

MINUTES

SEARTG

BOARD MEETING

5 APRIL 2013

**SOUTH EAST AVON REGIONAL TRANSITION GROUP
(S E A R T G)**

MINUTES

MEETING OF BOARD MEMBERS

SHIRE OF YORK – COUNCIL CHAMBER
9:40AM FRIDAY, 5 APRIL 2013

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

1.1 Opening

1.2 Announcement of Visitors

Invitations were extended to:

- Ms Caroline Tuthill - Senior Project Officer, Department of Local Government.
- Mr Tony Brown – Executive Manager, Governance and Strategy – Western Australian Local Government Association.
- Ms Joanne Burges – Regional Cooperation Manager, Western Australian Local Government Association.

The Chairman advised that Cr G Cooper and Cr T Boyle were absent due to Wheatbelt Development Commission and Regional Development Australia (Wheatbelt) commitments, whilst taking the opportunity to thank the Shire of York for hosting the meeting. Further, a special welcome was extended to Ms C Tuthill and Ms J Burges, with Ms J Burgess declining the Chairman’s invitation to be seated at the meeting table.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

2.1 Present

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Shire of Cunderdin | - Cr R Carter | - President |
| Shire of Cunderdin | - Mr P Naylor | - Chief Executive Officer |

Shire of Quairading	- Cr D Richards	- President (Chairman)
Shire of Quairading	- Cr G Anderson	- Deputy President
Shire of Quairading	- Cr B Caporn	- Councillor
Shire of Quairading	- Mr G Fardon	- Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Tammin	- Cr S Uppill	- President
Shire of Tammin	- Mr I Bodill	- Chief Executive Officer
Shire of York	- Cr R Scott	- Deputy President
Shire of York	- Cr D Smythe	- Councillor
Shire of York	- Cr M Duperouzel	- Councillor
Shire of York	- Mr R Hooper	- Chief Executive Officer
Shire of York	- Ms T Cochrane	- Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Western Australian Local Government Association	- Ms J Burges	- Regional Cooperation Manager
Department of Local Government	- Ms C Tuthill	- Senior Project Officer
Dominic Carbone and Associates (DCA)	- Mr D Carbone	- Executive Officer

2.2 Apologies

Shire of Cunderdin	- Cr G Cooper	- Councillor
Shire of York	- Cr T Boyle	- President
Shire of York	- Cr P Hooper	- Councillor
Western Australian Local Government Association	- Mr T Brown	- Executive Manager – Governance and Strategy

2.3 Leave of Absence

Nil.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Deputations

Nil.

3.2 Presentations

Nil.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Participants were advised that as the Notice Paper before the meeting was not particularly large, it was hoped that proceedings could be concluded by lunch time.

4.1 South East Avon Regional Transition Group Board Meeting held at the Shire of Tammin, Administration Centre (Lesser Hall) on Tuesday, 5 March 2013.

The Chairman then drew attention to Item 4.1 – Confirmation of Minutes, advising that he considered the previous meeting to have been very interesting with the attendance of Cr Mel Congerton – Chairperson of the Local Government Advisory Board and Mr Ross Earnshaw – Manager Reform Implementation for the Department of Local Government. In addition, the Minutes had provided a good refresher on the meeting content.

Business Arising from Minutes

The Chairman called for business arising from the Minutes, summarised as follows:

Page 21

Cr S Uppill requested that reference to his statement on the Great Northern Highway, as detailed on page 21, be amended to include the words “Royalties for Regions” in order to provide clarification, namely that this now read:

- “Cr S Uppill
- Commented on a Liberal candidate suggesting that *Royalties for Regions* funding be spent on Great Northern Highway.”

Page 1

Cr R Carter raised concern that page 1 of the minutes detailed the bracketed word “late” after his title, with the Chairman and Executive Officer providing comment in relation to Cr R Carter’s concern. *It is noted that this reference relates to Cr R Carter entering the meeting some minutes after it had commenced.*

With the above, it was then:

MOVED Cr R Carter, Seconded Cr S Uppill, that the Minutes of the South East Avon Regional Transition Group Board Meeting, held at the Shire of Tammin, Administration Centre (Lesser Hall), on Tuesday, 5 March 2013, be received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION

Nil.

6. REPORTS

RTG-005-13 STATUS REPORT – OUTSTANDING BUSINESS FROM THE SOUTH EAST AVON REGIONAL TRANSITION GROUP (SEARTG) BOARD MEETINGS (File: rtg005-13)

The Chairman drew attention to this item of business, with the Executive Officer providing comment on the following:

- Some of the outstanding matters are linked to preparation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- The MOU is being prepared and will be distributed once complete.
- The Advisory Board has been notified of the SEARTG Board’s resolutions detailing election of commissioners, ward names, etc.
- Response received advised that these matters were to be presented to the Advisory Board meeting of 4 April 2013.
- A worksheet is attached to this item of business relating to Federal Assistance Grants, as provided by the Grants Commission.
- Drew attention to Cr P Hooper’s previous comments on there being no funding reduction following the fifth year, namely 2018/2019 through to 2019/2020.
- Information provided indicates a funding reduction after the fifth year for an amalgamated group, when compared to total funding for the group of non amalgamated councils.

- Clarification will be sought from the Grants Commission on the amalgamated funding option versus funding as individual councils.
- Revised Regional Business Plan indicated a funding reduction.
- Funding will increase if compared to what is being received now, and what will be received in six years. However, the total as an amalgamated group will drop compared to total funding for the group as individual Councils.

Mr P Naylor suggested that the funding pool and methodology for distribution will change with the structural reform process and other amalgamations, with the Chairman concurring with this comment.

Following a further query from Mr P Naylor, the Executive Officer advised that clarification would need to be sought from the Grants Commission on the proposed \$680,000 reduction, and whether this modelling was based on today's population and infrastructure figures. Mr P Naylor then suggested that population increases over the period would directly affect funding proposals.

Ms C Tuthill provided clarification as follows:

- Funding figures are based on returns submitted to the Department and Grants Commission.
- Figures provided are projections on going forward, ie "best guess" at the time.
- Other external factors at play, ie state wide reform decreasing the number of local governments and increasing the amount of money in the pool.
- Savings will be generated in the governance area, with the Group having previously received grants for this.
- Whilst there is an offset of \$680,000, there is potential to save money by that stage.
- If the reduction is considered to be significant, there is scope to request a Grants Commission review.
- Grants Commission has an informal policy that if a reduction is going to negatively impact on a local government, it is open for consideration.
- Considers that there are fallback opportunities in this regard.

Mr P Naylor suggested that \$680,000 is not a substantive change in percentage given the "sliding scale" factor, and seeking confirmation that his amount was a "transparent" number. Ms C Tuthill advised that this was a projection for year six, with any influencing factors being taken into account when determinations are made at that time.

The Executive Officer again advised that clarification would be sought from the Grants Commission on the best option for the Group moving forward.

Ms C Tuthill drew attention to previous advice from Mr R Earnshaw that funding will be frozen on an increasing scale for a period of five years. Individually, each respective Participating Local Government will be subject to conditions at the time, with the potential for funding to decline. This must also be taken into account.

The Executive Officer suggested that it would be worthwhile seeking advice from the Grants Commission on the option of individual or grouped funding over the five year term.

As the matter is considered a “sticking point”, Cr S Uppill suggested that a mathematical response was required in order that Participants can advise Council and the community, confidently. Mr G Fardon advised that this matter had been raised at a number of meetings held on structural reform.

Cr R Carter stated that Cr S Uppill and Mr G Fardon had covered points he wished to raise, indicating that this matter was difficult to address confidently with ratepayers.

Mr G Fardon advised that there was not enough information available to positively answer the reason for a \$680,000 decline in funding with a degree of confidence, suggesting that the Executive Officer broker a lesser figure with the Commission.

Mr P Naylor concurred with Mr G Fardon, advising this was the basis of his concern, and that there was a need for clarification in this regard.

Mr R Hooper then suggested that the Group needs a determination that the projected figure is a “worst case scenario”, voicing concern if this figure were to increase.

The Executive Officer drew attention to the attachment and figures detailed for 2020/2021. This appears to be “worst case scenario” as the following figure increases by approximately \$150,000. Indications are that although there is a projected drop for one year, the long term trend indicates increased funding.

Mr R Hooper suggested that this was a structural reform “selling point” with the Department and Grants Commission, ie that there will be a downturn at the end of the five year term, however progression is then upward.

The Chairman suggested that the Group keep in mind that projections have been made on current figures. Further, that Royalties for Regions funding was yet to be taken into account, and providing comment on this funding since its inception. In addition, the Group cannot predict outcomes in this regard.

Mr R Hooper suggested that this was a necessary debate, detailing the Premier's announcement that he was taking greater control of the Royalties for Regions Fund, and that there is no certainty on the Country Local Government Fund. Further, that at a recent National Party launch for newly elected members, when questioned on a guarantee for the \$50M direct grants to local government, Brendon Grylls responded that "this was out of his hands" and suggested "looking at the Premier's June Budget as he will decide what is happening".

Additional comment was made by Mr R Hooper, suggesting that an 18% loss of funding could result in an equal rates increase, or alternatively equivalent loss in services, with this being an argument for structural reform. Further, that Royalties for Regions has only been in place for four years, yet local governments had become dependent on this funding source. Participants concurred with Mr R Hooper's comment in this regard.

The Chairman provided comment on the following:

- Dependency on Royalties for Regions funding is evident in the Group's long term financial plans.
- Standards required cannot be achieved without this funding, in particular in relation to roads.
- Long term financial plans will detail separation of assets, in particular buildings and roads, which will further demonstrate this fact.

Following the Chairman's query, the Executive Officer suggested that Participants may wish to resolve that a meeting be held with the Grants Commission to seek clarification in relation to matters raised.

Mr R Hooper provided comment on the following points:

- This is a chance for the Group to correspond directly with the Premier and Brendon Grylls.
- Correspondence should outline the effect on structural reform and on individual local governments, ie:
 - If the \$50M Country Local Government Fund is lost.
 - Accumulative effect of the current Grants Commission system with the drop in funding after five years.
 - Effect on overall viability of individual and combined councils.
- Need to push the message that these matters underpin successful structural reform.
- Premier needs to know the reasons for retaining the direct component.
- \$50M regional component is via the South East Avon Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (SEAVROC).
- Funding is required to permit building asset preservation completion.
- Need to concentrate on getting "best value for dollars".
- Consider that there are enough genuine projects to justify funding.

- Need to reiterate that if there is to be successful structural reform, funding is crucial for “day to day” operational matters, irrespective of transitional costs.
- Future viability is dependent on structural reform success and relevant funding.
- Correspondence should be copied to the new Minister for Local Government.

Following the Chairman calling for input, further concern was raised in relation to suspension or cessation of funding and its effect on structural reform success.

Mr R Hooper then clarified that his suggestion was for a part (b) to be added to the recommendation detailing that the issue of Country Local Government Fund Direct Grants be raised with the Premier, Leader of the National Party, and the Minister for Local Government, to analyse its impact on structural reform and the viability of individual and combined local governments.

Following the Executive Officer’s query, Mr R Hooper advised that the matter should be put in writing and followed up with a request for meetings.

The Chairman concurred with Mr R Hooper, as did Cr R Carter, who advised that the opportunity should be taken to point out that this Group had embraced structural reform from the beginning and should not be facing funding penalties as a result.

Mr R Hooper provided comment on the ability to fund projects, and then queried current direct funding grants, detailed as follows:

- Tammin \$313,000
- Cunderdin \$346,000
- Quairading \$365,000
- York \$452,000

Ms J Burges then clarified that the Group were basing their comments on the presumed loss of the Country Local Government Fund and comments by politicians, not the implementation of the Country Local Government Fund Review which is yet to be signed off by the politicians.

Following Mr I Bodill’s query, Mr R Hooper advised that the request was to analyse the matter in the context of structural reform, as opposed to individual local governments because there was a need to retain as much funding as possible.

The Chairman advised that such a motion is important to let the politicians know what the Group's stance is, how structural reform has been embraced from the beginning, and the need to meet face to face with the new Minister for Local Government to demonstrate the Group's passion on the subject.

Mr R Hooper suggested that the new Minister will be unaware of the impact on individual councils should the \$50M funding be removed.

Commenting on the value of including the proposed part (b) to the recommendation, the Chairman called for a motion in this regard.

It was then:

MOVED Cr R Carter, Seconded Cr S Uppill, that the following be added to the recommendation as part (b):

- (b) ***The issue of Country Local Government Fund Direct Grants be raised in writing with the Premier, Leader of the National Party, and the Minister for Local Government, to analyse its impact on structural reform and the viability of individual and combined local governments, with a request to meet in this regard.***

Mr R Hooper encouraged Participants to campaign as strongly as possible to obtain a guarantee on funding, reiterating the importance of this, and indicating that a win would not only benefit this Group but local government as an industry.

Following Participants' advice that they understood the motion, the Chairman then this to the vote.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Executive Officer drew attention to the recommendation detailed on page 5 of the Notice Paper, which through discussion is to form part (a) of the Board's resolution.

It was then:

MOVED Cr S Uppill, Seconded Cr R Scott, that:

- (a) ***Report No RTG-005-13 – Status Report – Outstanding Business from South East Avon Regional Transition Group Meetings, be received.***

- (b) *The issue of Country Local Government Fund Direct Grants be raised in writing with the Premier, Leader of the National Party, and the Minister for Local Government, to analyse its impact on structural reform and the viability of individual and combined local governments, with a request to meet in this regard.*

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Chairman called for a motion to meet with the Grants Commission, whilst providing comment on the following:

- Meeting with the Grants Commission is to determine a number of outcomes.
- Such outcomes are required in order to go to community with absolute clarity.
- Need to convince the community that amalgamation is the way to go with structural reform.
- Inability to answer specific questions is concerning.
- Need to seek determination from the Grants Commission in order to sell the process.

It was then:

MOVED Cr R Carter, Seconded Cr S Uppill, that a meeting be sought with the Grants Commission to determine a number of outcomes.

General discussion followed, summarised as:

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| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned that “determining a number of outcomes”, as described by the Chairman does not go far enough. • Queries what the \$680,000 represents. • Suggested that governance savings equates to what has been “cut back on”. • Argument needs to be that the figure of \$680,000 should be zero. • The benefit of savings equal to or greater than this figure is more “sellable”. |
| Cr S Uppill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queried why the \$680,000 was detailed at all. |
| Ms C Tuthill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes the Grants Commission will be reluctant to give an absolute funding figure. • Federal activity is unknown. • Grants Commission review is currently underway. |

- Commission's formula and methodology is a best guesstimate.
 - Believes that the Commission will be unable to provide definitive figures at this point in time.
- Cr R Carter
- Suggests that the Group meet with the Grants Commission prior to meeting with the politicians.
 - The Premier and Minister to be advised of the situation if there is no clarification, and that resolution is required in order to sell structural reform to residents and ratepayers.
- Ms C Tuthill
- The Grants Commission will be able to explain what the \$680,000 is based upon and what has been taken into consideration.
 - This can be based on a number of things such as governance.
 - It is anticipated that this figure represents an offset against savings.
 - Commission is unable to provide definitive figures for the future.
 - Offset of savings is generated by going from four councils to one, with reduction of costs as a result.
- Mr R Hooper
- Business Plan shows savings but not against a single amount.
 - Community views the \$680,000 as money removed by the government, not as a potential saving.
 - This is not for the Grants Commission to sell; this is the Participants' role.
 - Need to detail what can be done better, faster and more efficient in order to wear the proposed reduction.
 - Agrees with the comment that the Grants Commission will only be able to provide indicate answers, not definitive.
 - Counter argument is what savings exist.
- Executive Officer
- Need to look at the modelling.
 - An amalgamated council will take a "hit" in the first year, however if funding is fixed for five years the "hit" will be in the sixth year.
 - Gains are made over the five year period, namely that funding is what the four Participating Local Governments would receive plus 3%.

- Encouraging projections beyond 2020/2021 shows a quick return to “normality”.
- Question to be asked of Grants Commission is will recovery take one or two years, and whether this can be reduced by alternative methods.
- The Group can then be satisfied that the problem will be fixed in the short term and plan accordingly.

The Chairman sought direction on the motion before the meeting, querying if the Group wished to proceed given discussion to this point.

Mr R Hooper drew attention to there being a Mover and Seconder, whilst strongly advising the need to maintain dialogue with the Grants Commission, in particular on the effect of losing the Country Local Government Fund.

Following Ms C Tuthill’s advice that she had no further comment, the Chairman then put the motion.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

RTG-006-13 SOUTH EAST AVON REGIONAL TRANSITION GROUP (SEARTG) AMALGAMATION BUDGET (File: rtg006-13)
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The Executive Officer drew attention to this item of business, providing the following comment:

- This item is in line with the Department’s request for a budget detailing the \$2.95M funding expenditure.
- Page 6 details the funding instalment plan.
- It was necessary to determine expenditure timeline.
- If a poll is called, and this is unsuccessful, this will be the “cut off” line for funding expenditure.
- Uncommitted funds will need to be returned at this point in time.
- It is critical that those matters determined to be undertaken between this point and the poll date, are completed.
- Budget could not be prepared without an associated timeline.
- Items and dates detailed in the Local Government Advisory Board presentation were taken into account in preparing the budget and timeline.
- “D Day” is considered to be December 2013.
- Pre Release funding is to be spent by this date, with the budget prepared in accordance with this.

- Transitional cost of \$295,000 has been reconciled to the Regional Business Plan.
- Net transitional costs, less optic fibre and 10% contingency, plus new contingency, balances to the allocated \$2.95M funding.
- Pre Release funding budget has been determined at \$248,938, as opposed to \$295,000 allocated.
- Budget for Instalment 2 balances to funding allocation, and Instalment 3 variance equates to under expenditure of Instalment 1, ie \$46,062.
- Page 7 of the Notice Paper details how funds will be spent.
- Analysis of transition costs and considerations have determined the three major items of importance, namely process mapping, review of delegations, and corporate branding.
- Community engagement has been allowed for.
- Computer matters have been itemised.
- The engagement of a Project Management Officer for the required period has been detailed.
- Secretarial support to be taken from the contingency amount, as this service had not been allowed for.
- Item 2, as detailed on page 7, outlines those budgeted items to be completed from Pre Release funding.
- Item 3, as detailed on page 7, details additional tasks to be performed during the Pre Release phase.
- Projects are detailed on pages 8, 9 and 10 of the Notice Paper, with tasks, timeline and milestones shown for each.

Mr R Hooper queried the timeline for calling of a community poll, as detailed on page 6 of the Notice Paper, in particular given the government's "mood" on structural reform.

The Executive Officer advised that on looking at the Narrogin/Cuballing process, it was determined that an extended period of time was required rather than month as originally thought. Further, that it is not considered possible to deliver the required work within a shorter timeframe than that detailed.

Mr G Fardon raised concern with a poll being held in December during harvest, suggesting that October was preferable albeit that local government elections will be held at this time. Further, that timeframes were somewhat out of the Group's hands.

Ms C Tuthill advised she understood the reasoning behind moving the poll, providing comment on statutory provisions in determining timeframes.

The Chairman suggested that the poll could be held in February; however, this would impact on the amalgamation date determined for 1 July 2014. Further, that matters would be limited until the outcome of the poll is determined.

Mr R Hooper then raised concerns on:

- Need to raise this matter with the Minister.
- The ability to use the October electoral roll should the poll be moved to February.
- Cost of preparing an additional consolidated roll.
- Harvest impact on the poll, if held during this period.

Cr S Uppill suggested that if December is the determined date, then the Group will need to work with this in order to obtain the outcomes and information required from the government and the community.

General discussion determined that a December poll would simply be an inconvenience that will need to be dealt with, no different to State or Federal elections. Further, that statutory requirements and task timeframes are outside of the Group's control, and this should be relayed to the community.

Following Cr D Smythe raising the issue of a postal election, the Chairman advised that there was little support for this.

Mr P Naylor drew attention to the timeframes being indicative at this point, given the Advisory Board investigation process and timing of a decision in this regard.

Cr R Carter queried if there was scope to utilise the balance of \$46,062 from Instalment 1 in case amalgamation does not occur, suggesting as an example the formation of one ratepayer database and employment of a single rates officer for the region.

The Executive Officer advised that the budget is based on transitional considerations and costs as outlined in the Regional Business Plan, without introducing anything new. Further, that such a matter would rest outside of the scope and would be dependent on the Department funding that additional project.

Ms C Tuthill provided comment on:

- Ensuring that the Group gets up and running, with the appropriate planning in place.
- No benefits without investment.
- Suggests that there is scope to renegotiate and include this matter as part of the information technology process for example.
- Queries if the allocated sum of \$15,000 is sufficient for community engagement, which is considered crucial.

The Executive Officer responded by detailing that funds have been allocated from Instalments 1, 2 and 3 for community engagement, with Ms C Tuthill advising the need for a fluid budget given the unknowns as the process moves forward.

General discussion followed, summarised as:

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| Cr D Smythe | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queried comments in relation to optic fibre as detailed on page 160 of the Regional Business Plan, and where the associated \$12,000 had been included. |
| Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised that the \$12,000 was included in the relevant Service Delivery Plan, and did not form part of the transitional costs. |
| Mr G Fardon | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirmed that this money was not included in the transitional costs. |
| Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conservative approach has been taken in accordance with the Group's nominated conditions.• It was considered funding would not be provided for optic fibre.• This matter will impact on Instalment 2, not on Instalment 1. |
| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirmed with Ms C Tuthill that should the Group put forward a budget of \$248,938 for Instalment 1, yet requires an additional \$46,062, approval can be provided for this to be taken from Instalment 2.• The detailed contingency of \$9,000 may be more.• Timeframe provided of December, however once the Advisory Board report is issued, things will speed up. |
| Mr G Fardon | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community engagement is considered to be critical at this stage.• Instalment 1 should be increased to the full allocation of \$295,000. |
| Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised the need for Departmental approval to increase transitional costs. |
| Ms C Tuthill | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised that this would be reasonable. |

- Chairman • Queries drafting of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as detailed under point 3 on page 7 of the Notice Paper.
- Executive Officer • Advised that this would be undertaken as part of the Project Management.
- Cr D Smythe • Queried if funds could be utilised from the capital budget, such as staff mentoring, and used for community engagement.
- Mr G Fardon • This cannot be done in the first stage.
- Executive Officer • Approval required from the Department to revise figures.
• There is a need to balance to Instalment 1.
• Funds removed from Instalment 3, will need to be allocated to Instalment 1.
• There is a need to agree on increasing overall community engagement from \$38,000 to 58,000.
- Mr R Hooper • Funds to be brought forward.
- Executive Officer • Cash flow will not change.
- Ms C Tuthill • Only \$295,000 can be allocated in this financial year.
• Will need to look at what funds can be moved to accommodate request.
- Executive Officer • Current request is for \$38,000 to be moved from Instalment 3 to Instalment 1.
- Ms C Tuthill • Process requirements to adhere to in moving the \$38,000.
- Mr R Hooper • Queried what tasks could be brought forward to the Pre Release stage to bring the budget figure to the allocated \$295,000.

- Executive Officer
- All tasks required in the Pre Release stage were listed and included in the proposed budget.
- Cr D Smythe
- Suggested that community engagement be increased in this initial stage.
- Ms C Tuthill
- Appreciates the Executive Officer's commitment to only to undertake those tasks required in the initial stage.
 - Unspent funds from the allocation can be rolled over to the next stage.
 - Allocated funds required to be "off the Department's books".
- Mr G Fardon
- Comments on need to acquit allocated funds.
- Ms C Tuthill
- Approvals required for funds to be rolled over.
- Mr R Hooper
- The funding agreement with the Shire of York, on behalf of the Group, is for the Department to release \$295,000 to the required reserve fund for management.
 - Supporting documentation required detailing how the \$295,000 will be allocated and spent in the Pre Release stage.
 - Executive Officer's judgement suggests that Pre Release funds of \$248,938 are required.
 - Allocated funds need to be "off York's books" and with the RTG.
 - Budget allocations have flexibility as the process progresses.
- Ms C Tuthill
- Confirms the need to transfer the allocated funds from the Department to the Group.
- MR R Hooper
- Movement of funds, as detailed, offers a level of protection.
 - The Executive Officer has a working budget, with the ability to carry over funds if required, depending on demand.
- Cr S Uppill
- Movement and roll over of funds is a play on figures.
 - Increase community engagement to balance at \$295,000.
 - Total funds can then be utilised as necessary.

- Mr R Hooper
- The financial agreement between the RTG and the Department of Local Government is for \$295,000 to be released and managed by the Group.
 - Proposed Instalment 1 budget details a surplus of \$46,062.
 - Surplus can be spent on an approved line item for structural reform.
 - Adopt the proposed budget with either information technology or community engagement increased to bring the balance to \$295,000.
 - Expenditure will be taken care of in the internal mechanics.
 - Department does not need to be included in discussion on variations at this point.
- Cr D Smythe
- Queries the need to refund unspent monies.
- Executive Officer
- Unspent, unallocated funds need to be returned.
- Ms J Burges
- The Group will be surprised on how much community engagement expenditure will increase to.
 - Executive Officer's budget reconciliation is understood.
 - Increase community engagement to balance at the allocated \$295,000.
- Mr P Naylor
- Halve the difference between community engagement and information technology.
- Executive Officer
- Will increase budget allocation for community engagement to balance at \$295,000.
 - Information technology component has been priced by consultant without anticipated discounts in this area, therefore allocation considered adequate.
 - Discussions will be held with WALGA and information technology teams to progress this matter.
- Mr P Naylor
- Better to increase community engagement given discussion.
- Executive Officer
- Better to have money up front than at the end.
 - Option of allocating additional monies to human resources, as it is important to keep staff on line.

- Mr R Hooper
- Executive Officer has completed a phased structural reform process for the allocated \$2.95M.
 - Determination made that the Pre Release stage requires expenditure of \$248,938, with the balance of \$46,062 to be retained for the end of the process.
 - Discussion does not change the allocated funding total of \$2.95M, simply allocation of those funds.
 - Amendments will potentially leave a shortfall for Instalment 3.
 - Amend budget to \$295,000, with any surplus to be reported to the Group.
 - \$295,000 cannot be moved up or down.
 - Proposed budget components are not exact, all will deviate marginally.
- Executive Officer
- Queries the Department's dependency on the proposed budget as detailed.
 - Suggests that the Group agree to increase the community engagement and/or change management components to bring the proposed Pre Release budget to \$295,000.
- Mr P Naylor
- Queries if this will in turn create a budgeting issue.
- Executive Officer
- Funding expenditure will need to be manipulated as the process progresses, with appropriate acquittals.
- Ms C Tuthill
- The Department will approach the matter as the Ministerial allocation of \$2.95M.
 - Proposed budget expenditure items will change through the process.
 - The Department prefers a higher level document, not necessarily to fine detail as there will be a need to then check each line item.

The Chairman then sought a motion that the proposed budget be adopted, subject to consultation between Ms C Tuthill and Executive Officer, to balance the Pre Release funding component of \$295,000.

The Executive Officer then declared an interest in the matter, with Participants noting the declaration made.

Participants agreed to adopt the recommendation on the understanding that the Executive Officer and Ms C Tuthill will liaise on a minor amendment to balance the Pre Release component to the allocated balance of \$295,000 in accordance with discussions.

It was then:

MOVED Cr S Uppill, Seconded Cr R Scott, that:

- (a) That the South East Avon Regional Transition Group Amalgamation Budget, as detailed in Report No RTG-006-13 – SEARTG Amalgamation Budget, be adopted.***
- (b) Subject to (a) above, a copy of the SEARTG Amalgamation Budget be forwarded to the Department of Local Government to be incorporated in the Funding Agreement.***
- (c) Subject to (a) above, the projects and tasks identified for the Pre Release Funding Phase in Report No RTG-006-13 – SEARTG Amalgamation Budget, are approved and are to be undertaken in accordance with the timelines and milestones detailed the Report.***

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

RTG-007-13 FACT SHEET – RESERVE FUNDS (File: rtg007-13)
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The Executive Officer drew attention to this item of business, providing comment on the following points:

- March 2013 discussions raised concerns on the community perception regarding the treatment of Reserve Funds, and potential loss of those funds into general revenue on an amalgamation.
- A Fact Sheet was requested for use by each Participating Local Government and for loading to the “www.securingourfuture.com.au” website.
- A draft Fact Sheet has been prepared and is attached for Participants’ consideration.
- Intent is to retain the purpose and use of specific Reserve Fund monies.
- Figures detailed will be confirmed prior to dissemination of the Fact Sheet.
- 2011/2012 data utilised to prepare draft Fact Sheet.
- Need to understand that there is no power to provide absolute guarantee on retention of purpose and use. Future budget processes and resolutions of the new council can change the purpose and use.

- Some Reserve Funds will be expended prior to amalgamation.
- It is recognised that York has substantial Reserve Funds.
- General Reserve Funds such as long service leave will be combined as one reserve.

General discussion followed, summarised as:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Chairman | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This reiterates the need to increase the community engagement component of the proposed Instalment 1 Budget to balance at \$295,000. |
| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drew attention to York's \$291,000 per year cash component for plant depreciation, which moves in and out of the Reserve Fund each year, allowing the plant replacement program to be almost totally funded by cash backed Reserve Funds.• These monies have not been included in the Reserve Fund detail.• This needs to be noted to give a clear message. |
| Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fact Sheet will be amended to include matters raised by Mr R Hooper, and similar items for each Participating Local Government prior to dissemination.• This will provide additional explanation to the community on how Reserve Funds can be treated.• Fact Sheet contains a lot of figures, but these are needed to provide the required detail. |
| Mr G Fardon | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queries the need for separate funds for "Fire Fighters", suggesting that this would be covered by the Emergency Services Levy (ESL).• Further queries the need to specify the "Community Bus" given that Quairading's community bus is funded from the "Plant Reserve Fund". |
| Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is potential to combine the "Community Bus Reserve Fund" with the "Plant Reserve Fund". |
| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suggests that the Group have "glossed over" what is happening with Reserve Funds in the event of amalgamation.• Northam secured the purpose of their Reserves via Governor's Orders. |

- Queries if the Group’s intent was to do likewise.
 - Specific Funds are to be spent in specific localities.
 - Need to tell the community what is being protected and what is being combined.
 - Combined Ten Year Financial Plan needs to detail separate and combined Reserve Funds.
- Executive Officer
- This is the intent of page 2 of the Fact Sheet.
 - Example being “Swimming Pool – To fund the renewal and replacement of the Quairading Memorial Swimming Pool”.
 - These are detailed for their specific purpose with no intent to combine these funds.
 - This can be included in a Memorandum of Understanding.
 - Can be included in Governor’s Orders, but this has not been proposed in the Regional Business Plan, as it was not felt that this was the way to start a new entity.
 - Perception by the community that the Reserve Funds have been built through their hard work and should therefore be used in their respective locality or district.
 - The Fact Sheet conveys that wherever possible, those funds will be retained to be spent in the particular locality or district.
 - The other Reserve Funds will be merged and used in the best way that the local government deems fit.
- Mr R Hooper
- Concurs with the Executive Officer’s comments.
 - Community consultation will pick up on statements made and endorsed by the Board.
 - Reiterated the need to detail those Reserve Funds which will be retained for their original intent and use, and those that will be combined.
- Executive Officer
- Advises that page 2 of the Fact Sheets details this explanation.
- Chairman
- Dissemination of the Fact Sheet will probably raise more questions.
 - The community needs to be taken to the next level of information, in order that they are fully informed prior to undertaking a poll.

- Mr R Hooper
- Draws attention to “Plant and Equipment – to fund the acquisition, disposal and maintenance of plant and equipment”, as listed.
 - Previous discussions have centred on the volume of plant and equipment within the Group.
 - There is a need to analyse this asset group to determine what is to be retained and what will be disposed of.
 - Considers the “Plant and Equipment Reserve Fund” can make or break the new entity.
 - Not about reducing services, but about doing services better and smarter.
 - In 2005 York determined that 12% of the 19% rate increase would be dedicated to funding plant replacement through the rating system.
 - Needs to be spelled out clearly, for example is York’s 12% rates component going to fund Tammin’s grader?

The Chairman suggested that the whole process was about compromise, advising that the Group were undertaking the process to the best of their ability. Further, drawing attention to comments made by Mr Gavin Troy that the Group were all over capitalised. The Chairman advised that the Group will get through the issues of concern.

Cr R Scott then provided comment on the Reserves detailed, suggesting that questions will be received in relation to these.

The Executive Officer advised at the end of the day, the Group has what they have in relation to Reserve Funds, which are unable to be changed in a twelve month period.

The Chairman then drew attention to the recommendation detailed on page 10 of the Notice Paper, calling for a motion.

Mr G Fardon suggested that the Fact Sheet required fine tuning before dissemination, with the Executive Officer advising that he would liaise with Chief Executive Officer’s in this regard.

Subject to the agreed “fine tuning”, it was:

MOVED Cr S Uppill, Seconded Cr R Carter, that the Fact Sheet – What Happens to Reserve Funds, be placed on the “www.securingourfuture.com.au” website.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. BOARD MEMBERS' MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil.

8. NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

Nil.

GENERAL BUSINESS**1. Workforce Planning**

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• York is undertaking workforce planning with Ms Natasha Brennan, who has commenced with the outside crew.• Queries if Elected Members from the Participating Local Governments would like a presentation on what Workforce Planning is about.• Ms Brennan will liaise directly with the Chief Executive Officers in relation to staff presentations.• Workforce Planning is very important, in particular in relation to the structural reform process.• Following Mr I Bodill's query, advised that Ms Brennan was previously the Executive Support Officer at York. |
| Mr I Bodill | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised that he will ask Tammin Council if they would like to be briefed.• This may be a Chief Executive Officer meeting matter. |
| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised that the presentation will be a 20 minute Powerpoint presentation with 10 minute question time following. |
| Chairman | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirmed that Chief Executive Officers are to liaise with York and Ms Brennan in relation to presentations. |

2. Corporate Plans

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Mr R Hooper | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information must be returned for the first stage.• Base level working plan is to be adopted by Council by 30 June 2013, and confident that this will be achieved.• Intermediate and final stages are more involved, and require completion by December 2013. |
|-------------|--|

- Funding request to Department for corporate plans was unsuccessful.
 - All Participating Local Governments have Asset Management Plans for review and return to Mr D Long as soon as possible.
 - Asset Management Plans to be adopted by Council.
 - Ten Year Financial Plans are being completed by the Executive Officer and Mr D Long, and are three to four weeks away from being presented to Council.
- Executive Officer
- Will visit Participating Local Governments in relation to Ten Year Financial Plans by the end of the month.
- Mr R Hooper
- Strategic Community Plans have been adopted by Participating Local Governments.
 - The Corporate Plan is the last bit to tie everything together as the Integrated Planning Model.
 - Workforce Plans are required as soon as possible in order to achieve the Corporate Planning model component by 30 June 2013.
 - Have been unable to find a good model on how the plans are brought together.
 - Suggested securing the Executive Officer to prepare the Group's Corporate Business Plans.
- Ms C Tuthill
- Roebourne or Carnamah may be good examples.
 - Will follow up and advise accordingly.
- Executive Officer
- Development of various plans has been designed to directly link into the Corporate Business Plan.
 - Five years of the Ten Year Financial Plan will form the financial component of the Corporate Business Plan.
 - All financial reporting for the Corporate Plan is complete.
 - The summary of the Strategic Community Plan will form the basis of this component of the Corporate Plan, with:
 - An additional layer required detailing how this will drill down to the operational plan in relation to special projects.
 - A chart detailing what needs to be done, by whom, and timetable for completion.
 - Everything that is committed in the Strategic Community Plan is included in the Financial Plan, whether funded through a specific project with allocated monies, or those requiring a feasibility study.

- This provides assurance that goals and objectives that have been set in the Strategic Community Plan will be delivered to the community.
 - Asset Management Plans now dictate the amount to depreciate in the long term Financial Plan.
 - Plans need to correlate in order to meet objectives, which is the guiding principle.
 - Integrating and linking is starting to occur, which will be detailed in the Corporate Business Plan.
 - Workforce Plan will also link into the Corporate Business Plan.
 - Design of linked plans eliminates inefficiencies in repeating the work required to compile the Corporate Business Plan
- Mr I Bodill
- Sought the Executive Officer's response to Mr R Hooper's suggestion on compilation of the Group's Corporate Business Plans.
- Executive Officer
- Would need to check timelines etc.
- Mr R Hooper
- Suggested that the four Participating Local Governments obtain a Council resolution for funds to be allocated as a budget variation to permit the Executive Officer to finalise the respective Corporate Business Plans by 30 June 2013.
- Executive Officer
- Comments on compilation of the Corporate Business Plan from the various plans discussed.
 - Provides example of Boyup Brook and New South Wales prepared plans.
 - Document needs to be meaningful, and be a good working tool.
- Mr I Bodill
- Suggested that the four Chief Executive Officers get together in relation to the Corporate Business Plan.
- Mr G Fardon
- Suggested that the Chief Executive Officer meetings should be reactivated.
- Chairman
- Confirmed that the Chief Executive Officers would liaise in order to revisit the meetings as suggested.

3. Corporate Branding

- Mr R Hooper
- Queried when the Group will address the subject of a name for the new entity.
 - Money allocated in the budget for Corporate Branding, namely name, crest, logo, etc.
 - Executive Officer will need direction in this regard.
- Chairman
- Advised that Quairading were yet to address this matter.
- Cr R Carter
- Concurs with Mr R Hooper, it is time that the matter is given consideration.
- Mr I Bodill
- Queried if the name was to form part of the “badging” budget.
- Executive Officer
- Will prepare a proposal in this regard and present to a Board Meeting prior to obtaining quotations.
 - Not easy to achieve, and must last a long time.
 - Time and effort must be spent to ensure that all communities are represented.
 - The new badging must mean something to each community.
- Ms J Burges
- Different point of view.
 - The best way to get a positive community response is to get them involved, including children.
 - By doing so, this removes some of the “heat” from the process.
 - “Banners in the Terrace” operates well in this regard.
 - Community discussion will become a positive.
- Executive Officer
- Important to have someone who is skilled in this area and takes control of the process.
- Ms J Burges
- Becomes a public relations exercise.
- Chairman
- Concurred with Ms J Burges’ and the Executive Officer’s comments.

- Mr R Hooper
- Decide to put up individual suggestions from each Council, or by resolution that the community take control of the naming and branding as part of community engagement.
 - Executive Officer will need direction that this will be a community engagement project or governance, or both.
- Chairman
- Suggests that Ms J Burges' comments be taken on board, the Group engages a consultant to complete the process, with options voted on by the Board.
- Mr R Hooper
- Believes that a resolution is required from each Participating Local Government that this Group believes the community has a role in the naming process.
 - The Executive Officer is then directed to engage a consultant to undertake community engagement to achieve a result.
- Executive Officer
- Happy to proceed in this way.
- Chairman
- Queried the timeframe for this to occur.
- Mr R Hooper
- Reiterated the need for this to be in the Minutes of each Participating Local Government which will disseminate a positive approach.
 - Needs a resolution from Elected Members.
- Executive Officer
- Suggests the motion be "that a proposal be prepared for the name of the proposed local government to be undertaken through extensive community consultation".

It was then:

MOVED Cr R Carter, Seconded Cr R Scott, that a proposal be prepared for the name of the proposed local government to be undertaken through extensive community consultation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Chairman thanked Mr R Hooper for his input on the matter of corporate branding, commenting on the Group's positive resolve for extensive community engagement, which is considered crucial to the process.

4. Future of South East Avon Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (SEAVROC)

- Mr R Hooper
- Drew attention to the need for discussion on the Group's future path should a poll go against amalgamation.
 - Queried continued operation of the South East Avon Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (SEAVROC).
 - Requests have been received for provision of services within the existing Group, and from external sources.
 - The Shire of Brookton has queried if SEAVROC will continue, and if so, would like ranger, health and other services.
 - Enquiries have been received from Bruce Rock, Merredin, Kellerberrin, and Corrigin.
 - The Shire of Beverley provides services outside of the RTG.
 - Cannot finalise budget shared services information, which is independent of structural reform.
 - Concerned that Ten Year Financial Plans will not work unless external purchases/sales of services are made.
 - Only rigid current arrangement is Quairading's Natural Resource Management roll covering the Caring for Country Project.
 - This matter needs to be discussed at the Chief Executive Officers' meeting.
 - Talked about day to day undertakings from 1 July 2014 should amalgamation not go ahead.
 - Sought the Group's input on whether SEAVROC will continue as a collaborative effort with shared services.
 - Queried if each Council will undertake such matters individually.
- Ms J Burges
- Considered it useful for the Group to know where the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) stands on the subject.
 - Existing service provision will be worked into budgets.
 - Shared services would continue if amalgamation does not occur.
 - The Association would pursue a subsidiary model.
 - Suggested it should be "business as usual".
 - The Group are strongly committed to structural reform, with an enormous amount of good will.
 - Chief Executive Officers will continue to discuss.
 - Clarity throughout the process is difficult to obtain.
 - The Association would like to see the South East Avon group continue in whatever form it takes.

- Executive Officer
- Queried where the subsidiary legislation is at.
 - The subsidiary best suits this Group, particularly in relation to resource sharing.
 - Should amalgamation not go ahead, each Council will develop a resource sharing project and manage this as a fee for service.
 - Each Council would commit to an annual fee, as has been the case with Natural Resource Management.
 - This scenario requires a certain amount of guarantee.
 - Resource sharing and associated costs must be justified to the ratepayers.
 - This means local people, and is a good way of attracting professional people to the region.
 - With the right instrument to operate it, resource sharing will work.
 - Shared services will work via a subsidiary model or SEAVROC, as has been proven.
 - Councils will have a commitment to purchase the service.
 - Service can be sold outside of the Group, with this becoming a profit margin and benefit as a result.
- Mr R Hooper
- York requires information as Host Council.
 - Queried if the Group would remain as the current Participating Local Governments, or expand to include Beverley, Brookton, and possibly others.
 - SEAVROC will work no matter the size.
 - There is a need to ascertain what the community needs are, and how the services will be delivered.
- Chairman
- Understands Mr R Hooper's concern.
 - States that Quairading has taken a backward step as a community, with recent feedback.
 - Quairading has one Councillor who appears to be against the amalgamation proposal, with strong indications in the local Bulletin publication.
 - Failure of duty, if Councillors are unable to get the community "over the line".
 - Community meeting will be held on Thursday, 11 April 2013, and unsure of approach to take with this.
 - Aim is to stay positive and "on the front foot".
 - Prior to the community meeting, would like the Government and new Minister to announce that structural reform is continuing.
 - Considers negativity toward amalgamation has been a set back for Quairading.

- Cr S Uppill
- Tammin has similar perspective to Cunderdin.
 - Community meeting will be held following the Council Meeting of 18 April 2013.
 - Need to maintain communication.
 - Has been asked “what is happening at the grass roots”.
 - Community is receiving information from “across the border”.
 - Tammin has been quiet on the subject, however with feedback from Quairading, discussion is increasing.
- Chairman
- Did not expect a turn to negativity at this point.
 - No explanation provided for negative feedback on the inclusion of York.
 - Need to turn York into a positive at the community meeting.
 - The amalgamation is not viable without York, and considers York to be a positive in the process.
- Cr R Carter
- Emphasis needs to be back on the community.
 - It is all about a sustainable future for Council.
 - State government and every other business in the State have gone through reform; local government now needs to reform to remain sustainable.
 - Local government operates as it did in 1973.
 - Local government needs to operate smarter, with reform overdue.
 - Need to employ the correct people for the organisation instead of outsourcing the expertise required.
 - Following reform process, regional issues can be dealt with in more depth.
 - Provides comment on recent experience of American business reform.
 - Disappointing that the community are not coming to terms with what reform means and the need to change the way things are done.
- Cr R Scott
- Concern that the community thinks Council has an endless money source, and that their rates should supply everything.
 - Rates do not cover the wages and salaries of the 23 officers employed, with concern when extrapolated out six years.
 - Need for a change in thinking.
- Cr R Carter
- Rates versus wages situation will dramatically worsen when extrapolated out five or six years.

- Cr R Scott
 - Building gap is \$56,000 shortfall this year, in ten years it will be \$300,000.
- Mr G Fardon
 - This information has been put out to the community.
- Cr S Uppill
 - Comments on Anthony Albanese's comment in his first press conference, namely "there are too many councils in Australia".
- Mr R Hooper
 - Additional comment from Mr Albanese was that "we will only be giving funds to regional groupings; we will not deal with an individual governments".
- Chairman
 - This discussion will be helpful for the community meeting on Thursday 11 April 2013, and hopefully for the other three Participating Local Governments.
- Mr G Fardon
 - Provided comment on local strategy.
- Chairman
 - Advises that there will not be attendees from the Department or WALGA at the forthcoming community meeting, albeit this was viewed as a positive previously.
 - Community considered such attendance as "the heavy guns" for persuasion.
 - Information was provided to 180 people at the previous meeting.
 - Difficult to gauge the community's thinking.
 - Meeting will detail all that has been discussed, including sustainability for the future.
 - Community appears to accept structural reform with the exception of York.
- Cr S Uppill
 - Provides comment on a negative two page spread in the Bandicoot publication.
- Chairman
 - Considers that the negativity emanates from one or two people only.
- Cr R Scott
 - Queried if the negative feeling toward York was anything specific or a mindset issue.

- Cr G Anderson
- Feedback received is that “we are not like minded people”, which he does not understand.
- Cr R Scott
- Believes that York and Quairading have always liaised extremely well.
- Cr G Anderson
- Concurred with Cr R Scott, however feedback is in the negative.
- Cr R Scott
- Feedback cannot be answered as it is not understood.
- Chairman
- Advises that he too has received the same feedback from one person, and on asking where the division is, the person could not respond.
- Cr R Scott
- Agriculture is different from York to Quairading, to Cunderdin to Tammin.
 - Quairading, Cunderdin and Tammin are similar.
 - York has always been more heavy livestock and smaller farms, albeit this has changed to a lot more grain growing.
 - Four Participating Local Governments are stable.
 - It is possible that people fear instability creeping in.
 - York’s rate base is predominantly raised from the town site, which is not the case in the other Participating Local Governments.

5. National General Assembly for Local Government, National Convention Centre, Canberra, 16-19 June 2013

- Mr R Hooper
- Queries if Participants will be attending the Canberra Conference, and whether Participants would like York to arrange meetings with current opposition members.
- Mr I Bodill
- Will discuss with Tammin Council, whilst confirming that Mr R Hooper will arrange political meetings.
- Mr G Fardon
- Advised that York had historically made the relevant arrangements.

- Mr R Hooper • Two York representatives will be attending, again querying if Participants wanted meetings arranged.
- Mr I Bodill • Clarified that meetings would be arranged with who Participants want to meet with.
- Mr R Hooper • Requested that Participants confirm by Monday or Tuesday who they wished to meet with, such as Barnaby Joyce.
- Mr I Bodill • Provides comment on meeting with the Labor Party.
- Mr R Hooper • Advised that he wished to meet with Simon Crean given his current standing.
- Mr I Bodill • Met with Costello to talk about financial reform in local government approximately three to four months prior to him leaving his then position.
- Mr R Hooper • Reiterates wishing to meet with Crean given his current standing.
 - Asks that those wanting to attend to liaise with Ms Helen D’Arcy-Walker, Executive Support Officer at York.
 - Barnaby Joyce met with the Group last year and has asked to meet again.
- Chairman • Asked who would be attending from Cunderdin.
- Mr G Fardon • Advised that Cr G Cooper would be attending.
- Cr R Carter • Advised that he would like to attend, however this was dependent on when the season breaks.
 - Needs to look at attendance from a business perspective.
 - A discussion with politicians and “finding out how it all works” is important.
- Mr R Hooper • Following the Chairman’s query, confirmed that he and Cr P Hooper will be attending.

- Cr S Uppill
- Advised that Tammin representatives would be Cr C Crane, Mr I Bodill and himself.
- Chairman
- Advises that those attending would form a good contingent for the Group.

4. Future of South East Avon Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (SEAVROC)

- Cr R Carter
- Draws attention back to Item 4 relating to SEAVROC.
 - Advises that Cunderdin would be very keen to continue through SEAVROC, and to pursue reform.
 - Queries SEAVROC's current status, in particular membership of Beverley and Brookton.
- Mr R Hooper
- Advised that Beverley are still members, with Brookton wishing to rejoin.
- Executive Officer
- Clarified that correspondence has been received from Brookton advising that they wish to continue their current membership.
- Mr R Hooper
- Queried the vote to include Tammin also accepted Brookton's withdrawal.
- Executive Officer
- Clarifies that the resolution referred to was to forward correspondence to Brookton seeking their advice on remaining a member of SEAVROC.
 - Correspondence was received from Brookton in March 2013 advising that they wished to remain as a member.
 - Confirms SEAVROC membership at six Councils, namely, Beverley, Brookton, Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York.
- Cr R Carter
- Suggests that as time progresses, SEAVROC may wish to expand its membership further.

- Chairman
- Concurs with the thought of expanding SEAVROC's membership.
 - Is hopeful that amalgamation will go through, advising that the Group to focus on this.
- Cr R Carter
- Fall back position that data prepared to date will permit SEAVROC to achieve some worthy goals.
 - Would like to SEAVROC continue.
- Chairman
- Concurred that SEAVROC must continue.
- Cr S Uppill
- Tammin would like more resource sharing, working as one to provide services, assistance with compliance and achieving goals.
- Chairman
- Suggested that in the event that amalgamation does not occur, a meeting will need to be called quickly to work out how the Group is to move forward.

9. NEXT SOUTH EAST AVON REGIONAL TRANSITION BOARD MEETING

General discussion confirmed the Group's March 2013 decision to hold meetings on a monthly basis on the first Thursday of each month, with the next meeting to be held in Cunderdin.

Cr R Carter concurred with the decision, however suggested that meetings only be called if there was business to be dealt with.

The Chairman then called for input in relation to Cr R Carter's suggestion, summarised as:

- Mr R Hooper
- Queried from Ms Tuthill when advice would be provided from the Advisory Board given its meeting on 4 April 2013.
- Ms C Tuthill
- Advised that there was a meeting with the Minister today, and it was hoped that advice would be provided early in the week of 8 April 2013.

- Mr R Hooper
- With discussion on when the next SEARTG Board Meeting should be held, sought advice on whether there was anything the Group needed to do urgently on an announcement being made and newspaper notices place.
- Ms C Tuthill
- The Group needs to be engaged in the hearings.
 - Information to be provided to the community beforehand.
 - Department can assist with dissemination of information.
 - Will seek advice from Mr R Earnshaw in this regard.
 - Briefing notes to be prepared strongly detailing reform and the process surrounding this.
 - Important that all parties “are on the same page”.
 - With recent elections, indications are that reform will remain a strong priority, including the metropolitan area.
 - Will email information as it comes to hand.
 - Reiterates the need for communication and constant information for community and staff.
 - The Department is happy to assist wherever possible.
 - Lobbying is encouraged.
 - Minister wishes to meet with the Group.
- Mr R Hooper
- Difficulties with web site access appears to have been rectified.
- Cr R Scott
- Seeks an urgent copy of the minister’s media release to include in the next local publication.
 - This would offer a response to the two page spread by Quairading citizens.
- Cr R Carter
- Asked that all be provided with this press release.
- Chairman
- Speaks on comments to the negative from an ex York Councillor, and inability to address this.

The Chairman confirmed the Group’s decision to continue meeting on the first Thursday of each month, with the next meeting to be held in Cunderdin. However, should there be insufficient business to address, the meeting will be deferred to the following month.

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairman took the opportunity of thanking all Attendees for their presence and input, with particular thanks extended to the Shire of York for hosting the Meeting.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 12:00pm.
