant number of solar arrays on our major buildings. We've also worked with Synergy with part of a pilot called Project Symphony which is the largest battery renewable storage project in WA and is actually being studied by universities all over Australia; and that's located outside of our aquatic and recreation facility (the AFAC). No, not in Roleystone. Because that was actually one of the highest areas in that portion of the grid, of solar panel installations. So that was strategically chosen.

We've also worked with the West Australian Local Government Association so they collated all local governments' needs with regard to electric vehicle charging points so that we could put in a collective bid for funding to the Federal Government and that's been successful. In fact I've just signed the grant agreement this week and Council had to commit to the purchase of electric vehicles as part of that grant agreement. You may have noticed in our Budget that there were three EVs that were down to be purchased. So one of those charging points is going again at the AFAC so that the public will be able to charge their vehicles while they go and have a workout or a swim. There are lots of projects that are underway that are reducing our Corporate Greenhouse emissions. We also work regionally with the Switch Your Thinking group and they are looking at projects across the City of Gosnells, Armadale and Serpentine Jarrahdale. And they do rebate schemes for residents so if you were wanting to install electric saving devices within your home, solar panels, etc, you can actually get discounts as a result of the Switch Your Thinking program. So, that's aimed obviously at community greenhouse reduction and we're doing everything we can as a City. We're also installing building monitoring systems so that we can better target the 'leakage' or if we've noticed there's overuse of water or power.

And the City has also been working, our Executive Director Corporate Services, has been part of a group of local governments who have been pushing Western Power for the ability for us to replace the ageing luminaires on street lights, which are absolutely terrible in terms of contributing to greenhouse emissions, to energy saving LEDs and looking at that being a part of a major rollout and there's literally thousands of tonnes of CO2 that would be reduced within the City itself if we're able to do that. As for the specific total of tonnes, I don't have those but we are pretty passionate about the things that we are doing.

Q4:

Communication and Engagement. It's one we've discussed before with a motion raised at the 2022 AGM. The reply from COA for that topic highlighted the COA's community engagement policy and a further notation 4.4.1.3 quoting "seek to implement innovative methods of community engagement, coordinate engagement to reduce the impact on residents and ensure that engagement is timely and meaningful.

So based on recent events (I refer to the garden) and the lack of community group consultation prior to any referral, motion or Council discussion, I again question the process being adhered and engaged towards our community groups by way of direct discussion and community involvement before Council and/or Councillors move towards decisions affecting those community groups.

I again question the process.

CEO:

The City sought direction from the Council and the Council's direction was to go out and consult with the community garden group and the Roley Bushcare Group.

Mr Davey:

I was there at that meeting but my question is why wasn't there any communication prior to that?

CEO:

Because we're not able to until we've got that direction from Council.

Mayor:

So you're talking about communication for a specific case between Councillors with community groups, not the City's consultation?

Mr Davey:

I'll start with the Councillors because they are our elected representatives and I would hope they would talk to the community groups prior to making any referrals or motions towards any subject.

Mayor:

That's something that is up to individual Councillors; how they deal with community issues and also who they might be communicating with. The City does not have control over that.

Mr Davey:

And just to that same reference, the question also rolls into the updates and changes towards community groups lease arrangements. With current venues where the groups and their volunteer committee members have been experiencing concern and/or stress over the level of communication (lack of) and engagement by the City of Armadale to those groups and the delays they have faced. The leasing changes started back in 2023 and currently are still not finalised for various groups, with some noted to be for mid 2024. What engagement communication are being made to those groups currently awaiting the updates or outcomes towards their possible futures?

Mayor:

I don't know what groups you're talking about but I know that we have reviewed our leasing policy and as those leases come up, we have got a significant backlog of leases that will have to be worked through.

CEO:

We have finite resources within our team to process those leases. A report was put to Council after the adoption of the leasing policy, and that would be the dates you're referring to, and what they did was grouped the leases to be reviewed into the high priority leases. We are systematically working through those. Sitting down with community groups and going through the issues. Some groups are reviewing leases themselves. We do modify the engagement depending on the feedback and desire of the group(s) themselves.

Ms Veronica Hansen – 8 Protector Grove, Roleystone

Q3:

Great to hear that this meeting is being recorded. My question is about livestreaming of Council meetings. Livestreaming and recording officially commences 1 January 2025 as per WALGA. WALGA has also stated that you can start earlier if you wish.

My question has been raised at several electors AGMs. In 2021 there was a motion put through Corporate Services that was a referral motion that was eventually dealt with in 11 October 2021 and the premise was to identify possible funding sources to make sure the City's systems were upgraded. The timetable to amend the City's Standing Orders to accommodate livestreaming and the possibility of implementing livestreaming in the current FY22 financial year. In 2022 Corporate Services adopted a report that was for target implementation in January 2023.

Has this been actioned and is the equipment ready to go? If so, why are we not using that now?

CEO:

Yes there has been progress. The City has procured all of the equipment required. Legislative change has come about not only in regard to livestreaming, and the City was keen to see what the specifications were in relation to that. But also in relation to the Standing Orders. At the moment, there's consultation out with regard to Local Government Standing Orders. And there's going to be Model Standing Orders put in across the state. There's been legislative change, we have procured equipment. Also as part of that legislative change, there was an indication around a need for policy development. At the last SOHAG meeting, they considered the draft policy on livestreaming. That livestreaming policy will go to Council in next couple of months. The intent is that everything will be in place and ready to go to meet the legislative requirements for 1 January 2025, if not sooner, if Council so determines.

Ms Hansen:

I noted on one of those minutes that you had reference to three other councils that had policies so I assume that there's been some sharing of information. Given that it's been going through the motions for a couple of years, if it can be brought in even earlier that would be appreciated from the public's point of view.

Ms Pat Hart – 160 Croyden Road, Roleystone

Q1:

Are you aware how grateful all the environmental groups are that volunteer within the City of Armadale, the Armadale Gosnells Landcare Group, the Environmental Centre and all the volunteers that work on the environment, really grateful for the great support we get from Council. It is really amazing. The City of Armadale really sets a high standard as how they work with the volunteers and our communications with all Councillors and officers is outstanding. So thank you very much, it is very much appreciated, together we all make a difference, so thank you.

Mayor:

Thank you very much, that's much appreciated and good to hear.

Mr Ian Dunston – U19/24 Aragon Court, Armadale

Q2:

Confidentiality of Minutes of Council Meetings

This was raised at the AGM in 2022, Motion 3 that was brought in regarding the confidentiality.

Mr Dunstan:

Lot 301 Abbey Road, Armadale for principle shared path. An issue in the Minutes was deemed confidential. What was confidential? Short term accommodation was going in and re-zoned as an activity zone. Is that now going to change? What's going to happen with Lot 301. Did the City get money back from state government on the purchase of that part parcel of land or a land swap?

CEO:

In terms of that particular report there's been a development application. At that time, the City needed to consider its negotiating position with state government. We need to go to Council to get that direction. When negotiating you don't want the other party to know your hand as that weakens your position. The matter was considered behind closed doors so the City was able to get Council's direction regarding the negotiating position and to go forward. The outcome of that is now in DA3.

Mr Dunstan:

Is it still confidential? What was the outcome? Has the city been paid for it?

CEO:

Those negotiations are still continuing. In terms of the outcome, that will be agreed between the parties. There are a lot of matters at play and we are trying to get the best outcome for the community. I can't disclose the outcome at this stage but it was to facilitate the principal shared path. The reason the path does that double circle was so that important trees (400yrs old) didn't get bowled over for the path to go through. The very first plan put to the City showed those trees destroyed. They not only have environmental value but also significant cultural value with respect to those trees. That facilitated the need for the double circle on the Abbey Road land to then come underneath the viaduct. The project is moving very fast, they've closed the rail line, there are multiple DAs, multiple conditions within those DAs and matters still not determined. We try and keep Councillors as informed as we can but often information is received without a lot of time to review really complex matters but we are trying to ensure we understand what the community values, particularly that set of trees are preserved.

Q3:

Another one you had was on the confidential report at the Council meeting on 6 June 2023, was the proposed regional health and medical precinct business case. You spoke about this earlier on. This is going to be located somewhere in the CBD, can we get more of an explanation of what it's going to be, the height of the structure, all of these sorts of things and the location, for the residents?

Mayor:

We don't have a site, it's an advocacy position. We are advocating for a health precinct to be established within the City of Armadale. We don't have a location or any details. What we need is to partner with the state government and probably a private provider as well. We have parcels of land and there are developers with parcels of land. There's not a concrete site earmarked; and there will be lots of public consultation. At the moment, we

are lacking services so we're advocating for improvements and for it to be centralised within the CBD to activate the economy and make us a more functional city centre.

Mr Dunstan:

One other point on the confidentiality of the Eighth Road project update from 11 March 2024 that was closed to the public and deemed confidential. I have a property off Eighth Road. This has been dragging on for some time and I think the budget was carried forward for this financial year. It doesn't say anything more about the update. I've had a Council representative along with Western Power with respect to my property because the power is going underground at some stage or possibly is going. Will it affect my property? What's actually happening with the Eighth Road upgrade, when is it likely to start? Will it start at the eastern end? Can I have some information on this? It's been around for a long time.

CEO:

That is a really complex project. Development WA were progressing with the project and doing the land acquisition and the project kept getting put off because they were unsuccessful in negotiating the land acquisitions. The City received some funding for Eighth Road and have been able to achieve some of the service relocations necessary to facilitate the design of the road. The initial design was also done by Development WA and unfortunately it didn't identify some of the service relocations that were required. There's an added difficulty with Main Roads who are progressing the traffic light installation at the intersection with Armadale Road. Initially they were going to complete the intersection and the tie in works to Eighth Road but they've reduced the amount they are going to do, to only that intersection area. As such, there's been a need for the City to consider there's a further stage of works than originally planned. One site is incredibly difficult and land acquisition for that site hasn't been achieved and negotiations are ongoing with that party to try and resolve. The City has put forward an option into those negotiations; and we're hopeful they will be accepted. Until that land acquisition is confirmed, and the ultimate layout of the road is landed on and agreed to by Council, particularly with respect to any impact on existing vegetation, when any prerequisites have been determined, we can then give you clarity on what will be happening with Eighth Road.

Mr Dunstan:

There's been dilly dallying going on and the acquisition still in limbo at this stage of the game.

CEO:

There hasn't been dilly dallying. Development WA were quite unsuccessful so 18 months or so ago, the City took over the land acquisition component and apart from one land owner, we've been able to acquire all of the land that's needed. We've been able to get the service relocations happening. Those costs have come in higher than expected because the original design by Development WA didn't properly identify and address them. The City has done all those works, obtained quotes for all the service providers, so that the costings, with respect to service relocations, are based on real quotes. The City has been doing everything we can to get as ready as we possibly can.

Mr Dunstan:

With these elements being drawn out, is it likely there's going to be a cost increase or blowout?

CEO:

The costs have increased for everything we do. With that particular job we've had construction costing increases but also scoping increases to address the works that Main Roads is now doing. And we've also had cost increases because the original designs didn't adequately identify the service relocations required. So yes, there will be. We will be working with funding bodies and looking at, if we get go ahead from Council, how we could maximise funding to defray those cost increases.

Q4:

Regarding the CEO performance review in October 2023 and the Key Performance Indicators. I know it was discussed at the last AGM of electors. I think that was going through the state government as some sort of legislative requirement as to what the KPIs would be and there's also a contract review of CEO. When is your contract up and how is it reviewed? Is it by Council, by a select few, how is that arrived?

Mayor:

It's by Council. There is a CEO's Review Panel and they can make recommendations to full Council and it's voted on by full Council. And the CEO's contract has been renewed; and the new contract expires in October 2029. And KPIs are set every year.

CEO:

The state government is bringing in as part of local government reforms, the requirement for CEO KPIs to be public. The reforms haven't been finalised and gazetted for that requirement yet but it's imminent.

Q5:

In the Council minutes for Technical Services on 8 May 2023 about the tree canopy, there was an optional consideration for a database for the tree assets with a cost of \$1M. There were four options being looked at. Has that been considered for the 2024 Budget? It seems a lot of money for a database for trees. Has that been agreed to?

Mayor:

Yes we allocated \$1M and we are working on a database for trees. That's been agreed to and passed through Council. It's incredibly important because of our changing environment and the tree losses we're experiencing through development and re-development. The City of Armadale controls our verges but not what happens on people's private property. Our community, Councillors and officers are noticing massive tree losses; and the heat island effect (data on heat being produced off hard surfaces), particularly in our new suburbs that don't have established trees. We need to have a look and monitor what trees we have in the landscape, particularly on our verges and that's what we are getting some data on.

We need to know if trees are surviving; whether they're being ripped out; if they're dying; how much canopy they're producing. We've got some very disappointing canopy figures and some heat being produced and coming off hard surfaces. Trying to mitigate that absorption is very important for liveability of suburbs for the future. If it's not monitored, we don't get results.

Q5:

I sent through a query about shopping trolleys and the state of Neerigen Street with the closure of the footpath on the south side Armadale Road. I did get a response from you, the presiding member, thank you for that. And I also got a later response from the Executive Director Technical Services who pointed me to shopping trolley collectors. I referred to an incident where the footpath was covered in trolleys. The footpath is there for pedestrians and people with mobility issues. Like to ask that the City contact the shopping centres and ask them to pick up their trolleys or get someone to pick them up and impound them.

Mayor:

The question is what can we do? I believe we've been in contact; it's a perennial problem and I agree it's appalling and the collection of trolleys on the footpath is terrible. We do have communications with the shopping centre management to alert them it's not on. However, their response is like every other shopping centre and they will get round to the clean up, get trolley people out. Getting them to do better is our goal. We have collected and impounded trolleys in the past but they're not worth it to them to collect; they write them off. Impounding doesn't work. Working with the management, we could start fining them for littering.

Q6:

Wirra Willa Gardens. The City purchased that property for \$2M. Is that correct?

Mayor:

Yes we did.

Mr Dunstan:

What happens with that? Will that be open to the public as gardens of historical nature? Is that what it's going to be?

Mayor:

Yes. At the moment the garden is being fenced to make safe to keep people out and we have employed a very small team. Members of our Parks crew have been making the garden safe. It is a very significant heritage listed garden of great interest to historians in the local district, tree lovers and others that love a park and water. The eventual plan is to get it to a stage where we can get public to come through there. And we are looking at various ways of putting infrastructure in to make it accessible to a wide variety of people. The gardens were really run down. The original house is being assessed (asbestos, white ants). The trees were neglected, which are heritage listed, have needed pruning and making safe. This is the work being undertaken now.

We have an Engage page on our website where people can ask questions, get updates and see photographs. We have a small management working group made up of some officers and Councillors and we bring in some expertise when we need to. There are plants in there that are very rare and special. We've had various societies/groups go in to have a look and take cuttings (some form of MOU to be organised), etc. there are a lot of uses we're looking at for the garden and the public will definitely be allowed in there. We are making it safe at the moment.

Q7:

Emails I've sent regarding Metronet and Metconnx

I've had a huge problem as I'm right on the edge of the works, with traffic management, trucks, dust, etc. I've sent emails to Metronet, Metconnx, the City and Minister Safiotti, with not a great deal back from her. Is the City able to cc me in to their response to Metconnx and/or the minister? I'm not getting a great deal back. I have to put everything in writing to Metconnx. I had huge problems when they demolished the bridge. I don't hear anything back from the City.

Mayor:

There are 19 staff working on that project and we are definitely going in to bat for residents and the City. We want to protect our infrastructure and your way of life. It's a huge project with many moving parts and it's going so fast that you might complain one minute and you write a letter or make a phone call, and by the time that someone goes out to have a look, they're all gone and the work is done. It's awful and we get what's going on. The City not getting a lot of response either, so nothing really to cc you into. As soon as we get answers from them, we reply to your correspondence.

Q8:

You put out for public comment on the mall upgrade. I haven't seen a cost on this. What is it going to achieve? Is there a budget for it? How's it going to rejuvenate the mall as part of the public realm (train station, basketball courts)?

Mayor:

The furniture in the mall has needed replacing for a long time and there needs to be better lighting. It will cost some money to get that work done. There is a budget but I don't have that specific information. It's been approved through Council. We did get a grant from the federal government for lighting (part of grant). The goal of changing the seating is to dissuade people from gathering in large groups and laying around. We're changing the seating so that it has arms that can sit two or three people and doesn't look like a daybed; that's been a request of users of the mall and businesses for a long time. Lighting can be safety matter and an encouragement of people to traverse the mall when the train station reopens and providing a link between the station precinct and the mall. The upgrade to the mall and that integration area across Commerce Avenue is important; addressing some of those issues.

Mr Dunstan:

Have we got a figure on that or is that confidential?

Mayor:

No, it's not confidential

CEO:

We'll have to take that on notice.

2.4 Motions received from the floor

MOTION-1

MOVED Mr Phil Davey, SECONDED Ms Veronica Hansen
OPPOSED Mr D Grimwood

That the City of Armadale enable all motions by Councillors to require a seconder to further enable full and proper discussion within Council for that motion; and a recorded final vote for or against the said motion. In the absence of a seconder, the presiding member is compelled to second the motion.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION-2

MOVED Ms Veronica Hansen, SECONDED Mr Phil Davey

That the Council adopt livestreaming by the end of this financial year, 30 June 2024.

MOTION CARRIED

The Mayor thanked all the electors and rate payers who attended.

Closure

I now declare the meeting closed.

MEETING DECLARED CLOSED AT 8.57PM