

**The Friends of Inglewood Triangle (FoIT) is a local Community Volunteer Group collaborating with the City of Stirling to protect and manage Inglewood Triangle, a 1.9 hectare A class reserve forming part of the remnant banksia woodland of the Swan Coastal Plain.**

FoIT responses to the WA Government's proposed reforms to Local Government are provided in the table below. However, this process provides opportunity to consider additional reforms related to Local Government's critical role in achieving better outcomes for the natural environment with resultant health benefits for its communities. To this end the FoIT supports the following additional Local Government reform priorities:

- ✓ Compulsory development and application of a Local Biodiversity Strategy and Local Biodiversity Plan by each LGA and associated formal incorporation into Town Planning Schemes (TPS).
- ✓ Introducing 'local biodiversity conservation land use' category in Model Scheme Text (MST) and Local Planning Schemes (LPS) that has appropriate protections.
- ✓ Compulsory development and application of an Urban Forest Strategy by each LGA including adopting and applying the WA Planning Commission (in collaboration with the WA Local Government Association) *Guide for Better Urban Forest Planning*.  
[https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2021-05/PRJ\\_Better\\_Urban\\_Forest\\_Planning.pdf](https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2021-05/PRJ_Better_Urban_Forest_Planning.pdf)
- ✓ Protecting and enhancing green space to ensure adequate, resilient ecological linkages.
- ✓ Reducing the 'heat-island-effect' whilst actively demonstrating accountability to State Government and Local Government Laws, Policies and Strategies to reduce 'heat -island-effect' such as application of each LGA's *Urban Forest Strategy and Native Vegetation Protection Policy*.
- ✓ Establishing a "Tree Protection By-law on private and public lands" (including penalties for damage or removal).
- ✓ In addition to required 'green space', establishing and managing on all freehold and lease-hold properties a living, green space (i.e. not plastic or non-living lawn, plants, greenery)
- ✓ Carbon neutral status for all LGAs.
- ✓ Compulsory voting for all LGA elections.
- ✓ Introducing Third Party Appeal Rights (TPARs).
- ✓ Stopping political donations from property developers.
- ✓ Amending *Integrity (Lobbyists) Act 2016 (WA)* to apply it to "local governments" and "town planning".

**LG REFORM: Theme 1 – Earlier intervention, effective regulation and stronger penalties**

Ref.	Proposal	Support	Neutral or N/A	Do NOT Support	COMMENTS	IMPROVEMENTS
1a	The LG Inspector	✓				
1b	LG Monitors	✓				
1c	Stronger penalties	✓			For environmental damage.	
1d	Mandatory Training	✓			Cllrs rarely have knowledge required for decision making regarding the natural environment, its values and ecosystem services.	<p>Cllr training should include knowledge of below and involve familiarisation visits to natural areas managed by the LGA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural environments managed by the LGA and partner agencies and community groups</li> <li>• Biodiversity values of the natural environment</li> <li>• Economic value of natural environment as estimated by the ecosystem services it provides including the health and wellbeing of residents and what is required to manage it properly</li> <li>• Bush Forever and ecological linkages</li> <li>• All environment legislation, policies, strategies and action plans related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local Biodiversity</li> <li>○ Urban Forest</li> <li>○ Climate Change</li> <li>○ Water Course Reserves</li> <li>○ Storm Water</li> <li>○ Street Tree</li> <li>○ Urban regeneration and Greening</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local Community Volunteer Groups that care for bushland and wetland in the LGA</li> <li>• Community Engagement Charter (refer 4f).</li> </ul>

**LG REFORM: Theme 2 – Reducing red tape, increasing consistency and simplicity**

Ref.	Proposal	Support	Neutral or N/A	Do NOT Support	COMMENTS	IMPROVEMENTS
2a	Standardised Meeting Procedures across all Local Governments	✓				
2b	Greater Consistency for Small Business			✗	Do not support without further clarification. Critical assessment processes aimed at protecting our natural environment and/or providing good governance should not be considered unnecessary 'red tape'.	

**LG REFORM: Theme 3 – Great transparency and accountability**

Ref.	Proposal	Support	Neutral or N/A	Do NOT Support	COMMENTS	IMPROVEMENTS
3a	Mandatory Recording of Council Meetings	✓			Critical to community understanding and trust.	Including recording of contributions from the visitor gallery including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputations</li> <li>• Questions, and</li> <li>• Discussion of Deputations and Questions.</li> </ul>
3b	Guidance for Confidential Meeting	✓			This removes the temptation for some councils to apply this 'confidential' facility inappropriately.	
3c	Transparency and Accountability	✓			Individuals and community groups need to be able to understand how decisions are made and what resources, actions and timings are involved.	
3e	Consistent Recording of all Votes	✓			Important that Councillors are visibly accountable for how they vote and thus impact on the delivery of services and management across LGAs.	

**LG REFORM: Theme 4 – Stronger local democracy and community engagement**

Ref.	Proposal	Support	Neutral or N/A	Do NOT Support	COMMENTS	IMPROVEMENTS
4f	Community Engagement Charter	✓			<p>The consultation process must mean that people are involved in the decision-making process, not just informed about a decision.</p> <p>Where Community Volunteer Groups such as FoIT are involved in managing a natural area within an LGA there needs to be a collaborative approach to planning and decisions regarding management priorities and associated resource allocation.</p> <p>Having a clear charter is critical to enabling residents and ratepayers to understand how and when they will be consulted and what the level of community engagement will be. Refer International Association of Public Participation’s Spectrum (e.g. Inform; Consult; Involve: Collaborate or Empower).  <a href="https://iap2.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2018_IAP_2_Spectrum.pdf">https://iap2.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2018_IAP_2_Spectrum.pdf</a></p>	<p>For proposed developments, there must be a <b>requirement to detail</b> how the development aligns with community expectations (including those who use and care for the area).</p> <p>Note: Unfortunately, community workshops are often misused as vehicles for disseminating the developers plans rather than truly engaging the community for the best environmental, social and cultural outcomes.</p> <p>All LGAs to endorse and apply the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage <b>Planning Engagement Toolkit for Western Australia</b>  <a href="https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/getmedia/73a54d99-d65e-4803-91f8-70570fb1017b/PRJ-Draft-Planning-Engagement-Toolkit-for-Western-Australia">https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/getmedia/73a54d99-d65e-4803-91f8-70570fb1017b/PRJ-Draft-Planning-Engagement-Toolkit-for-Western-Australia</a></p>

**LG REFORM: Theme 5 – Clearer Roles and Responsibilities**

Ref.	Proposal	Support	Neutral or N/A	Do NOT Support	COMMENTS	IMPROVEMENTS
5a	Principles	✓			Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognition of the unique status of Aboriginal West Australians</li> <li>• guidance for community engagement</li> <li>• guidance for financial management</li> </ul>	How Indigenous guidance has influenced decision making must be acknowledged and documented.

**LG REFORM: Theme 6 – Earlier intervention, effective regulation and stronger penalties**

**Theme 6: OTHER COMMENTS**

To ensure non-selective reporting, increased understanding and transparency, the reform of *LG Act 3.59* Business Plans need to clearly document:

1. Indigenous cultural values,
2. Environmental values,
3. Social values, as well as
4. Economic values.