

Shire of Plantagenet - Local Government Reform Checklist

Local Government Reform Checklist			
Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
1. Long term strategic planning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has a five year (or longer) strategic plan in place. 	Yes		<p>In 2002 we conducted a 'Community Needs Survey' (copy attached) and as a result our strategic plan (copy attached) was adopted and published in 2003. This is currently under review.</p> <p>We also have a rolling two (2) year 'Plan For The Future' (copy attached) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Plan For The Future – Executive Services. (2) Plan For The Future – Corporate Services. (3) Plan For The Future – Community Services. (4) Plan For The Future – Works and Services. (5) Plan For The Future – Development Services. <p>The Shire has prepared a series of finance and budget policies as a prelude to preparing a strategic financial management plan. The Council has also purchased 'Jigsaw' Long Term Financial Planning (LTFP) software and started to run financial modelling using infrastructure renewal gap information extracted from the WAAMI program. The Shire should be in a position to adopt a formal LTFP this year.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has a five year (or longer) financial management plan in place that is linked to the plan for the future. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>Our current 'Plan For The Future' is linked to our Annual Budget.</p> <p>Our Annual Budget also incorporates a five (5) year projected capital works program.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has detailed three / five year business plans. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>Our 'Plan For The Future' serves as a detailed business plan and is updated on an annual basis.</p>

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Guiding principle	Are these elements in place at your organisation?	Explanatory comment
2. Detailed asset and infrastructure management planning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your local government has an inventory of all infrastructure and assets and has an accompanying maintenance and renewal plan in place. 	Yes	<p>All of our infrastructure and assets are listed on the Asset Register. We currently have five (5) year renewal / replacement programs (copies attached) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Plant Replacement Program 2009-2014. (2) Proposed 5 Year Works Program (Funded Projects) – 2007-2011. <p>A recent full inventory of all of our buildings and structures was undertaken and is integral to our maintenance and renewal program, including a 20 year projected cost analysis. Attached are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Building and Maintenance Infrastructure Program. (2) Roads and Footpath Infrastructure Management Plan. (3) Asset Management Plan – Parks and Gardens.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset maintenance and replacement gaps have been identified and addressed in the financial plan. 	No	<p>We are active participants in the Western Australian Asset Management Improvement Program (WAAMI) and we are working towards completing this project. The most recent project meeting with the consultants occurred on 22 April 2009.</p> <p>All asset maintenance and replacement gaps have been identified and the financial issues raised by this are still being addressed.</p>

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3. Future financial viability and planning																									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your local government has adequate reserve funds for future capital works and plant replacement. 	Yes		<p>We are currently developing a policy to support the setting of adequate funds for future requirements. It is anticipated that this policy will go to the Council in June 2009.</p> <p>We currently have \$563,171 in Reserve, including:</p> <p>\$108,057 - Plant Replacement. \$219,535 – Shire Development.</p>																						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your local government income stream including rates, fees, charges and grants can satisfy your long term community service and operational needs and without grants represents at least 40% of your total revenue. 	Yes		<p>As at 30 June 2008:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Rates</td> <td>3,620,848</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contributions etc</td> <td>460,315</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fees and Charges</td> <td>2,071,084</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Interest Earnings</td> <td>261,632</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Revenue</td> <td>23,482</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Profit On Disposals</td> <td>406,308</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6,843,669</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operating Grants</td> <td>1,719,592</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Grants</td> <td>2,203,764</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>3,923,356</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Revenue</td> <td>10,767,025</td> </tr> </table> <p>40% of 10,767,025 = 4,306,810</p>	Rates	3,620,848	Contributions etc	460,315	Fees and Charges	2,071,084	Interest Earnings	261,632	Other Revenue	23,482	Profit On Disposals	406,308		6,843,669	Operating Grants	1,719,592	Capital Grants	2,203,764		3,923,356	Total Revenue	10,767,025
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			<p>Even if we factored in reduced interest earnings due to lower rates of interest and did not include profit on sale of assets, we would still be well within the 40%.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Rates</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,620,848</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contributions etc</td> <td style="text-align: right;">460,315</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fees and Charges</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2,071,084</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Revenue</td> <td style="text-align: right;">23,482</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">6,175,729</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operating Grants</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,719,592</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Grants</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2,203,764</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">3,923,356</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Revenue</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10,099,085</td> </tr> </table> <p>40% of 10,099,085 = 4,039,634</p>	Rates	3,620,848	Contributions etc	460,315	Fees and Charges	2,071,084	Other Revenue	23,482		6,175,729	Operating Grants	1,719,592	Capital Grants	2,203,764		3,923,356	Total Revenue	10,099,085
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<p>o Your local government has financial management plans indicating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing debt levels; - depreciation allocations compared to allocations on asset replacement and renewal; - operating deficit compared to rates revenue; - amount of reserve funds compared to expenses / asset values; and - adverse financial trends. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>The following policies (copies attached) assist us in our financial management and cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Management – Borrowing Program - Significant Accounting Policies - Investment - See answer to question 3 - Raising rates in line with its operating deficit <p>See Financial Regulations</p>																		

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Guiding principle	Include figures	Explanatory comment																											
4. Equitable governance and community representation																													
○ Indicate the number of vacancies at the 2007 ordinary local government elections.	Four (4)	Four (4) vacancies as follows: - Kendenup Ward - two (2) nominations - East Ward - Rocky Gully / West Ward - two (2) nominations - Town Ward																											
○ Indicate how many vacancies at the 2007 ordinary local government elections were uncontested.	Two (2)	Two (2) were uncontested namely: - Deb Nye-Chart – East Ward - Ken Clements – Town Ward (re-elected)																											
○ Indicate the ratio of elected members to community population.	<p>Ratio of Elected Members to Electors</p> <p>Total</p> <p>Councillors 9</p> <p>Electors 3,111</p> <p>Ratio 1:346</p> <p>Ratio of Elected Members to Community population</p> <p>Total</p> <p>Councillors 9</p> <p>Electors 4,950</p> <p>Ratio 1:550</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ward</th> <th>Number of Councillors</th> <th>Number of Electors</th> <th>Ward Ratio Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>East</td> <td>2</td> <td>620</td> <td>1:310</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kendenup</td> <td>1</td> <td>410</td> <td>1:410</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mount Barker Town</td> <td>3</td> <td>1156</td> <td>1:385</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rocky Gully / West</td> <td>2</td> <td>598</td> <td>1:299</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South</td> <td>1</td> <td>327</td> <td>1:327</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ward	Number of Councillors	Number of Electors	Ward Ratio Average	East	2	620	1:310	Kendenup	1	410	1:410	Mount Barker Town	3	1156	1:385	Rocky Gully / West	2	598	1:299	South	1	327	1:327			
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Indicate the percentage of voter turnout at the most recent local government elections.		At our October 2007 elections, we had a participation rate of 57.64% which is higher than the state average of 34.16%. Our electorate is vitally interested in Shire issues.
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Guiding principle	Include figures		Explanatory comment
5. Proficient organisational capacity			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indicate the number of staff vacancies and the period these vacancies have continued in each of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - senior management; - middle management; and - senior operational staff positions. 	Senior Management – Nil Middle Management – Nil Senior Operational Staff - Nil		A qualified planner was attracted by using a Temporary Business (Long Stay) visa (sub-class 457) applicant from South Africa. We also created an Engineering Traineeship to assist the industry as a whole and the local district in particular to help ensure a pool of qualified staff. We are presently employing a disabled young man with grant assistance and we have employed three (3) administrative cadet staff over the past five (5) years. We continue to employ apprentice mechanical staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has an employee attraction and retention strategy. 	Yes		As part of this strategy we offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nine (9) day fortnight for majority of staff; - \$400 annual uniform allowance; - 5% above award wages plus annual CPI%; - 5% superannuation matching co-contribution; and - Very active and assisted staff social clubs. Subsidised Housing for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEO; - DCEO; and - Engineering Technical Officer.

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			<p>Housing Allowance For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager Works and Services. <p>Salary Sacrifice Rental Payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Officer. <p>Vehicles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEO – full private use; - DCEO – full private use; - Manager Community Services – full private use; - Manager Development Services – full private use; - Manager Works and Services – full private use; - Planning Officer – limited private use; - Engineering Technical Officer – limited private use; - Building Surveyor – limited private use; - Environmental Health Officer – limited private use; - Maintenance Supervisor – limited private use; - Parks and Gardens Supervisor – limited private use; - Mechanic – limited private use; - Saleyards Manager – limited private use; - Ranger – limited private use; - Cleaner – limited private use; - Building Maintenance Officer – limited private use; and - Storeman – limited private use.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your current staff engage in annual professional training and development opportunities. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>Every staff member has a Personal Development Review which includes discussing any training / development that the officer and their supervisor believes would be beneficial. These are then compiled by the Human Resources Officer and a training schedule is created each year.</p> <p>During each review, officers are asked what sort of career paths they are interested in and future opportunities are discussed.</p> <p>Training allocation in the 2008/2009 budget was \$111,800.00.</p> <p>Attached is a comprehensive list of training completed by officers in the current financial year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government currently experiences delays in meeting statutory reporting functions and / or requests extensions. 		<p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	<p>This is evidenced with the compilation of the Annual Compliance Audit (see attached).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government processes residential building licence applications within 20 working days. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>We have a weekly development control unit meeting to discuss applications etc and all of our building licence applications are processed within ten (10) working days once all information is received.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under delegations your local government processes development applications within 20 working days. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>Normal planning consents processed within twenty (20) working days once all information received.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All other development applications are processed within 40 working days. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>Planning consents for complex items are processed within forty (40) working days once all information is received.</p>

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	Yes	No	
6. Effective political and community advocacy for service delivery			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has funding or other partnerships in place with programs and services sourced by the State Government. 	Yes		<p>To assist us with the new \$1.3million Medical Centre we have funding / partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Headworks Program (RHP) - \$44,000; and - Regional Infrastructure Funding Program (RIFP) - \$220,000. <p>both administered by the Department of Local Government and Regional Development (DLGRD).</p> <p>The Department of Sport and Recreation has also funded major refurbishments to the Mount Barker Swimming Pool (\$62,000 over the past four (4) years) and Sport and Recreation Masterplanning.</p> <p>To assist us with the provision of playground equipment we have funding / partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Facilities Grants Program (DLGRD) - \$23,000; and - Lotterywest - \$35,000.

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			<p>\$42,000 funding was also received from Lotterywest and the Great Southern Development Commission for a Trails Masterplan and Trails Design Plan.</p> <p>The Fire and Emergency Services Authority has funded a Community Risk Assessment Program and two (2) Risk Awareness training sessions through the AWARE funding allocation.</p> <p>Through a partnership with the Office of Crime Prevention (OCP), funding was also sought for the preparation of a Community Crime Prevention and Safety Plan. OCP also funded a safety lighting study for Wilson and Centenary Parks.</p> <p>The Bushfire Mitigation Program, administered by the Department of Environment and Conservation, provided funds for an Emergency Mapping project in the Kendenup district.</p> <p>The Disability Services Commission, through the Disability Access and Inclusion Program, provided support to upgrade the Shire's website to become more inclusive for people with disabilities.</p>
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			<p>Lotterywest has also provided \$750,000 funding for the Mount Barker Community Centre, a \$1.5 million joint project with the Mount Barker Baptist Church.</p> <p>The Shire's recent 'Connecting Local Governments – Working Together Better' project was funded through DLGRD.</p> <p>The Western Australian Country Health Service provided a grant to assist with the construction of the new Home and Community Care Centre. The Centre project budget is \$495,000.</p> <p>Other grants which have been sourced through partnerships with the State Government including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Royalties for Regions; - Weed Strategy Grant; - Regional Road Group Funding; - TIRES Funding; and - Black Spot Funding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Your local government has funding or other partnerships in place with programs and services sourced by the Federal Government. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>To assist us with the new medical centre we have funding / partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund (RMIF) - \$440,000.

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			<p>To assist with the development of a Central Emergency Control Room, \$52,000 funding was received from the Attorney General's Office (Emergency Management Australia). \$100,000 of RLCIP funds have been sourced for the development of new Cemetery, at a cost of \$450,000.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has funding partnerships in place with the private sector to enhance service delivery. 	<p>Yes</p>		<p>Each year the Shire provides funding to community groups and service providers through the Community Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs). \$119,000 will be distributed in 2009/2010. Some of the recipients of the FAGs include Smart Start, Rotary, Chaplaincy and Youth Care Program and local sporting groups.</p> <p>Funding was received from the Mount Barker Tourist Bureau and the Banksia Farm to assist in the development of a detailed Trail Master Plan for the Mondurup and Pwackenbak trails.</p> <p>Further support of an 'interest free \$200,000 loan' from the Bendigo Community Bank has been received for the Medical Centre project.</p> <p>A partnership is in place with Wanslea Family Services to provide long day care for children. The Centre is licensed for twenty eight (28) children and employs five (5) full time staff members.</p>

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			<p>The Great Southern GP Network has also funded a program co-ordinated by the Shire which aims to improve the literacy skills of young children in Kendenup.</p> <p>The Mount Barker Community Centre is a partnership with the Mount Barker Baptist Church to establish a Centre in which a range of Government Services are delivered such as Centrelink and Emergency Relief Counselling and other community services such as after-school and vacation child care, learning programs for adult students, youth spaces and the public Library. \$1.4million of the total \$1.5million required has been raised to start the project. Construction on the Centre is to commence by 31 May 2009.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The relationship between local government boundaries and relevant State and Commonwealth Agency boundaries are appropriate for effective decision making. 	Yes		<p>We note that the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) splits the Shire of Plantagenet into two (2) areas ie: Frankland, Walpole and Albany.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the past 2 years your local government has attracted investment that has led to economic growth and job creation. 	Yes		<p>Over the past five (5) years, several large subdivisions have occurred with several more still planned. This has led to housing development which in turn has had a 'flow-on' effect in regards to economic growth and job creation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Shire of Plantagenet</p>

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			<p>will continue to encourage property investors / subdivisions due to its location and affordability due to several large employers within the district.</p> <p>The Mount Barker Northern By Pass was completed last year at a total cost of over \$4 million.</p> <p>At present Main Roads (WA) is completing passing lanes on Muirs Highway just West of the town of Mount Barker at a total cost of \$5 million.</p> <p>See attached comparisons between 2001 and 2008 for Building Licences for dwellings.</p> <p>The Narrikup Southern By Pass will be completed next year at a total investment of \$1.5 million with \$1.1million from Timber Industry Roads Evaluation Strategy (TIRES) grants funding.</p> <p>The completion of the Mount Barker Community College is expected this year at a total cost of \$20 Million.</p> <p>The total value of building licences issued in the last two (2) years is \$31,142,021.00.</p> <p>The value of development consents and building licence approvals issued in the last</p>
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			<p>two (2) years is \$11,692,524.00.</p> <p>The past two (2) years have witnessed the opening of a new bakery, pizza shop, Elders Outlet, Automotive Workshop, Office and Workshop, Station House Café, Windrush Winery/Café, Poachers Winery/Café, Animal Park and new Bottle Shop in Mount Barker.</p> <p>Major State Government projects such as the upgrade of the Mount Barker Police Station, extension of the Water Corporation's sewer pond network and extensive repairs and replacement to the Western Power network has supported the local economy and local employment.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your local government has community consultation strategies in place, both on-going and project specific. 	Yes		<p>Four (4) years ago the Council created 'The Shire Flyer' which is a flyer designed, created, printed and delivered to each residential property and PO box. This is done on a quarterly basis and it is used to keep the residents informed and updated with what is going on in their Shire (Sample copies attached).</p> <p>We conduct a non-statutory 'pre-budget' public meeting to explain the budget process and major items and potential rate increases each year.</p> <p>We have a column in the local fortnightly paper which advises the community of community interest Council meeting resolutions as well as other information the Council thinks may be important for the community to know.</p> <p>When things of interest / concern / contention are occurring, the Shire will hold public meetings and workshops with Senior Staff and Councillors in attendance.</p>

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			<p>In 2002 we conducted a 'Community Needs Survey' to assist in the preparation of our Strategic Plan. The Council strongly promotes community feedback and involvement.</p> <p>In 2008 the Shire also conducted a Community Risk Assessment postal survey and Sport and Recreation Planning postal survey with all landholders.</p> <p>Onsite community workshops for the Weed Strategy, Local Planning Strategy and Porongurup Village Strategy have taken place. Community Information Sessions have also been held in Rocky Gully and Narrikup.</p> <p>The Shire is also undertaking a Sport and Recreation Precinct Planning study to progress the Sport and Recreation Plan. This has involved numerous place studies and feature surveys with sport and recreation groups.</p> <p>The Shire has adopted a Customer Service Charter, reviewed in 2007, which is attached. The Charter highlights the Shire's community consultation aims.</p>
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7. Understanding of and planning for demographic change										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government's population trend for the past five years has been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - declining - stable - growing 		<p>According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics we had recent growth of 1.5%:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2001 census population 4,420 - 2006 census population 4,483 <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Local Government Area</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Estimated Resident Population at 30 June 2008</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Change over previous year</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Change over previous year (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Plantagenet</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4,950</td> <td style="text-align: center;">130</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;">Source ABS Regional Population Growth 3218.0</p>	Local Government Area	Estimated Resident Population at 30 June 2008	Change over previous year	Change over previous year (%)	Plantagenet	4,950	130	2.7
	Local Government Area		Estimated Resident Population at 30 June 2008	Change over previous year	Change over previous year (%)					
	Plantagenet		4,950	130	2.7					
Yes										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government's projected population for the next five years will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - declining - stable - growing 		<p>According to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) in its Country Land Development Program for the Great Southern Region in the 2005 Annual Review, a projected annual growth rate for the population is 0.42%.</p> <p>Unfortunately this 'Annual Review' has not been updated by the WAPC since 2005 and even taking into account the recent economic slow-down etc, this is quite conservative.</p>								
	Yes									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has plans in place for demographic change. 	Yes	<p>The Council is very aware of recent growth and possible future demographic changes and to prepare for these changes we have undertaken or caused to be undertaken:</p>								

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recreation Feasibility Studies – this study encompasses the entire Shire and takes into account, the wants and needs of each 'township' as well as the Shire's needs as a whole; - New Medical Centre – this is part of the Council's commitment to assist our current resident doctors in the attraction and retention of key medical staff along with coping with the increased demand from neighbouring Councils as well as our growing community. The Centre will house eight (8) full time doctors, space for visiting specialists, two (2) physiotherapists, pathology laboratories and current medical technologies. Scale of project is \$1.5 million; - New \$490,000 HACC Centre – this is part of the Council's commitment to the increased need for aged care facilities; - The Council has prepared a draft Local Planning Strategy for the whole Shire and submitted it to the WAPC for approval to advertise in June 2008. Unfortunately the Department of Planning and Infrastructure have not addressed the draft strategy and this inhibits our ability to respond to demographic changes; - The \$1.5million Mount Barker Community Centre – planned to provide a wide range of community services to respond to immediate and future needs. The Centre will incorporate Child Care and Adult Training Facilities, Youth Spaces, office space for visiting professionals, financial assistance services, the public library and room for expansion. This facility is being constructed in partnership with the Mount Barker Baptist Church; - The new \$450,000 Mount Barker Cemetery development which will provide 1,518 plots, serving the district for at least
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			<p>76 years;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Council has supported the construction of the new Mount Barker Community college to recognise increases in student numbers and to expand training opportunities; and- Current requests for Town Planning Scheme Amendments and Subdivisions include the development of over 1,000 new residential and rural/residential lots.
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	Yes	No	
8. Effective management of natural resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government, by itself or in partnership, has resource management plans to address changing environmental conditions. 	Yes		<p>As part of our draft Local Planning Strategy, several factors are considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - climate change; - flood and its impact on waterways; - acid sulphate soils; - bush fire; - sustainability; - carbon sequestration; - weed strategy; <p>Recycling stations at each waste management facility.</p> <p>Kerbside Recycling Pick Up Scheme Tender to be decided by the Council as part of the 2009/2010 Budget process.</p> <p>The Shire Office is a mobile telephone recycling centre.</p> <p>ZERO Waste Management Plan has been prepared in partnership with the City of Albany and the Shires of Cranbrook and Denmark.</p>
9. Optimal community of interest			

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<p>○ Your local government provides services and facilities to communities with a similar community of interest.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Council provides the following services and facilities to communities with similar interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great Southern Regional Cattle Saleyards which service the Great Southern Region and Shire's as far as Esperance. The Saleyards manage 60,000 head of cattle annually which are sold and transported throughout the country, through weekly sales increased to twice weekly in summer months; - Mount Barker Swimming Pool, the only 50 metre pool south of Katanning, services Plantagenet and neighbouring Councils including the City of Albany; - The Mount Barker Recreation Centre accommodates many neighbouring communities with two (2) courts, a gymnasium, squash courts and conference facilities; - The Medical Centre will accommodate doctors that extend their medical services to the Shire of Cranbrook (visiting practitioners attending both Cranbrook and Frankland townsites) and patient bases that extend across all neighbouring Shires; and - The Council has supported the establishment of a wind farm in Mount
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			Barker which has received \$4.2million of Federal funding.
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10. Optimal service delivery to community			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government has the capacity to improve / increase service delivery in response to community expectation and associated demand. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>		<p>The following projects are either completed or in the process of being completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large multi-purpose recreation centre; - New medical centre eight (8) doctors and support staff); - Home and Community Care Day Centre; - Mount Barker Community Centre / Library; - Completion of new Administration Centre three (3) years ago; - Underground Power; - Streetscape; - Traffic Management Plan; - Undertaking Sport and Recreation Strategy; - CCTV Cameras in CBD of Mount Barker (for three (3) years); - New Public Toilets built three (3) years ago; - More public toilets proposed in 2009/2010 to cater for increase tourism numbers; - Support creation of new Community College; and - New Park development strategies - Wilson and Centenial Park, Rocky Gully and Narrikup Playground upgrades.

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Guiding principles	Are these elements in place at your organisation?		Explanatory comment
	Yes	No	
11. Membership of an effective regional grouping			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your local government is a member of a regional grouping of two or more local governments to plan and deliver services regionally. 	Yes		<p>The Shire of Plantagenet, Shire of Cranbrook, Shire of Broomehill/Tambellup and Shire of Kojonup are all active participants of the Southern Link Voluntary Regional Organisation Of Councils (SLVROC) and as part of this we are currently looking into the centralisation of our records system.</p> <p>We also 'shared' a building surveyor for two (2) years with the Shire of Denmark and have looked into the sharing of an IT Officer with neighbouring shires.</p> <p>Our Manager Works and Services is a member of the 'Great Southern Works Managers and Engineers Management Group' which has eleven participating Councils.</p> <p>We have been active participants of the Rainbow Coast Regional Recreation Council for several years which includes the Shire of Denmark, City of Albany and the Shire of Cranbrook.</p> <p>In light of our newly formed SLVROC, the Council resigned from this VROC to focus more on those communities with which it has similar interests.</p> <p>The CEO is a board member of the Great Southern Region Marketing Association the brief of which is to market food and tourism opportunities in the whole of the Great Southern.</p> <p>Council staff have been regular attendees at the Government Officers Technical Advisory Group (GOTAG) for the past twenty (20) years.</p> <p>Council staff have also participated at the Great Southern Regional Advisory Group, Regional Road Group, TIRES, Southern Agcare and the Great Southern Regional Recreation Advisory Group for many years.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indicate your regional grouping preference, identifying participating local governments. 			<p>The Shire of Plantagenet wishes to remain autonomous but if forced to choose a regional grouping preference, would choose those Councils with which it has a similar community of interest ie: Shires of Cranbrook, Broomehill / Tambellup and Kojonup. These are the local</p>

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			<p>governments which make up the Southern Link Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils. Although only 50km separates Mount Barker from Denmark and Albany, both of these Councils are coastal towns that focus on different community needs. The Shire of Plantagenet is an agriculturally focussed area with a modest but growing interest in capturing the tourism market generated in Albany and Denmark.</p> <p>Both Albany and Denmark are focussing strongly on their tourist and coastal related industry while balancing growing residential demands and do not consider agriculture as their main business.</p>
<p>12. Previous Structural Reform</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have you gained any benefits from structural reform measures taken with other local governments to date? 	<p>Yes</p>		<p>The creation of the Southern Link VROC has already had benefits with the agreement to appoint an asset management officer to support the four member councils and there is the possibility to expand in the future. The Great Southern Regional Council which was formed in 2002 with member Councils of the City of Albany and Shires of Cranbrook, Denmark, Gnowangerup and Plantagenet to oversee waste management in the combined Local Government area and was subsequently disbanded in 2004 due to major differing of opinion regarding the treatment of waste and long lead distances. Also a joint venture between the City of Albany and the Shire of Plantagenet for the running of the Great Southern Regional Cattle Saleyards was disbanded due to governance issues with the respective Councils adopting differing points of view regarding the management of the saleyards. It should be noted that the original joint venture negotiations current between the Shire of Albany and Shire of Plantagenet both of which had similar communities of interest.</p> <p>Also the Shire of Plantagenet, as mentioned elsewhere has recently withdrawn from the Rainbow Coast Regional Council (RCRC) due to a lack of action coming from that grouping because of different communities of interests.</p>

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13. Conclusion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After completing the checklist, are you of the view that amalgamation or any other type of structural reform is necessary for your local government? 		<p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	<p>The Shire of Plantagenet is sustainable and prepared for future projected growth.</p> <p>The Council has been extremely pro-active in providing better services for its own community and neighbouring Shires have also shared in these services.</p> <p>The Council is fully supportive of structural reform that would increase efficiencies and improve services but believes we have a proven track-record of forward planning, compliance and efficient operations. Therefore we believe that there is no need for amalgamation with any adjoining local government area as there is a likelihood that because of distances involved any larger local government area may actually introduce inefficiencies of scale. However we are firmly committed to the efficiencies that may be brought about by the Southern Link VROC especially those that are readily accessible through the introduction of technology.</p> <p>It should be noted that in 2001 the Council resolved to reduce the number of Councillors from twelve to nine and to review ward boundaries. The smaller number of councillors has worked well although with the increased workloads of councillors, nine would appear to be a workable number.</p>