



Town of Cottesloe

**STRATEGIC PLANNING
COMMITTEE
19 FEBRUARY 2014**

**WALGA CENTRAL METROPOLITAN
ZONE MOTION**

ATTACHMENT

**LETTER - SHIRE OF WAGIN -
REQUEST FOR SUPPORT**

Lydia Giles

Subject: FW: Seeking Support - Zone Motion
Attachments: Shire of Wagin - Amalgamations.docx

From: Peter Webster [mailto:ceo@wagin.wa.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 31 January 2014 3:04 PM
Subject: Seeking Support - Zone Motion

Good afternoon All

The Shire of Wagin are submitting the attached motion to the next Central Country Zone meeting regarding local government amalgamations.

Council believes that local government needs to make a stance regarding this matter particularly following on from the proposal to amalgamated York, Tammin, Quairading & Cunderdin not being recommended by the LG Advisory Board recently.

This Council is seeking you Councils support in having this motion listed at your next Council meeting and submitted to your zone for consideration.

A letter will be sent to your Mayor / President in the near future regarding this matter.

Should you wish to discuss this matter more fully please contact either myself or Cr Phillip Blight 0429 948 868

I look forward to your Councils support with the motion.

Regards

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Shire of Wagin

Motion to Central Country Zone of WALGA

28th February 2014

COMMENT

As some of you would know, WALGA, as the representative body for Local Government in Western Australia, has held the position for some time that some structural reform is needed.

Several years ago it commissioned a report titled "The Journey" now commonly referred to as the SSS Report.

Clause 3.3 of The Scope for Change in the SSS Report introduction says:

"The SSS Panel Report was careful to emphasise that there was no demonstrated case that amalgamations of Local Governments will deliver improved outcomes. The forced amalgamation of Local Governments without existing capability and without specific regard to the ability to deliver more sustainable arrangements offers slim prospects of improvement. The extensive work of the five working parties which have generated the Plan has confirmed this conclusion."

In 2009 the then Minister for Local Government John Castrilli MLA announced a policy to reform local government in W.A. There were few guidelines and largely a lack of direction other than to say that there are too many local governments and this should be changed.

Sustainability was used as the focus and little or no regard was given for the valuable contribution that Local Government provides for a community and the social dividend of that.

Councils and staff have invested thousands of hours and millions of dollars to comply with the Minister's regulatory requests to submit business case plans and develop strategies within those plans.

Most, if not all Local Governments fulfilled these obligations in writing direct to the Minister through the Department of Local Government.

Since then the State Government has shifted its reform focus away from the country areas towards the metropolitan area. There are concerns however, that whatever happens in the metropolitan area will be repeated in the country.

The State Government has no mandate or ethical position to accuse Local Government of being poor managers of assets and finances.

Successive State Government's, have neglected to maintain essential infrastructure such as Tier 3 railways, roads, hospitals, electricity supply grids, water supplies throughout WA. Local Governments and their communities are adversely impacted by that.

In fact there is considerable pressure on Local Governments to increase the range of services that they deliver and also to manage this within already tight budgets. Cost shifting by both State and Federal Governments has been a large part of that. Rural local governments are increasingly having to fund medical services as well as provide housing for police, teachers and doctors. There has been a steady withdrawal of state services and decline in the standards of infrastructure.

If the State and Federal governments were to resume funding tasks that are not the core function of Local Government, then the relief to the Local Government budgets would, in most cases rejuvenate their sustainability.

The following motion is submitted by the Shire of Wagin for consideration and support

1. That WALGA reject any moves by the State Government to force the amalgamation of local governments.
2. That amalgamations, mergers and boundary changes be supported by WALGA only if introduced and supported by the effected Local Governments.
3. That each Local Government community be entitled to hold a poll if structural change is proposed.
4. That this resolution be submitted to the Central Country Zone of WALGA for consideration by the zone.
5. That the Shire President circulates this resolution to ALL WA Local Governments via email and letter seeking their support and requesting that they submit this motion to their next Zone meeting for consideration.

