



PSC Ref: PSC2059522

29 June 2020

Mr Paul Martin
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale
6 Paterson Street
MUNDIJONG WA 6123

Dear Mr Martin

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S COVID-19 RECOVERY PANDEMIC

I write to clarify the role of local government in Western Australia's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. I acknowledge the considerable support local governments have provided to their communities and the way many have proactively adapted their service delivery to the changing environment. Criticality of the two levels of government working together in partnership is fundamental to successful recovery planning and delivery for citizens in Western Australia.

Given the scale of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the extended nature of recovery efforts, the Government has determined that Western Australia's approach to recovery is most appropriately coordinated at a State rather than a local level. However, every local government will play a key role in recovery, particularly as they are the closest touch points to the community.

Local government has played an integral part in the stakeholder engagement process for recovery, with representation on the State Recovery Advisory Group, at Ministerial roundtables and at a dedicated roundtable on local government and leadership. The outcomes of this engagement will help to inform the final Impact Statement and State Recovery Plan to be released in July 2020.

As you know, I have tasked Graham Swift, State Recovery Coordinator, to coordinate activities across local governments throughout recovery. Thank you to those who completed the survey issued to capture impacts, initiatives, risks, opportunities and emerging risks at the local level.

Going forward, local government's role in recovery will be to:

1. collect and provide local impacts to the State Recovery Coordinator to inform recovery planning and implementation

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2. align local recovery plans to the State Recovery Plan where required to ensure consistency
3. build on the strong work already undertaken by local governments in:
 - a) reviewing or adopting financial hardship policies to support ratepayers to provide rate, fee and tenancy relief to businesses and individuals in distress
 - b) reviving community services, sports and recreation to promote wellbeing and enable the community to resume active, connected lives in a COVID-safe manner
 - c) supporting arts, culture, events and tourism activities and content in local areas and helping these industries to innovate to operate in the future
 - d) accelerating small capital works projects to provide vital employment channels and use local materials, contractors and labour services to support vulnerable parts of the workforce
 - e) streamlining or fast tracking approvals processes and relieving compliance burdens on businesses and households where possible to stimulate local economic activity
4. monitor recovery progress and report any emerging issues and key actions taken at the local level to the State Recovery Coordinator to inform quarterly reporting to the State Recovery Steering Committee.

Thank you in advance for your efforts. The knowledge and expertise of local government is a vital component to the success and sustainability of State recovery outcomes. The two levels of government working together is integral to the development and delivery of the State's priorities in local communities.

Should you have any questions, please email Graham Swift, State Recovery Coordinator, at graham.swift@dfes.wa.gov.au or telephone 9395 9300.

Yours sincerely



SHARYN O'NEILL
STATE RECOVERY CONTROLLER
PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSIONER