



Minutes

Annual General Meeting of Electors

Monday 3 February 2025 6pm



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1. Official opening, welcome and acknowledgement

The Presiding Member Mayor, Hannah Fitzhardinge declared the meeting open at 6:00pm and welcomed electors to the meeting.

2. Attendance

Ms Hannah Fitzhardinge	Mayor / Presiding Member
Mr Glen Dougall	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Matt Hammond	Director City Business
Ms Vikki Barlow	A/Director Creative Arts and Community
Mr Graham Tattersall	Director Infrastructure
Mr Russell Kingdom	Director Planning, Place and Urban Development
Ms Alida Ferreira	Manager Financial Services
Ms Melody Foster	Manager Governance
Mr David Settelmaier	Manager Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations
Ms Gabrielle Woulfe	Meeting Support Officer
Ms Marie Vitanza	Meeting Support Officer
Ms Maddie Knorr	Meeting Support Officer

There were approximately 89 members of the public and no members of the press present at the meeting.

3. Annual Report

3.1 Presentation of the Annual Report

A presentation on the Annual Report 2023-24 was presented by the Director City Business.

3.2 Public question time: Annual Report

Craig Ross asked the following questions:

Question 1:

Page 23 refers to a \$2.3m net result, however had there not been an investment property revaluation of \$9m, the City would have recorded a net loss of \$6.7m. Why did investment properties rise by 39% and who performed the valuation?

Question 2:

In relation to page 22, why is Capital Revenue amount of \$1.5m significantly lower by \$5.2m than the budgeted revenue of \$7.7m?

Question 3:

On page 23, only Operating Revenue is noted and for transparency why is



Operating Expenditure not mentioned which is \$8m higher than budgeted expenditure?

Question 4:

In relation to asset valuation methodology discrepancies; due to the lack of a proper response in the prior year over the methodology accuracy of the Park Infrastructure revaluation and the refusal by the City to transparently provide property listings as done in prior years, the question is being asked again, what are the methodology assumptions and common sense reasons that Park Infrastructure was revalued upwards in FY23 from a carrying value of \$10m to \$70m?

Question 5:

In Note 9 of the financial report the value of Park Infrastructure dropped by \$5.7m during FY24 due to depreciation. Is the City willing to invest approximately that amount each year as required to meet the asset sustainability ratio?

Question 6:

Why is the actual capital expenditure for FY24 of \$6.5m yet again so miserably low compared to the budget of \$24.5m?

Question 7:

Based on the 6 months YTD FY25 results capital expenditure is only \$5.7m against an unrealistic annual budget of \$22.2m, why are project managers not held accountable for project delivery failures and poor budgeting that has been consistently occurring every year?

Question 8:

When will the updated Long Term Business Plan transparently be available to allow proper analysis against financial reports that are now being presented to ratepayers or see how realistic the figures are to the community service and corporate plans?

Question 9:

Will the presumably draft but unavailable Long Term Business Plan include the cashflow payments and receipts associated with the proposed rate increase above CPI, underground power project, loan required to pay Western Power, realistic and sustainable capital expenditure, when Quarry Street properties and other council properties are scheduled to be sold?

Question 10:

Why has the sale of the Quarry Street properties been shelved and reclassified in the FY24 financial statements, and how will the FY25 budget be balanced without the proceeds from the sale of the Quarry Street properties?



Question 11:

What buildings, land, parks and carparks is the Council intending to sell in the coming three to five years, and is the Council intending to sell the Leisure Centre carpark?

Question 12:

The City attempted to prematurely shoehorn into the last FY25 budget the \$16.5m service charge for the South Fremantle underground power project without the normal preparation of a proper business plan or cost benefit analysis, will the City be preparing proper documentation?

Question 13:

Given the underground power project was not intended to commence until FY26 and the City claims it is in a strong financial position, why was there such a desperate money grab in advance by the City from ratepayers in FY25?

Question 14:

Has the Western Power co-funding agreement been signed, and if so, what is the City's contribution?

Question 15:

How much is the City intending to borrow to meet the construction payments to Western Power for the underground power project?

Question 16:

What is the current budgeted 'Total Project Costs' for the entire South Beach changeroom project? This includes all costs, landscaping, design fees, demolition, any associated costs, road, footpath & parking changes, etc, related to the project. Will the projected forecast budget be less or exceed \$4m?

Question 17:

Why are heritage assets are not shown separately and transparently in the Note 8 of the FY24 report to both highlight and showcase the heritage assets of Fremantle?

Response by Director City Business:

The asset valuation was completed by AV Advisory, a required evaluation under regulations. The capital revenue discrepancy was due to the timing of some of the grants which were budgeted in the year. In relation to operating revenue on page 23, that refers to City income only. The annual financial statements provide a detailed overview of expenditure from page 87 onwards. The regulations require assets to be valued every five years. It is not unusual for some assets to vary significantly over that period. That period also saw the completion and capitalisation of a number of projects that incorporated substantial volumes of turf, trees, and other parks infrastructure, including the re-development of the Fremantle public golf course.



The asset sustainability ratio is no longer used by the State and the City refers to the incoming Local Government Financial Index ratio rate. A key strategy in our long-term plan is to increase the investment made to asset renewals, so the City will be investing in parks infrastructure annually.

Budgets are set at the start of each financial year and provide an estimate of expected expenditure throughout the year. A number of high value projects were planned and budgeted for in the 2023/2024 financial year. Some capital works projects depended on the involvement of third parties which may cause delays on projects. Some projects are subject to cost increases and delays due to market conditions beyond the City's control. Despite this, the City has been able to substantially progress some of those major projects that have been impacted by those delays in that year, within the current financial year.

The capital programs are developed annually based on asset management requirements and community need. While some projects may experience delays or rephasing due to a range of factors those projects still require the allocation of funds in the budget regardless of when the project is required to be delivered.

A renewed version of the Long Term Financial Plan will be tabled for Council consideration in June 2025. An updated draft of the plan has been presented to Elected Members to commence 2025-2026 budget deliberations. It has been in draft over that period so that the City can design it to work for Council and corporate needs.

Unfortunately the purchaser of the Quarry street properties determined they no longer wish to proceed with the sale. Due to accounting standards, the City had to reclassify the property as community land. Proceeds running over budget are going into reserves, thus there was no impact to the operating budget.

Should we intend to sell anything, including buildings, land, and carparks, it will be included in the long term financial plan and the respective budget year for Council approval. Both the current Depo site and Leisure Centre carpark do present opportunities for re-development, however the appropriate plan and business case is yet to be completed for either site.

The City undertook community consultation in 2024 and further developed an approach to assist Western Power to roll out the underground power services project. The City will be running regular three-weekly community sessions in South Fremantle from Wednesday 5 February. The City will be recovering the costs of the project from residence on behalf of Western Power, and ideally that cost is collected over a longer period of time to ease cash flow requirements on residence and avoid any additional interest charges that may result in the City having to take on any borrowing associated with the project.



The City signed an MOU with Western Power. As it is a Western Power project the City doesn't intend to make its own contribution, rather the City is simply facilitating the collection of the costs required from residents, which is approximately only 20% of the total project cost. Based on Western Power's current estimate, the project will cost approximately \$48m. It is currently the City's preference that the City doesn't borrow any money for this project. However, the City will continue to discuss Western Powers cash flow requirements as they further progress the project.

The budgeted amount for the South Beach toilets and change rooms in the 2024/2025 budget is \$3.4m. The City has prior year expenditure of \$715,000 which totals an estimated cost of \$4.1m. There is an additional parking project which is being considered, but that is separate which is currently budgeted at \$250,000.

The City acknowledges that the disclosure of assets has been asked for in the past. It is only an opinion that the requirement is best practice, it is not included in the accounting standards nor required by the OAG. As there is no statutory requirement to do so, it hasn't been a priority for the City, however, the City notes it would add value to the financial reporting and it will be considered as part of the City's improvements to the annual report in future years.

The following electors made a statement in relation to the Annual Report:

Andrew Luobikis
Craig Ross
Marija Vujcic

3.3 Receival of the Annual Report

**ELECTORS DECISION
(Officer's recommendation)**

Moved: Jenny Archibald

Seconded: Sam Wainwright

That the City of Fremantle Annual Report 2023-24, provided in Attachment 1, be received.

Motion LOST



4. Public question time: General

Heather Wright asked the following questions:

Question 1:

In reference to the CEO's message in the annual report "conservation and sustainability are central to our operations as we move towards net zero emissions". What does that mean, and what is that going to cost us?

Question 2:

What is the role of the Mayor, and what authority do you have? What is the role of the Councillors, and what authority do they have? Where is this information written down?

Response by the Chief Executive Officer:

The state government is currently going through some Local Government reforms, although the role of the Mayor, the Councillors, and the CEO are still listed within the *Local Government Act 1995* (Section: 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, and 5.41).

The role of the Mayor is to be the spokesperson of the City of Fremantle, who speaks on our policies and strategic initiatives. The role of the Council is to set direction for the executive. The role of the CEO is to implement this direction.

Response:

Question 1 has been taken on notice.

Elisabeth Megroz asked the following questions:

Question 1:

Referring to the Trees on City Owned or Managed Land Policy, given that trees near buildings need regular pruning maintenance with regard to preventing costly maintenance works to roofs and gutters, and with regards to health and safety issues, can you please advise and clarify what the practical and financial implications are for rate payers by the City covering all aspects that concern the removal of unwanted overhanging branches from City owned trees onto private properties?

Question 2:

In relation to the Change Makers Program, what were the direct inputs on the City of Fremantle policies and plans by past participants? For how many past participants were there opportunities to take part in paid consultations? Are paid consultations one off or ongoing engagements? Who is responsible for the implementation of this program? Who decides on the content of this program? What is the cost of this program to the ratepayers?



Response by Director Infrastructure:

In respect to ad hoc responses to trees, the City have a natural areas team that will monitor the health of trees, it is responsive. Additionally, the City do have planned work programs. It is very hard to predict and manage all trees, in respect to leaf drop and overhanging, so the City manage it on a case-by-case basis. In respect to trees in or near Western Power lines, the City has an annual pruning contract with a contractor and actively liaise with Western Power on a health and safety perspective.

Response by Acting Director Creative Arts and Community:

The Change Makers Program was a new program which commenced in 2023/2024, which is a youth leadership program. The program had 10 young people aged between 18 and 30, which have been involved in a number of paid consultation activities; around 2-3 opportunities. The program will continue to run and the City are seeking new members for the youth leadership program. It is funded through staff time and support and \$5,302.00 has been spent on the program.

Sam Wainwright asked the following question:

Question 1:

The report titled "Building Defence Social License in the Perth South West Region" by the South West Metropolitan Alliance assumes that it is the job of the local government to build social license for the so-called defence industry. On what basis, on who's authority, and why with our money?

Response:

This question has been taken on notice.

Mark Woodcock asked the following questions:

Question 1:

How long will the decommissioning phase take for the Resource Recovery Group, and when will the City's current investment, valuing \$2.4m at 30 June 2024, be written down to nil?

Question 2:

How much more are residents paying by contributing to subsidise RRG's model until the 31st of December 2025, rather than switching to more efficient and effective service providers as other Councils have done?

Question 3:

How much are Councillor's being paid to oversee the RRG?



Question 4:

Why are the heritage assets not shown separately and transparently in the annual report, in accordance with note 4 of the report, to better highlight and showcase Fremantle’s heritage assets?

Question 5:

Is it true that the Town Hall will no longer be receiving it’s internal renovations and painting which was promised to the community?

Response by Director Infrastructure:

The City of Fremantle, the City of Canning, the City of Melville, and the Town of East Fremantle formed the Waste Management Collective model, working together to negotiate the ways to wind up the RRG, and the future of the Regional Resource Recovery Centre site at Canning Vale. It is only the City of Fremantle and Melville left in the RRG at this time. The City is negotiating with Melville to find the optimum solution and keep the site running and possibly engage a third party to operate the Materials Recovery Facility and FOGO facility at the site.

The City’s contributions to the RRG are an investment; for a long time the City has invested in state of the art technology and really pushed the City forward in terms of recycling. The City is proud of what has been achieved. It is costly, and the market has caught up, so there are new opportunities the City wants to take advantage of.

Response by Director City Business:

In relation to heritage asset reporting, as previously mentioned there is no statutory requirement to do so, however, the City note it would add value to the financial reporting and it will be considered as part of the City’s improvements to the annual report, ongoing.

Response by the Chief Executive Officer:

There are some forward works on the forward budget for the Town Hall; the City was looking to use some of the proceeds of the sale of Victoria Hall to fund those. Victoria Hall wasn’t sold in 2024. The City is looking to reevaluate how to fund the works moving forward. Over the next four years there are allocations to complete works on the Town Hall.

Response:

Question 3 has been taken on notice.

Marija Vujcic asked the following questions:

Question 1:

How were the 300 overs distributed across the wards in the City of Fremantle in the 2021 election?



Question 2:

How were the 400 overs distributed across the wards in the City of Fremantle in the 2023 election?

Question 3:

What were the reasons for the issuance of 300 overs in the 2021 and the 400 in the 2023 elections?

Question 4:

Were the overs issued due to any anticipated errors, printing issues, or a higher-than-expected voter turnout?

Question 5:

What steps were taken to ensure that the overs were issued only when necessary and that they did not affect the election results?

Question 6:

What procedures were followed to ensure that the overs were accounted for and not counted as valid votes?

Question 7:

How were the overs securely handled and tracked throughout the election process to ensure they were not inadvertently included in the count?

Question 8:

Were any scrutineers involved in monitoring the use of overs during the 2021 and 2023 elections?

Question 9:

Were there any instances where the use of overs raised concerns during the election or at any point in the tallying process?

Question 10:

Is there a formal audit or a review process in place to verify that the overs were not improperly used in the election count?

Question 11:

Can you provide the public with a report on how the overs were managed and used during the election, including any potential discrepancies or irregularities?

Question 12:

Is there any indication that the use of overs had an impact on the election outcome, particularly in the close races or contested wards?



Question 13:

Can you confirm that the final vote tally was only based on valid ballots, and that no overs were mistakenly counted in the result?

Question 14:

What steps are being taken to prevent the potential misuse or confusion surrounding overs in future elections?

Question 15:

Has the City of Fremantle or the WA Electoral Commission reviewed the process of issuing overs to ensure that it is in line with best practices and electoral integrity?

Response:

Questions 1 to 15 have been taken on notice.

Shirley Burbidge asked the following question:

Question 1:

Can we request the rubbish collectors to regularly visit the Round House?

Response by Director Infrastructure:

Thank you for raising this, the City will investigate further and liaise with you about ongoing cleaning.

Helen Cox asked the following questions:

Question 1:

In July 2024, I asked about the inadequately out of date Long Term Financial Plan and the CEO advised that it would be updated and brought forward to Council very soon. Why is the plan still not finalised six months later so ratepayers like myself can see amongst other figures, the overall trend of the forecast council rate increases and timing of underground power service project costs and charges?

Question 2:

When was the updated Long Term Financial Plan presented to Council members and why is it not on the City's website?

Question 3:

The latest update about the underground power project drop-in sessions indicate that the City has determined the most suitable approach to the calculation of service charges that will be collected from residents but without any further details. What is that suitable approach, what are the instalment payment options, and do I get a discount if I already have an underground power connection?



Question 4:

In July 2024 I also asked about the asset sustainability ratio which is an important financial health indicator, with the CEO's response being it is a difficult ratio to put together and no ratio was provided. Why does the CEO believe this key ratio is difficult to put together and what is the asset sustainability ratio for FY24?

Question 5:

Who and how has the administration been held accountable for yet again more construction delays at the South Beach changerooms due to the recent concrete flooring problems?

Response by Director City Business:

As mentioned previously, the City has a draft Long Term Financial Plan which has been used for the past 12 months to test it with Council, and to make sure it is appropriate for our ongoing planning, development of projects and budgets. The City intends to bring the plan forward for adoption with the budget this year.

The City is starting to provide some more information on underground power to the community, starting from Wednesday 5 February. Residents are welcome and can request information on estimated charges for their property and how those charges are being calculated. There will be a property connection fee and a transmission infrastructure charge, however those who already have a connection won't be required to pay for that. The City will be working with Western Power to identify which properties those are.

Response by Director Infrastructure:

The works that are currently being completed at the South Beach toilets and changerooms are to remove a floor that wasn't laid to specifications. The City committed to ensure the quality of the product was to a level accepted, and the specifications weren't met, so the City asked the contractor to re-do the works. The contractor also want a quality outcome and are carrying the cost.

The following electors made a statement in relation to the questions asked and motions carried at the previous Annual General Meeting of Electors:

Andrew Luobikis
Petr Pacak

The following electors made a statement in relation to DNA contamination relating to COVID 19 vaccinations:

Jaki Greenfield
Dominique Mimmagh



5. Acceptance of Motions

1. Motion proposed by Leonie Lundy

Moved: Leonie Lundy

Seconded: Adrian Glamorgan

That Council:

- 1. Requires the City to call a public meeting to address the need for community information and consultation about AUKUS, as identified in the Perth South West Metro Alliance's (PSWMA) report "Building Defence Social Licence in the Perth South West Region";**
- 2. Requests the meeting:**
 - a. Includes attendance of qualified representatives from the Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) and ARPANSA, and the relevant local MP or a government defence spokesperson;**
 - b. Includes panel participation of a First Nations spokesperson and representatives from Stop AUKUS WA, Nuclear Free WA (NF-WA), Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) and Conservation Council of WA (CCWA);**
 - c. Allows a substantial Q&A. Questions may be submitted in advance to ASA and ARPANSA to ensure they are answered at the event, questions also will be allowed from the floor;**
 - d. Be moderated by an impartial member of the community, wider public or media; and**
 - e. Is widely advertised through traditional and digital media.**

Motion Carried

The following electors made a statement in relation to the motion:

Leonie Lundy
Adrian Glamorgan
Barry Healy
Annolies Truman
Caleb Faulkner Hill
Andrew Luobikis
Felicity Townsend
Mark Woodcock



2. Motion proposed by Dominique Mimmagh

Moved: Dominique Mimmagh

Seconded: Heather Wright

That Council instruct the Chief Executive Officer to write to

- the Prime Minister;**
- the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Aged Care;**
- the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care;**
- the Chief Health Officer;**
- the Commonwealth Health Secretary;**
- the WA Premier;**
- the WA Department of Health; and**
- the WA Minister for Health, to:**

- 1. Urge the immediate suspension of the use of all COVID-19 vaccines in Australia;**
- 2. Engage a body of qualified experts, including the Chief Health Officer of the Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee, to conduct a comprehensive, science-based evaluation of emerging evidence regarding synthetic DNA contamination to the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines; and**
- 3. Investigate excess deaths and hospitalisations in Western Australia following vaccine rollouts, specifically:**
 - a. Prior to the reopening of state borders; and**
 - b. Over the longer term.**

Motion Carried

The following electors made a statement in relation to the motion:

Dominique Mimmagh

Heather Wright

Dr Sally Price

Sally McKay



3. Motion proposed by May-Ring Chen

Moved: May-Ring Chen

Seconded: Dominique Mimmagh

That:

- 1. The electors of Fremantle request that council instructs the Mayor to apologise to the residents of the City of Fremantle.**
- 2. Those affected by the mandate demand partial refund of paid rates for during the time residents were denied access to many services.**

Motion Carried

The following electors made a statement in relation to the motion:

May-Ring Chen
Andrew Luobikis
Marija Vujcic

4. Motion proposed by Elisabeth Megroz

Moved: Elisabeth Megroz

Seconded: Marija Vujcic

That:

- (a) The City fully clarify to ratepayers what is to occur with overhanging street tree branches onto private properties; and**
- (b) Trees will be pruned to the property line if property owners want overhanging branches removed.**

Motion Carried

The following electors made a statement in relation to the motion:

Elisabeth Megroz
Marija Vujcic



5. Motion proposed by Marija Vujcic

Moved: Marija Vujcic

Seconded: Mark Woodcock

- (a) Motion of no confidence in Mayor Fitzhardinge handling of the City finances and in particular the South Beach Toilets and Changeroom Project, inaccurate reporting of operational costs, capex and budget.**
- (b) That the City conducts an independent investigation into the South Beach toilet and changeroom project immediately and to make the report available to ratepayers and residents. The report is to provide an honest assessment of the projects progress and the clear plan of addressing the issues with a deadline for the project's completion.**

Motion Carried

The following electors made a statement in relation to the motion:

Marija Vujcic
Mark Woodcock
Andrew Luobikis
Craig Ross

6. Closure

The Presiding Member Mayor, Hannah Fitzhardinge declared the meeting closed at 8:26pm.