

GREAT SOUTHERN GROUP OF COUNCILS

REGIONAL WASTE STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 TO 2018



Prepared for

CITY OF ALBANY on behalf of the Group member councils

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Revision: Final
Date of Issue: 31 May '14

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1. Introduction

In late 2008, the Great Southern Group of councils developed a “Strategic Waste Minimisation Plan 2008 - 2013” (SWMP). This Plan incorporated that City of Albany, Shire of Plantagenet and the Shire of Denmark. Originally the Shire of Cranbrook was a participant, but subsequently withdrew from the Group to join a neighbouring group.

Following the expiry of the SWMP validity period (2013), the Group appointed *IW Projects* to undertake a review of the Group’s SWP and current waste management practises. The scope of work was to include the following activities:

1. Review the Great Southern Group of Councils 2008 – 2013 Strategic Waste Minimisation Plan reporting on the status of its Key Action Areas.
2. Review the strategic waste management documents belonging to Albany, Denmark and Plantagenet, highlighting common goals and their potential significance to regional waste management.
3. Review current and planned waste infrastructure within the Councils of Albany, Denmark and Plantagenet noting potential opportunity of co-use or overlap of resources.
4. Review the range of contracted waste services within the Councils of Albany, Denmark and Plantagenet noting potential opportunity of shared contracts.
5. Discuss the merits of suitable technologies that may compliment the regions proposed direction in waste management.
6. Based on the information reviewed and discussed, provide within the plan achievable key action areas applicable to developing a sustainable regional waste management practice that aligns with the Vision statement.
7. Based on the information gathered from the review of strategic alignment, regional waste infrastructure and contracted services, and in consultation with the partner Councils, consider the merit of establishing a regional Council to centralise waste management services to achieve cost effective regional outcomes.

2. Strategic Waste Planning

Strategic planning should ideally incorporate the following activities:

- Determine where the Group is currently – Current competencies;
- Identify what is important – Priority areas;
- Define what the Group must achieve – Objectives to address priority issues;
- Define who is accountable – How the Group is going to get to where it wants to go; and,
- Review, review, review – Regular formal reviews to assess progress.

This document follows these fundamental strategic steps to identify the Group's strategic direction. Although the detailed key action areas cover the period 2014 through to 2018 (a five year planning period), the overall strategic direction should transcend this period and be applicable to the long-term future direction of the Group.

3. State Waste Strategy

3.1. Creating the Right Environment

In March 2012, the Minister for the Environment launched the WA Waste Strategy: *Creating the Right Environment*.

The Strategy employs best practice and continuous improvement, along with target setting, as primary approaches to drive this change. The Strategy builds on existing programs and initiatives such as the Regional Funding Program, Household Hazardous Waste Program, Data Program, Waste Awards, and grants programs as well as strategic partnerships, to achieve the desired outcomes.

The amount of waste being recovered in Western Australia has been increasing steadily for a number of years, and there is evidence that increases in the landfill levy have accelerated this trend. However, the State's performance when benchmarked against other mainland states is still poor and requires a significant boost if comparable outcomes are to be achieved by 2015. In order to achieve this, the key drivers that have shaped the strategies and targets in *Creating the Right Environment* include:

- Key Driver 1 - The need to lift the effectiveness of planning for long-term waste management at a State level.

- Key Driver 2 - Access to data and information to underpin the measurement of strategies and services.
- Key Driver 3 - Significant opportunities to improve performance on construction and demolition, and commercial and industrial waste recovery.
- Key Driver 4 - Consolidation and improvement in municipal waste collection and processing performance.
- Key Driver 5 - A desire to do better on packaging waste management, litter recovery and other problematic wastes.
- Key Driver 6 - Improved landfill practices and incentives to reduce waste to landfill.

Creating the Right Environment has five strategic objectives within which strategies relating to knowledge, infrastructure and incentives have been developed to support a coordinated approach to changing the behaviour of individuals, groups and organisations:

- Strategy Objective 1 – Initiate and maintain long-term planning for waste and recycling processing, and enable access to suitably located land with buffers sufficient to cater for the State’s waste management needs.
- Strategy Objective 2 - Enhance regulatory services to ensure consistent performance is achieved at landfills, transfer stations and processing facilities.
- Strategy Objective 3 - Develop best practice guidelines, measures and reporting frameworks and promote their adoption.
- Strategy Objective 4 - Use existing economic instruments to support the financial viability of actions that divert waste from landfill and recover it as a resource.
- Strategy Objective 5 - Communicate messages for behaviour change and promote its adoption, and acknowledge the success of individuals and organisations that act in accordance with the aims and principles in the Strategy and assist in its implementation.

Targets in the Strategy are based on ambitious but achievable improvements in current recovery rates. The targets are expressed as the proportion of waste recovered compared to that generated. Recovery targets for municipal solid waste in the Perth Metropolitan Region are 50% by 30 June 2015 (up from 36% in 2009/10) and 65% by 2020 and in major regional centres 30% by 30 June 2015 (up from 15% in 2009/10) and 50% by 30 June 2020. Statewide targets for the commercial and industrial sector are 55% by 30 June 2015 (up from 46% in 2009/10) and 70% by 30 June 2020. Construction and demolition waste State wide targets are 60% by 30 June 2015 (up from 29%) and 75% by 30 June 2020.

The implementation of the Strategy is supported by funding from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account, and initiatives and actions funded under the Strategy are contained in the Waste Authority's annual Business Plan.

3.1.1. Impact on the Group

The Waste Strategy is a State wide strategy for improved waste management; hence, covers all regions within the State. As can be expected, the main concentration of focus is in those areas where the most waste is generated and consequently the implementation of the Strategy's initiatives will have the most impact. The focus areas are:

- The Perth Metropolitan Area.
- Major regional centres – Avon, Greater Bunbury, Albany, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Peel and Busselton.
- All other areas within the State.

The Group falls into the second focus area – major regional centre. The consequence of this is that there are *Municipal Solid Waste Sector Targets* that directly apply to the Group. Hence, the Strategy targets should be used to drive the Group to make reasonable changes and improvements to its current level of recycling.

It is noted that the Strategy Targets refers to “material presented for collection” being that material that is to be accounted for when determining the Group’s success against the set targets. This would certainly include all kerbside collections (waste, recyclables, green waste, bulk waste etc.). It is unclear as to whether material presented at the Group’s transfer stations, drop-off facilities, tip shops and landfills by local residents is included in the targeted quantities. According to the written word, this material would appear to be outside the targeted materials, but logically, it should be presumed that this material is also considered for diversion from landfill. In future reporting against the Waste Strategy targets (which may impact future funding opportunities), the Group should be mindful of this fact and separate the data into the “Targeted” material and “Other” material. The challenge in reporting success is in the accuracy of the data available.

Although the recycling targets are an important aspect of the overall Strategy, they are not the only aspect of the Strategy. As documented above, there are numerous Key Drivers and Strategic Objectives that set out a range of aspects of current waste management practice that the Waste Authority seeks to influence. Some of these Drivers and Objectives are relevant to the Group and need to be considered in the Group’s future planning:

- **Key Driver 1 - The need to lift the effectiveness of planning for long-term waste management at a State level.** State level planning is beyond the influence of the Group. However, the Group should be aware of its current waste management facility capacities, primarily landfill airspace, to develop an understanding of the medium and long-term requirements within the Group.
- **Key Driver 2 - Access to data and information to underpin the measurement of strategies and services.** In order to plan for the future, it is essential that the Group has an understanding of the quantity of waste and recycling material that is handled. There is a need to develop a simple data collection system that enables the individual councils to gain a better understanding of their current activities. This data collection will provide valuable information for future decision making as well as reporting against the Waste Strategy Targets.

- **Key Driver 3 - Significant opportunities to improve performance on construction and demolition, and commercial and industrial waste recovery.** This Key Driver has no particular relevance to the Group at this stage of its waste management development. Possibly at some time well into the future, when the Group is looking for continuous improvement projects, the Group may consider strategies to improve the management of construction & demolition (C&D) waste and commercial & industrial waste (C&I). It is however important to note that a single demolition project could generate a relatively significant quantity of C&D waste (such as the recent demolition of the old Albany hospital). The landfill operators should have contingency plans on what to do with a large quantity of C&D waste.
- **Key Driver 4 - Consolidation and improvement in municipal waste collection and processing performance.** There is an opportunity to improve on the existing waste and recycling collection systems currently in operation. This is achieved by a combination of community education to increase at source waste sorting while reducing recyclable contamination and expanding the collection service or drop-off opportunities into additional areas.
- **Key Driver 5 - A desire to do better on packaging waste management, litter recovery and other problematic wastes.** For the Group, this Driver is somewhat linked to Key Driver 4 above as well as providing improved E-waste collections and handling, hazardous household waste collections and handling and increasing the range of materials that can be collected at the verge side and diverted from landfill (eg. food waste).
- **Key Driver 6 - Improved landfill practices and incentives to reduce waste to landfill.** This Objective is relevant to the Group as there are numerous landfills in the region. Improving the management thereof is and should continue to be a priority for the Group. Knowledge and experience (positive and negative) sharing will assist in raising the average level of facility management in the region. Incentives primarily relate to “gate fee” incentives. The region’s facility gate fees need to be structured to incentivise waste diversion from landfill. This is, recycling disposal should be cheaper than waste disposal.

- **Strategy Objective 1 – Initiate and maintain long-term planning for waste and recycling processing, and enable access to suitably located land with buffers sufficient to cater for the State’s waste management needs.** This Objective is not overly relevant to the Group as it is more relevant to the Perth metropolitan area and its surrounds; however, when the Group or individual councils are looking for future waste management sites (primarily new landfills), these issues need to be considered. The Group or individual councils may review planning policies and Structure Plans to ensure that there are adequate buffers secured around existing facilities and potentially for future waste management sites.
- **Strategy Objective 2 - Enhance regulatory services to ensure consistent performance is achieved at landfills, transfer stations and processing facilities.** This Objective is relevant to the Group. This Objective identifies that there is likely to be increased Department of Environment Regulation (DER) monitoring and inspections of waste management facilities in the future to ensure that facilities are managed to best practice standards. Sites not being operated appropriately will likely be encouraged to comply with best practice and in extreme circumstances penalised accordingly. The enhanced regulatory services are also likely to result in more stringent design and compliance requirements when developing new landfill sites. This has the potential to significantly increase the cost of developing and operating future waste management facilities.
- **Strategy Objective 3 - Develop best practice guidelines, measures and reporting frameworks and promote their adoption.** This is of limited impact to the Group and is likely to be an output from the DER at some time in the future.
- **Strategy Objective 4 - Use existing economic instruments to support the financial viability of actions that divert waste from landfill and recover it as a resource.** This is seen as a direct reference to increasing the Perth metropolitan landfill levy to narrow the cost gap between recycling operations and landfill disposal costs. With the landfill levy only applying to the Metropolitan area, this is of no consequence to the Group. It is important to note that in time, there is the potential that the landfill levy will be expanded into the major regional centres, of which, Albany is one.

- **Strategy Objective 5 - Communicate messages for behaviour change and promote its adoption, and acknowledge the success of individuals and organisations that act in accordance with the aims and principles in the Strategy and assist in its implementation.** This Objective is structured around community education and the influencing of behavioural change to achieve community buy-in to improved recycling activities. This is seen as an important aspect of any proposed changes within the Group or individual council's waste management activities and there is an opportunity to obtain DER funding to subsidise the implementation of a community education campaigns. It is pointed out that community education is not a one-off activity; it is an ongoing requirement to ensure continued success of the recycling activities.

Overall, the WA Waste Strategy is likely to have the following impact on the Group:

- Put pressure on the Group as a major regional centre to achieve the stated targets by improving waste diversion activities;
- Require the Group to have a common and transparent data collection system (in order to measure the success against the Targets);
- Require improvement in current landfill operations to comply with best practice landfill management;
- Make future site development more costly due to increased regulatory requirements; and,
- Opportunity to obtain funding to achieve the objectives of the Strategy.

3.2. Waste Authority Business Plan 2013/14

Although the Waste Authority Business Plan is developed annually, this plan contains projections through to the 2017/2018 financial year; consequently, this provides guidance to the Group on the Waste Authority's likely direction for the majority of the duration of the Group's Strategic Plan.

3.2.1. Strategic Objectives

This is the second Business Plan since the release of the State Waste Strategy (March 2012) and builds on the foundation of the inaugural plan that was released in August 2012 and includes actions relevant to the five key strategic objectives identified in the Waste Strategy (above):

- **Planning** - Initiate and maintain long-term planning for waste and recycling processing, and enable access to suitably located land sufficient to cater for the State's waste management needs.
- **Regulation** - Enhance regulatory services to ensure consistent performance is achieved at landfills, transfer stations and processing facilities.
- **Best Practice** - Develop best practice guidelines, measures and reporting frameworks and promote their adoption.
- **Economic Instruments** - Use existing economic instruments to support the financial viability of actions that divert waste from landfill and recover it as a resource.
- **Communication and Promotion** - Communicate messages for behaviour change and promote its adoption, and acknowledge the success of individuals and organisations that act in accord with the aims and principles in the Strategy and assist in its implementation.
- **Data and Measurement** - Collection and analysis of data on waste and recycling services and performance across Western Australia to assess progress against Waste Strategy objectives and targets, to assist in planning for waste management, to allow comparison with performance in other jurisdictions, and to meet national reporting requirements.
- **Strategic Policy Development and Review** - Implementing programs that deliver on outcomes in the Waste Strategy will require regular review and updating of actions in response to emerging issues, changing market circumstances, national waste policy development and implementation of initiatives, such as producer responsibility schemes.
- **Administrative and Program Service Provision and Support** – Administrative and program delivery staff salaries, sitting fees, office and management overheads, and board and committee support and on-costs.

4. Review of Group SWMP 2008 to 2013

The SWMP was developed as a result of the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) implementing a program to encourage regionalisation within the Local Government waste industry. The Great Southern Group SWMP included, amongst other detail:

- Priority Areas;
- Priority Wastes;
- Available Waste Management Infrastructure; and,
- Proposed Activities.

These primary aspects of the original SWMP have been review and commentary provided on the current relevance and the degree of success in achieving the stated outcomes.

4.1. Priority Areas

Priority areas in the original SWMP were established by the Waste Authority in its Strategic Direction and confirmed in its Annual Business Plans.

The priority areas (in order of priority) were:

- Organic products
- Building products
- Chemical products
- Packaging products
- Electrical products
- Synthetic products

Based on the achievements of the Group, organic products (green waste), chemical products (hazardous household waste), packaging products (kerbside recycling collection) and electrical products (E-waste) were targeted and real progress made in diverting these products from landfill.

As is the case in the waste recycling industry, absolute success is never achieved and there is always an ongoing need to continuously improve existing systems to increase the capture rate of targeted products.

During the period of the SWMP there was no meaningful progress against the building products priority area.

The State Waste Strategy – *Creating the Right Environment* did not cover Priority Areas but has concentrated on Key Drivers and Strategic Objectives. Consequently the Group is free to determine its own priorities. It is proposed that the following Priority Areas be considered for the 2014 to 2019 Strategic Plan:

- Waste management staffing
- Data collection
- Existing recycling activities
- Landfill management
- Disposal fees
- Organic products.

Although a list of Priority Areas has been established. Each Group member may have a different order of priority for these various Areas.

4.2. Priority Wastes

The Group identified the following priority waste streams in the SWMP (in order of priority):

- Packaging Waste (not currently being collected by existing recycling activities).
- Organic Waste and Green Waste.
- Household Hazardous Waste.
- Electronic Waste.
- Construction and Demolition Waste.

These priority waste streams then drove the proposed activities for the SWMP.

Without the State Waste Strategy (March 2012) specifying Priority Wastes the Group is free to determine its own priorities. It is proposed that the following Priority Wastes be considered for the 2014 to 2019 Strategic Plan:

- Packaging waste
- Household Hazardous Waste
- Electronic Waste
- Bulk Waste
- Organic waste.

Although a list of Priority Wastes has been established. Each Group member may have a different order of priority for these various wastes.

Liquid waste has not been listed as a Priority Waste; however, is a regional issue that, in time should be considered.

4.3. Available Waste Management Infrastructure

The 2008 SWMP provided a list of available waste management infrastructure in the region. This list has been review and the current status of these facilities commented on.

Table 4.3.1 – Waste Management Infrastructure (2008) provides a list of waste management infrastructure identified in the 2008 to 2013 SWMP and includes commentary of the current status.

Table 4.3.1 – Waste Management Infrastructure (2008)

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Class I Landfills		
McIntosh Road, Denmark	Shire of Denmark	Operational, min. 10 yrs life
Class II Landfills		
Hanrahan Road, Albany	City of Albany	Operational, min. 10 yrs life
Baker's Junction, Albany	City of Albany	Operational, min. 10 yrs life
South Stirlings	City of Albany	Closed, transfer station only
Cape Riche	City of Albany	Offal pit only, small
O'Neill Road, Mount Barker	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, min. 10 yrs life
Kamballup	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, min. 10 yrs life
Peaceful Bay	Shire of Denmark	Operational, near capacity
Class III Landfills		
Nil		

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Transfer Stations		
Redmond	City of Albany	Operational, small
Kronkup	City of Albany	Operational, small
Wellstead	City of Albany	Operational, small
Cheyne's Beach	City of Albany	Operational, small
Manypeaks	City of Albany	Operational, small
Porongurup	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, small
Kendenup	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, small
Rocky Gully	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, small
McIntosh Road, Denmark	Shire of Denmark	Operational, large
Peaceful Bay, Denmark	Shire of Denmark	Operational, small
Recycling Drop-Off Facilities		
Hanrahan Road, Albany	City of Albany	Operational, large
Bakers Junction	City of Albany	Operational, small
Redmond	City of Albany	Operational, small
Kronkup	City of Albany	Operational, small
Wellstead	City of Albany	Operational, small
Cheyne's Beach	City of Albany	Operational, small
Manypeaks	City of Albany	Operational, small
Porongurup	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, small
Kendenup	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, small
Rocky Gully	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, small
McIntosh Road, Denmark	Shire of Denmark	Operational, large
Peaceful Bay	Shire of Denmark	Operational, small

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Materials Recycling Facilities		
Hanrahan Road, Albany	City of Albany	Operational, mixed recyclables
John Street, Milpara	City of Albany	Operational, green waste
Alternative Waste Treatment		
Nil		
Reuse Facility/Tip Shop		
Hanrahan Road, Albany	City of Albany	Operational, large
McIntosh Road, Denmark	Shire of Denmark	Operational, large

Table 4.3.2 – Waste Management Infrastructure - New provides a list of new waste management infrastructure since the 2008 SWMP.

Table 4.3.2 – Waste Management Infrastructure - New

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Class I Landfills		
Nil		
Class II Landfills		
Kendenup	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, min. 10 yrs life. Approval for ongoing landfill granted by DER.
Class III Landfills		
Nil		
Transfer Stations		
South Stirling	City of Albany	Operational, small
Recycling Drop-Off Facilities		
O'Neill Road, Mount Barker	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, large

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Materials Recycling Facilities		
Nil		
Alternative Waste Treatment		
Nil		
Reuse Facility/Tip Shop		
O'Neill Road, Mount Barker	Shire of Plantagenet	Operational, large

Table 4.3.3 – Waste Management Infrastructure - Proposed provides a list of future proposed waste management infrastructure since the 2008 SWMP.

Table 4.3.3 – Waste Management Infrastructure - Proposed

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Class I Landfills		
Nil		
Class II Landfills		
O'Neill Road, Mount Barker	Shire of Plantagenet	Western expansion. Min. 10 yrs life. Currently going through the DER approval process.
O'Neill Road, Mount Barker	Shire of Plantagenet	Eastern expansion. Min. 10 yrs life. Currently reviewing a potential land swap to facilitate the expansion.
Kernutts Road, Denmark	Shire of Denmark	Min. 10 yrs life. Currently going through the DER approval process.
Class III Landfills		
Nil		
Transfer Stations		
Nil		

Location	Ownership	Current Status
Recycling Drop-Off Facilities		
Nil		
Materials Recycling Facilities		
Nil		
Alternative Waste Treatment		
Nil		
Reuse Facility/Tip Shop		
Nil		

4.4. Proposed Activities

The 2008 SWMP provided a table of Proposed Activities for the Region. This table has been review and comments included on the degree of achievement within each council as well as an overall commentary provided from a Group point of view.

Table 4.4.1 – Proposed Activities – 2008/9 to 2013/14 provides the table of Proposed Activities, including comments on achievements.

Table 4.4.1 – Proposed Activities – 2008/9 to 2013/14

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Financial Year 2008/2009				
Where possible, apply local solutions to local problems.	Always considering local solutions	Always considering local solutions	Looking at a local solution for cardboard reuse (packing material). Developing a local landfill.	Common goal to look at local solutions. Increased Group participation in waste management activities should increase the feasibility of developing local solutions.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Develop systems for the collection and recording of waste management data.	Good data from Hanrahan Rd weighbridge, kerbside recycling and green waste collections. Comfortable with level of information. Could change the tip shop and transfer station contract to increase data provision by contractor.	Developed waste volume/classification estimates system at all sites in 2010.	Good data for waste disposal to landfill (from the CoAlbany). Minimal other data. Based on estimates.	Some accurate data available. Need for a common mechanism for estimating material quantities to enable reasonably accurate comparison across councils. Staff training will be required.
Improve the management of landfill facilities.	Ongoing improvement, eg. leachate collection system at Hanrahan Rd.	Continues to develop waste management and recycling facilities.	Nil action. Need to get landfill management plans for both of the Shire's landfills.	Landfill management of individual shire facilities is not a Group activity, but education and training in improved facility management is a Group activity.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Implement a household hazardous waste collection system.	Implemented	Limited HHW transported to Albany from SoPlantagenet. No dedicated HHW storage facility in the Shire.	Implemented at both landfill sites.	Individual council activity, with centralised HHW consolidation in Albany. Education (staff and community) and improved facility operation is a Group activity.
Financial Year 2009/2010				
Implement regular community education/information communication.	Cleanaway provide an education officer as part of the Waste Minimisation Contract. Not overly effective. No continuity (4 officers in 2 yrs). Need to revisit the program.	Limited programs in the Shire. AWARE centre accessible to Mt Barker students.	No education activities. High recycling contamination 40%, need increased community education.	No unified approach to education. This is an area of potential improvement within the Group.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Implement sustainable purchasing policies.	Generic City policy. Not overly sustainable.	No action.	Have a sustainability officer. Minimal sustainability purchasing policy. Green fleet policy.	Shared policies and learning could be a Group activity.
Improve internal communication and knowledge sharing.	Group meets every quarter. Strategic Plan to try and encourage participation within the Group.	Quarterly Strategic Waste Minimisation meetings within the Group.	Needs more effort within the Group. CoAlbany is so much larger and further developed, therefore different needs.	Quarterly Group meeting. Good forum to launch a renewed effort to improve waste diversion from landfill by working together on a range of waste minimisation activities.
Develop links with neighbouring Local Governments.	No meaningful links with other LG's outside the Group.	VROC meetings and involvement with northern Shires since 2010.	No action.	Minimal action. SoPlantagenet, through its VROC link. Group to concentrate on increased internal cooperation between Group participants before looking beyond the Group boundaries.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Investigate and implement additional recycling activities.	Success in cardboard recycling. Looking at food scrap composting.	Comingled recycling drop-off facilities at landfill and transfer stations. Introduced kerbside recycling collections to all town sites in 2013.	Glass – working with Cleanaway. Cardboard – looking at local solutions.	Good individual progress. Heavy reliance on CoAlbany to implement solutions and then the other members get involved thereafter. Preference to have Group development, even if it is likely to have majority reliance on CoAlbany
Investigate the development of organic/composting facilities.	Undertaking green waste separation through contractor. Investigation food scrap composting.	No action.	Potential for food waste and maybe green waste collection.	Green waste recycling in Albany. Food scrap potential to be included in this solution and have other member participation.
Improve staff training in waste management activities.	Formal training Cert. 3 landfill waste operations through TAFE.	No action.	No action.	No Group action. Knowledge sharing amongst the Group. Specific Group training for facility operators and other waste management staff.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Financial Year 2010/2011				
Implement E-Waste collection systems.	Implemented	Since 2013, Shire collects and transports to Albany. Part of the Product Stewardship recycling program.	Received funding (\$10k). Used for a one-off e-waste collection in 2013. Currently send to Active Industries – cost \$0.50/kg.	All councils are involved in this activity, but not as a Group solution.
Lead by example – improve internal recycling activities.	Batteries, mobile phones and white paper.	Shire administration building recycling.	No action.	Minimal action. Group knowledge sharing would improve internal recycling information and implementation.
Encourage elected members support in waste minimisation.	Enthusiastic Councillors. Adequate funding. Agenda driven by officers.	Strong support from Council. Significant funding for development of recycling infrastructure at O'Neill Rd.	Strong support.	Strong support across all councils. Lends itself to good Group support for common activities.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Investigate and implement public place recycling.	Implemented.	Limited facilities. Recycling at public events encouraged by the Shire.	Implemented.	Due to the location of the activities, this will always be an individual council activity, but the Group could share experiences and improve the systems used by individual councils.
Improve transport efficiencies in recycling management.	Not applicable. Contractors handle all recyclables.	Use of waste contractor to undertake waste and recycling collections.	Stockpile glass and send to Perth, but gets rejected. Looking at alternative with Cleanaway. Looking at a local solution to cardboard due to the transport cost of getting it to Albany.	Group activities need to be considered in light of transport distance and the associated costs. There could be efficiencies in some activities, but regionalised solutions may result in significantly more transport cost in comparison to current activities.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Financial Year 2011/2012				
Improve materials handling of all existing recycling activities.	Not applicable. Contractors handle all recyclables.	Use of contractor to collect and sort. Expanded recycling facilities at O'Neill Rd.	No action.	Not a Group activity. But Group knowledge sharing could improve individual facility operational efficiency.
Implement planning solutions to force the developers to manage waste appropriately.	No change. Fee structure at landfill used to encourage recycling.	Bulk bin business to introduce separate recycling bays within bulk bins and or introduce recycle bins.	No action.	Not a Group activity. But Group knowledge sharing could improve individual planning solutions.
Assess the need to employ a dedicated waste management officer.	Part-time activity by council officer.	May be potential for officer through development of regional landfill site or VROC.	No action.	Partially achieved through Group quarterly meetings, but there is a need for a dedicated officer who has the direct responsibility (job description) to carry out this role.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Continuous improvement.	Ongoing improvements.	Ongoing improvements.	Ongoing improvements.	Significant improvement in individual council activities, but minimal Group improvement. This will be determined by future Group activity.
Financial Year 2012/2013				
Investigate implementation of C&I waste processing.	No action.	No action. Not a significant waste stream in the Shire.	No action. Not a significant waste stream in the Shire.	No Group action. This is unlikely to be a significant Group activity as there is minimal C&I waste in the two Shires. Only the CoAlbany has the critical mass to generate sufficient material to consider recycling solutions. There may be some larger scale farming waste streams that may be options for dedicated recycling solutions.

Activity	Comments			
	CoAlbany	SoPlantagenet	SoDenmark	Group
Improve participation rate in existing recycling systems.	100% coverage in town, increasing in rural areas. Looking at improving landfill site recycling activities.	Minimal progress.	No action. There is minimal data available, no community education program in place. Difficulty to judge success.	No Group activity. Part of continuous improvement of existing systems.
Investigate the potential for increasing the range of products included in kerbside recycling.	Looking at food scrap collection diverted to composting. Bulk verge collection includes separation of E-waste and metals.	Introduced domestic kerb side recycling collection system in 2013.	No action.	No Group activity. Potential for future common solutions (eg. green waste and food scrap composting).
Investigate the potential for developing an 'Earth Carers' group in the region.	No action	No action	No action. Could use Green Skills. Would be easy to facilitate.	No Group activities. Difficult to implement on a regional basis with relatively large travel distances between communities. Future education programs may encourage community group involvement.
Financial Year 2013/2014				
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Following a review of the 2008 Proposed Activities, the degree of success in achieving the Proposed Activities and based on an understanding of the requirements within the Group, the Proposed Activities for the period 2014 to 2019 are presented in the order of priority.

Table 4.4.2 – Proposed Activities – 2014 to 2019 provides the table of Proposed Activities in the order of priority, including related details and responsibilities.

Table 4.4.2 – Proposed Activities – 2014 to 2019

No.	Activity	Details	Responsibility
1	Appointment of a dedicated Regional Waste Management Officer	<p>To have a dedicated Group staff member to “champion” waste management activities and to drive the Strategic Plan objectives.</p> <p>Ideally an existing waste management employee within one of the Group member councils.</p> <p>Provides a dedicated focus on regional and local waste management issues.</p> <p>Responsible for coordinating regional activities.</p> <p>Responsible for coordinating similar waste management activities within individual councils.</p> <p>Knowledge sharing between Group participants to ensure efficiency in waste management activities from landfill operations through to waste minimisation activities.</p> <p>Organising, coordinating and driving regular waste management meetings</p>	Group

		<p>amongst councils.</p> <p>Initially coordinating common waste education information amongst councils and developing basic waste education programs (not a primary activity).</p> <p>In time, arrange for the employment of a full-time Waste Education Officer.</p> <p>Manage Waste Education Officer's activities to achieve desired regional outcomes.</p> <p>Review regional gate fee pricing structure to influence disposal habits.</p> <p>Undertake or coordinate regional tendering of waste management services (kerbside waste and recycling collection, bulk waste collection, recycling processing, composting, bulk recycling removal etc.).</p> <p>Undertaking regular reviews of the Strategic Plan and Proposed Activities.</p>	
2	Review of disposal facility gate fees	<p>Assess disposal facility gate fees to encourage/influence disposal habits.</p> <p>Recycling to be cheaper than landfill.</p> <p>Uniformity across the region to limit the likelihood of waste from an expensive landfill going to a cheaper landfill.</p> <p>Regular review to ensure appropriate influence.</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer
3	Improve systems for the collection and recording of waste management data	<p>Some accurate data is available within the region.</p> <p>Need for a common mechanism for estimating material quantities to enable reasonably accurate comparison across councils.</p> <p>Staff training will be required to ensure consistency across the region.</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer

4	Investigate and implement improvements to existing recycling systems	<p>General improved participation in existing systems.</p> <p>Opportunities to extract additional packaging waste from general waste stream (which is currently being disposed of to landfill).</p> <p>Recycling bins at transfer stations and landfills to enable the drop-off of packaging waste prior to the disposal of general waste. These would be positioned where the vehicles are unloaded, near bulk bins or adjacent tipping areas. CoAlbany currently provides this service.</p> <p>Additional recycling street bins.</p> <p>The above maximises the opportunities to extract packaging material from the general waste stream prior to disposal. The materials separated will fit into existing kerbside recycling collection systems (side lift collection), processing (standard MRF) and downstream product consumption.</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer and Regional Waste Education Officer
5	Extraction of bulk recyclables	<p>Metal/aluminium cans/paper/cardboard/plastics/green waste etc.</p> <p>Increased effort in removing bulk materials from general waste. Provide more dedicated areas or bins (MGB) at off loading points to encourage customers to separate materials prior to the disposal of general waste.</p> <p>Removing the recyclables from general waste (small loads). Existing site staff, when opportunities present, remove easily accessible recyclable materials and place them in bins provided above. Employ additional operational staff (new staff or increased hours for existing staff) to extract additional recyclable materials from disposed waste.</p> <p>Removing recyclables from landfill tipping face (large loads). Use a small</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer and Regional Waste Education Officer

		excavator with grab attachment to extract larger recyclable materials from the tipping face.	
6	Appointment of a dedicated Regional Waste Education Officer	<p>Take direction from Regional Waste Management Officer.</p> <p>Coordinate waste education activities.</p> <p>Generally the same message across the region, but may be some local variants to suit local situations.</p> <p>Work with downstream recyclers to improve the feedstock quality that they receive. Result in cost savings that could be passed back to the region/Local Government or at least an increased willingness to receive the recyclable materials.</p> <p>Work with the Regional Waste Management Officer to influence community perception/habits to fall inline with regional recycling direction.</p> <p>Encourage local community involvement (Lions Club/Green Skills etc.).</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer
7	Improve participation rate in existing recycling systems	<p>No specific targeted activity.</p> <p>Part of continuous improvement of existing systems.</p> <p>Ongoing review of existing systems and improvement as necessary.</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer
8	Increase the range of materials that can go into the recycling bin	<p>In consultation with existing MRF contractors, assess economic impact of increasing the range of materials in the recycling bin (negotiated solution).</p> <p>In future tenders, increase the range of materials in the yellow bin (forced solution) or get a pricing structure for various additional material types (assess the economic viability of increasing the range of materials).</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer and Regional Waste Education Officer

9	Green waste diversion from landfill	<p>Green waste currently recycled in Albany.</p> <p>Food scrap potential to be included in this solution and have other Group member participation.</p> <p>Separate from general waste stream and burn if allowed.</p> <p>Separate and mulch - product provided to local residents or council for garden improvement products.</p> <p>Separate and compost - regional activity.</p>	<p>Regional Waste Management Officer and Regional Waste Education Officer</p>
10	Contaminated paper and cardboard recycling	<p>Extract at tipping location then compost with green waste.</p> <p>Small contribution to overall recycling rates.</p> <p>Requires an existing composting system to feed into.</p> <p>Not a stand-alone feedstock for a dedicated composting operation.</p> <p>Good environmental solution as this removes a potential source of methane generation (under the right conditions in a landfill).</p>	<p>Regional Waste Management Officer</p>
11	Sources separated food waste	<p>Provide an outlet for the disposal of sources separated food waste, typically from restaurants and potentially from a limited number of enthusiastic residents.</p> <p>Need an existing composting system to fit into.</p> <p>Not a stand-alone feedstock for a dedicated composting operation.</p> <p>Good environmental solution as this removes a potential source of methane generation (under the right conditions in a landfill).</p>	<p>Regional Waste Management Officer and Regional Waste Education Officer</p>

		<p>Could become a relatively significant recycling component if good take-up of the scheme by the food industry.</p> <p>Cost of collection/disposal needs to be competitive with landfill disposal costs or else the material will not be separated and simply continue to be disposed of to the landfill.</p>	
12	Biological liquid waste	<p>If composting system is available, biological liquid waste can be “consumed” by the composting solution. Travel distance from current disposal locations and disposal cost will influence the effectiveness of this solution.</p> <p>Divert selected biological liquid waste to composting or increased disposal costs at the liquid waste ponds to influence disposal habits and hence make composting disposal cost effective.</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer
13	Improve staff training in waste management activities	<p>Knowledge sharing amongst the Group.</p> <p>Specific Group training for facility operators.</p> <p>Involvements of specialist trainers for specific activities.</p>	Regional Waste Management Officer and Regional Waste Education Officer

5. Contracted Waste Services

5.1. City of Albany

5.1.1. Current

The City of Albany has a Waste Minimisation Contract, which contracts out the majority of its waste management activities. These include:

- Kerbside waste collection;
- Kerbside recycling collection;
- Bulk waste verge collection;
- Provision of an education officer;
- Operation of the MRF at Hanrahan Road;
- Operation of transfer stations;
- Operation of tip shop at Hanrahan Road;
- Road side litter bins;
- Road kill removal; and,
- Pressure cleaning of footpaths.

This Waste Minimisation Contract is held by Cleanaway and it expires on 31 May 2015.

In addition, the City of Albany has a contract with Vancouver Waste for the kerbside collection and composting of green waste. This contract commenced on 1 March 2013 and has a term of 5 years with an option of a further 3 years; consequently, has a termination date of 28 February 2018 or 28 February 2021.

Householders own all mobile garbage bins (MGB) and pay for the repair and maintenance thereof.

5.1.2. Future

With the Waste Minimisation Contract expiring on 31 May 2015 and the fact that it included a significant portion of the City's waste management activities, the City of Albany has the perfect opportunity to reassess its waste management structure and future operational methodology as well as provide an opportunity for other Group members to participate in the tendering process and hence establish a regional waste management contract.

The City is currently considering the pros and cons of running its waste transfer stations and the tip shop internally as well as employing its own education officer.

5.2. Shire of Plantagenet

5.2.1. Current

The Shire of Plantagenet has a contract with Warren Blackwood Waste for the collection of both the kerbside waste and recyclable materials and the servicing of the street bins. This contract expires on 2 October 2014 and has a two-year extension option, which the Shire has indicated that it will accept.

All other waste management facilities and activities are managed by in-house staff.

The Shire does not offer any bulk waste or green waste verge collections.

5.2.2. Future

The Shire does not have any plans to change the level of contracted waste services verses those managed in-house.

The Shire is also involved with the VROC group of councils to the north of the Shire and as part of this involvement has recently modified three of its waste transfer station (Kendenup, Kamballup & Porongurup) to a similar design to the other VROC participants' waste transfer stations. This similarity of design (hook lift bins) affords the opportunity for a contracted regional transfer station waste and recyclable collection services amongst the VROC participants. However, being hook lift type solutions, this also affords the opportunity for the Great Southern participants to either contract out a hook lift service for its transfer stations or carry out the activity with a shared hook lift vehicle owned by the Group.

5.3. Shire of Denmark

5.3.1. Current

The Shire of Denmark has a contract with Cleanaway for the collection of the kerbside recyclable materials. This contract is due to end in June 2014. There is the possibility that the contract could be extended to align with the end of the City of Albany's Waste Minimisation Contract.

The South Coast Environmental Group has an arrangement with the Shire for the operation of the Peaceful Bay waste management facility. There is no formal contract for this activity and it simply continues on a month-by-month basis so long as both parties agree. This site is a small local facility and is not a significant waste management asset that would be considered for regional synergy; hence, the Shire is likely to continue with the current arrangements for the foreseeable future.

Green Skills (community group) operates the tip shop and recycling area at the McIntosh Road waste management facility. There is no formal contractual arrangement in place; however, the Shire has no plans to change the current arrangements, so long as both parties are in agreement.

There are two green waste burning areas in the Shire that are managed by the Progress Association (type of ratepayers group). Again, there is no formal contractual arrangement in place and this situation is likely to continue into the future so long as both parties agree.

All other waste management facilities and activities are managed by in-house staff. The Shire has recently purchased a new side lift vehicle for the Shire's kerbside waste collection; hence, is unlikely to consider contracting out this activity for the foreseeable future.

The Shire does not offer any bulk waste or green waste verge collections.

5.3.2. Future

The Shire would seriously consider a combined kerbside recycling collection contract with the City of Albany when its Waste Minimisation Contract expires on 31 May 2015.

The Shire is in the process of developing a local landfill facility (currently going through the approval process). Should this development be completed, it is likely that the Shire will manage the landfill facility in-house and not contract out the facility operations.

6. Suitable Waste Management Technology

6.1. Waste Management Technology

The waste industry has progressed significantly in recent time in developing a wide range of technologies available to treat or process waste and recyclable materials. These technologies range from simple windrow aerobic composting of organic materials through to elaborate waste to energy solutions, which are able to receive the vast majority of municipal and commercial & industrial (C&I) waste streams.

Typically, the application of any technological solution as a substitute to simple landfilling (the cheapest solution) results in the cost of waste management increasing, often significantly in comparison to landfilling. When considering the option of utilising suitable waste management technologies, the Group or an individual council needs to be certain that they have control the waste stream that is proposed to be processed. Without direct control of the waste stream, there is a real chance that as the cost of disposal increases to cover the cost of the new technology, the uncontrolled waste (typically commercial waste) will go to a cheaper location for disposal, which is usually the next closest landfill facility or transfer station.

Consequently, the Group or individual council should only consider processing municipal waste that is collected from the kerbside and to a lesser degree other municipal waste delivered to landfill by self-haul residents. All other waste will be highly reactive to market forces and simply be diverted to the cheapest disposal location.

The exception being if the technological solution can be implemented at a lesser or equal cost in comparison to landfill disposal fees. Then a similar quantity of incoming waste can be relied on irrespective of its source. There is always the possibility that waste generation habits will change over time; hence, the waste stream is likely to change accordingly.

Based on the above, the Group is to be careful when determining what waste stream is proposed for processing.

Processing of municipal waste is a real possibility as the community is usually comfortable to pay a little more for waste disposal in order to achieve a more environmentally friendly solution.

C&I waste is difficult to process and usually costs significantly more than landfill disposal (otherwise commercial operators would currently be processing the material); hence, the associated cost increase is likely to drive the waste elsewhere.

C&D waste is relatively easy to process (sorting and screening) and can be carried out at a similar cost to landfill (approximately \$100/t including sorting, processing, marketing and landfill disposal of waste residue). The establishment cost of this type of operation is relatively affordable and if it were economically viable based on waste volumes, commercial operators would already be offering this service.

6.2. Available Waste Management Technology

Considering only municipal waste, there are the following available waste processing technologies (not an exhaustive list, but a spread of available technologies):

- Composting:
 - Requires a relatively clean source separated feed stock;
 - A variety of processes – aerobic or anaerobic;
 - Windrow, in-vessel, enclosed;
 - Manual, fully automated;
 - Product quality highly dependent on feedstock quality;
 - Relatively low processing cost.
- Manual sorting of mixed waste streams:
 - Can process mixed waste;
 - Produces a range of sorted products;
 - Mechanical (excavator/loader) sorting for larger items;
 - Manual (hand) sorting for smaller items;
 - Flexible to handle changing waste stream;
 - Slow process, low throughput;
 - Relatively low processing cost.
- Mechanical sorting (MRF type solution):
 - Designed based on a defined waste stream;
 - Cost proportional to infrastructure requirements and processing complexities;
 - Sorts predetermined material types;
 - Unable to process general waste;
 - Relatively inflexible to accommodate changing waste stream;
 - High throughput (depending on design);
 - Relatively high processing cost;
- Specific Material Processing (eg. E-waste, glass)
 - Requires a single waste stream, either source separated or sorted by one of the above operations;
 - Low process throughput;
 - Dedicated waste stream;
 - Inflexible process (depending on design);
 - Cost highly dependent on process.

- Waste to Energy:
 - Range of commercial solutions available;
 - Usually requires large throughput tonnage to make economically viable, but can be developed for site specific solutions;
 - Receives a large range of waste materials;
 - Relatively new technology in Australia and not readily accepted by the environmental regulators;
 - Community concerns about emissions (more a perception than a real concern with the modern facilities);
 - Expensive processing cost;
 - Produces a product (power or energy) that has a ready and reliable market and of high value;

6.3. Way Forward

The selection of the type of waste management technology is highly dependent on the type of waste that the Group or individual council is proposing to process. The type of technology should not drive the selection process. The type and quantity of waste needs to be determined and thereafter, the range of suitable processing technologies can be investigated. Typical decision factors include:

- Waste type;
- Waste quantity;
- Control of waste stream;
- Affordability level of processing (upper cost that is palatable);
- Process location (transport, impact on neighbours, space availability, environmental restrictions);
- Likely recyclable product(s);
- Availability of downstream use for recycled product(s);
- Reliability of downstream use for recycled product(s);
- Consequence of losing the downstream customer(s) over the short-term (Global Financial Crisis had a significant influence on the recycling industry for a number of years);
- Business structure (in-house operation or contracted out); and,
- Duration of operation.

The above list of decision factors provides a basic list for the initial consideration of possible technologies. This is not an all inclusive list, as there will be a number of additional factors that will emerge as the options narrow down to the detail of what is being considered or is available.

The primary consideration should be caution about the true cost of implementing a technological solution and the consequences if the costs blowout beyond the reasonable expectation of the Group (locked in contract or option to terminate or modify the activity).

Based on the knowledge of the type and quantity of material being managed by the Group, any reasonably sized process will require the involvement of the City of Albany. With the City having the vast majority of the waste material, the facility location will be comparatively closer to Albany than the other Shire town site; hence, the Shires of Plantagenet and Denmark will have the added expense of the additional transport cost to consider.

With the current stage of development of the waste management activities within the Group, it is deemed premature to consider involvement in any substantial waste processing technology. The preference at this stage would be to concentrate on improving waste diversion from landfill through small, affordable steps before the Group ventures out into larger scale and costly solutions.

In time, if there is real progress achieved within the Group in maximising small-scale waste diversion, then there is the opportunity to expand the Group's horizons to include the more advanced waste technologies.

7. Regional Council Consideration

7.1. Objective

7.1.1. Department of Environment Regulation Motivation

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) promotes regionalisation of waste management activities in order to encourage Local Governments to work together to increase the “critical mass” of the population within regional groupings and hence increase the opportunity of combined resources being able to improve waste management environmental performance and waste diversion from landfill. As an added benefit to the DER, there becomes far fewer smaller waste management sites that the DER is required to regulate; hence, saving effort, staff numbers and cost.

The reasons for the DER encouragement into regionalisation should be solely based on net environmental benefit and at a reasonable cost to the community.

7.1.2. Group Motivation

The objective of the Group to embrace regionalisation should be based on the following:

- Ensuring future waste disposal site availability (statutory requirement to manage domestic waste);
- Achieve optimal environmental performance at all of its waste management sites;
- Improve the regions recycling activities;
- Increased critical mass (population size/waste quantity) in order to undertake activities that individual councils would not be able to achieve;
- Increased knowledge sharing amongst the councils;
- A rationalisation of waste management activities to achieve a more cost-effective solution.

The Group is to be aware of the benefits and shortfalls in getting involved in the various aspects of regionalised waste management. There are a wide range of potential activities in which the Group could get involved. Each of these activities has a suite of pros and cons associated with the decision making process. The Group needs to fully investigate these activities before the decisions are made to enter into a formal regional arrangement.

7.2. Waste Management Activities

Under a regional council structure there are many waste management activities that can be regionalised. These could include:

- Kerbside Waste Collection;
- Commercial Waste Collection;
- Kerbside Recycling Collection;
- Bulk Verge Collection;
- Waste Disposal;
- Recycling Processing;
- Waste Transfer Stations;
- Drop-off Facilities;
- Organics Processing;
- Minor Recycling Activities;
- Major Recycling Activities; and/or,
- Liquid Waste Management.

The justification for the implementation of any of the above projects will ultimately come down to the cost benefit associated with the various projects. The “cost” is primarily the dollar value; however, environmental “cost” should also be part of the consideration as whether to progress with a project.

7.3. Purpose of a Regional Council

In accordance with the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (WARR) Act 2007* Local Government is responsible for municipal waste (Local Government waste); that is waste from households and waste generated from its own activities.

A Local Government has a responsibility to the community it represents to provide services that meet the community's expectations. These expectations include environmental, social and economic considerations.

In order to comply with the necessary legislation as well as community expectations it is common in Western Australia for individual Local Governments to combine together to form a regional council to manage waste in a more effective and professional manner within the region. In some circumstances the regional council is used to carry out additional, non-waste management related activities on the half of its participant member councils.

A regional council is a mechanism by which a group of Local Governments get together in order to combine resources to carry out either a single activity or a range of activities common to all Local Governments. Due to waste management being the responsibility of all Local Governments, it is common for Local Governments to form regional councils primarily to undertake waste management activities.

7.4. Perth Metropolitan Regional Councils

Within the Perth metropolitan area there are five waste management related regional councils. These five regional councils cover the vast majority of the metropolitan area with only the City of Nedlands not incorporated into a formal waste management regional council structure.

The five metropolitan regional councils include:

- Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council
- Southern Metropolitan Regional Council
- Mindarie Regional Council
- Western Metropolitan Regional Council
- Rivers Regional Council (previously South Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council).

The participation within the metropolitan regional councils ranges between 5 and 7 member councils. This provides the individual regional councils with a significant population base and hence a significant quantity of waste being generated. Consequently the regional councils are able to undertake large-scale, expensive waste management solutions, which would otherwise not necessarily be available to each of the individual member councils.

Each of the five metropolitan regional councils has slightly different Establishment Agreements developed specifically to cater for the needs of the particular regional council. One of the significant defining differences is that within some of the regional councils there is the option for member councils to choose whether to be involved in a particular project or not; whereas in other regional councils there is no choice and all member councils are required to participate in all activities of the particular regional council. The Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council, Southern Metropolitan Regional Council and the Rivers Regional Council are the regional councils which allow member councils to choose whether to be involved in particular projects. The other regional councils operate on the principle of “one in, all in”.

7.5. Bunbury Harvey Regional Council

The Bunbury Harvey Regional Council is a formal regional council established between the City of Bunbury and the Shire of Harvey. This regional council was established to operate the Stanley Road waste management facility near Bunbury, which is primarily a landfill site with a small front-end recycling/reuse facility.

This regional structure is the most simple of the existing regional council structures as it has only two participants and only operates one facility.

The regional council was established in 1990 and has operated successfully since then. Anecdotal evidence is that the disparity in the “shareholding” (approximately CoBunbury 90% and the SoHarvey 10%) and the fact that there are three CoBunbury councillors and only two SoBunbury councillors results in a loss of influence by the minor party.

7.6. Typical Regional Council Model

7.6.1. Overview

A regional council composition should typically comprise of the following entities:

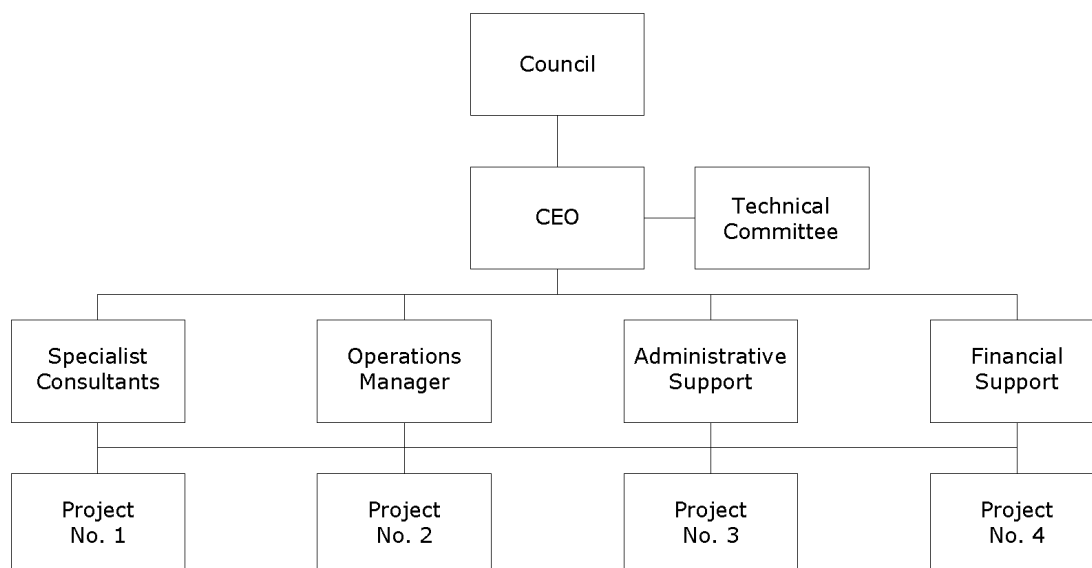
- Administration section;
- Council of elected members;
- Project teams (with Administration support);
- Specialist consultants (as required); and,
- Member Council Technical Officer Support.

The range of services undertaken by the regional council should relate predominantly to waste management activities with an option for expanded services in the future into non-waste related activities of mutual interest and benefit to the regional council member councils.

The regional council would undertake all essential waste management activities (waste collection and disposal) on behalf of its member councils. Ideally the Regional Council would undertake all waste management related activities (not just the essential waste management activities) within the region on behalf of its member councils.

If all municipal waste management activities are not undertaken by the regional council this can lead to confusion as to which party is responsible for which aspect of waste management and the regional council has waste management staff and the member councils have waste management staff (double up of costs).

7.6.2. Organisational Structure



7.6.3. Regional Council Structure

Issues to consider:

- Councillors – Numbers (one or two from each member or proportion to population)
- Representation – proportional to population density
- Voting
- Amalgamation or De-amalgamation
- Communication
- Council Meetings
- Administration Structure
- Member Council Technical Officer Support
- Project Plan Structure
- Decision Making Process
 - Participation in the Regional Council
 - Participation in Particular Projects

- Financial Implications
 - Council Expenses
 - Administration Expense
 - Project Expense
 - Existing
 - Future
- Withdrawal of a Project Participant
- Withdrawal of a Regional Council Participant
- Additional Project Participant
- Additional Participant in Regional Council
- Regional Council Cost Implications
- Implementation.

7.7. Pros and Cons of a Regional Council

The pros and cons of a regional council include:

Pros:

- Dedicated organisation for the management of waste.
- Critical mass allows for increased waste management opportunities and potentially at lower cost than individual council activity.
- Larger skills base than available within a single Local Government.
- Improved management of facilities.
- Reduced requirement for individual member councils to maintain waste management staffing.
- Potentially reduced number of waste management facilities in the region (especially when the local landfills reach capacity).
- Easier compliance with DER requirements.
- Potentially more cost effective than the individual member councils managing waste activities separately (highly dependent on the structure, size and level of activity within the regional council – in some cases it could be more expensive).
- Regionalisation may open up other waste management synergies between the member councils.
- There could be additional funding available from the Waste Authority to fund specific projects.

Cons:

- Additional administration and governance structure; which could cost more than the benefit of critical mass.
- Potential increased transport distance and hence cost for the majority of the member councils if regional facilities are developed; however, these solutions may not be locally available without a regional council.
- Less flexibility that within a single Local Government.
- Potential for discontent amongst members (usually caused by mounting waste management costs).
- Negative impact on the remaining members if a participant departs the regional council.

7.8. Relevance to the Great Southern Group

Although there are some benefits in forming a regional council, due to the structure of the three potential member councils with the City of Albany being vastly larger than the other two councils, the whole regional structure is totally reliant on the City of Albany involvement in all aspects of the activities of the regional council. Effectively, the City of Albany will dominate the regional council.

It is believed that the same regional benefits can be achieved by the three Local Governments simply working closely with each other in a less formal regional grouping structure as is currently the case. With this less formal structure, there will not be the need for a separate council of elected members, management structure and associated administration activities. Consequently, saving the members significant overhead costs, which could be put towards direct waste minimisation activities.

This regional grouping, providing that it is active and achieving significant gains in continuous waste minimisation, would be able to access the same level of funding from the Waste Authority that it would if it was a formal regional council.

7.9. Recommended Way Forward

Based on the above information, it is not recommended to establish a formal regional council as the vision and objectives of the region can reasonably be accomplished by close regional cooperation between the Group's participants without incurring the additional governance and financial burden of operating a regional council.

Operating under an efficient regional group, as opposed to a formal regional council will result in a significantly more effective utilisation of the Group's financial resources in achieving the Group's objectives.

The exception being that if the Group was to establish a relatively large scale waste process operation(s), the viability of the projects(s) would likely rely on the continuous involvement (material deliver and/or financial commitment) of the individual participants in the project(s); hence, there would need to be a formal agreement signed between the participants in the project(s) to ensure that the future stability of the project(s). This would normally be covered by the regional council establishment agreement; however, in the absence of a regional council, a simple legal agreement between the participants, specifically relating to the projects would be required.

8. Regional Waste Strategic Plan 2014 - 2019

8.1. Vision

The Great Southern Group of councils will be a leading regional agency for efficient waste management practises, building on past performances and establishing new benchmarks for waste minimisation and management.

8.2. Regional Council Consideration

Based on the recommended not to establish a formal regional council, the future strategic planning for the Group is based on there being close cooperation between the three Group members, without a formal structure being in place. Should there be a regional council formed in future, there would be a need to review this strategic plan to accommodate the related structural and constitutional changes.

8.3. Priority Areas

Based on the review of the previous SWMP and the progress achieved within the Group, the following are considered the Group's priority areas:

- Waste management staffing
- Data collection
- Existing recycling activities
- Landfill management
- Disposal fees
- Organic products.

8.4. Priority Wastes

Based on the above priority areas, the following are the Group's priority wastes:

- Packaging waste
- Household Hazardous Waste
- Electronic Waste
- Bulk Waste
- Organic waste.

8.5. Regional Synergies

Table 8.5.1 – Regional Synergies lists the potential synergies between the Group participants during the 2014 to 2019 validity period of the Strategic Plan.

Table 8.5.1 – Regional Synergies

No.	Activity	Synergy
1	Kerbside Waste Collection	Joint Contracts
2	Commercial Waste Collection	Joint Contracts
3	Kerbside Recycling Collection	Joint Contracts
4	Bulk Verge Collection	Joint Contracts
5	Waste Disposal	Knowledge Sharing
6	Recycling Processing	Joint Contracts
7	Waste Transfer Stations	Knowledge Sharing
8	Drop-off Facilities	Knowledge Sharing
9	Organics Processing	Joint Contracts/Joint Operation
10	Minor Recycling Activities	Joint Operation/Joint Contracts
11	Major Recycling Activities	Joint Contracts - unlikely
12	Liquid Waste Management	Knowledge Sharing/Joint Operation

The vast majority of the synergies come with the ability to contract out larger operations than would be possible for the individual councils. This would initially revolve around transport (collection) efficiencies, but in time progress to materials processing activities.

There is also the opportunity for the individual councils to operated their own facilities (landfill/drop-off/transfer stations) while sharing knowledge and experiences (through the Regional Waste Management Officer) to improve the standard of facility operation and encourage continuous improvement.

8.6. Proposed Activities

Table 8.6.1 – Proposed Activities 2014 to 2019 provides a summary of the proposed activities for the duration of this Strategic Plan. The activities are listed in the order of priority.

Table 8.6.1 – Proposed Activities 2014 to 2019

No.	Proposed Activity
1	Appointment of a dedicated Regional Waste Management Officer
2	Review of disposal facility gate fees
3	Improve systems for the collection and recording of waste management data
4	Investigate and implement improvements to existing recycling systems
5	Extraction of bulk recyclables
6	Appointment of a dedicated Regional Waste Education Officer
7	Improve participation rate in existing recycling systems
8	Increase the range of materials that can go into the recycling bin
9	Green waste diversion from landfill
10	Contaminated paper and cardboard recycling
11	Sources separated food waste
12	Biological liquid waste
13	Improve staff training in waste management activities

Section 4.4, Table 4.4.2 - Proposed Activities – 2014 to 2019 above provides detail on the breakdown of the individual proposed activities.

There have been no dates attached to the proposed activities as this has previously been of limited assistance in achieving the desired outcomes. The preference is to list the proposed activities in the order of priority. Hence, providing the Group with an order from which to achieve the regions goals.

8.7. Contracted Waste Services

Table 8.7.1 – Regional Contracted Services lists the potential regional contracts that could be established between the Group participants during the 2014 to 2019 validity period of the Strategic Plan.

Table 8.5.1 – Regional Contracted Services

No.	Activity	Participants
1	Kerbside Waste Collection	Joint Contracts – Only after the SoPlantagenet current contract ends or if the SoDenmark opt to contract out the in-house operation.
2	Commercial Waste Collection (MGB only, as part of the Rates services)	Typically rolled into the domestic kerbside and and/or recycling arrangements.
3	Kerbside Recycling Collection	CoAlbany, SoDenmark – SoPlantagenet once existing contract ends.
4	Bulk Verge Collection	All three participants
6	Recycling Processing	All three participants
7	Waste Transfer Stations	All three participants – materials transport only
8	Drop-off Facilities	All three participants – materials transport only
9	Organics Processing	All three participants
10	Minor Recycling Activities	All three participants
11	Major Recycling Activities	All three participants - Unlikely

The fact that the City of Albany will be re-tendering the vast majority of its waste management services in May 2015, there is an opportunity for the Group to participate in a regional tendering process. The Shire of Denmark is able to participate in at least the recycling collection component; however, the Shire of Plantagenet will still be contracted to Warren Blackwood Waste for a further 2.5 years (October 2016) and hence will not be able to participate directly. The tender documentation should be structured to enable the Shire of Plantagenet to join the contract at a later date if the Shire so chooses.

With there being numerous waste transfer station and recycling drop-off facilities throughout the region, there is the opportunity for the group to either purchase a hook lift vehicle or contract out this service for the transport of materials from these facilities.

Depending on the direction taken by the Group during the 2014 to 2019 period, there are numerous other activities that could be jointly contracted out in order to gain the advantage of critical mass and hence potentially lower operating costs.

8.8. Sustainable Waste Management Technologies

With the Group having numerous “grass roots” proposed activities to be undertake during the 2014 to 2019 period, the preference is to actively pursue these basic activities before embarking on the more technologically advanced process.

The Group is to use this period to firmly establish the regional cooperation between the participants and implement effective waste management operations and shared contracts prior to considering the more advanced technology solutions.

8.9. Funding

The individual Group participants have acknowledged significant political and financial support from their individual councils. This support is essential for the future success of the Group's proposed activities.

As a regional grouping of Local Governments and being located within one of the Waste Authority identified major regional centres (Albany), there is the opportunity to access significant funding from the Waste Authority to implement some of the proposed activities, so long as the activities are in line with the Waste Authority strategic direction.

The Group is to actively pursue available funding sources to supplement the financial contributions from individual member councils.

8.10. Review

This Strategic Plan sets out the Group's proposed activities for the period 2014 to 2019. In order to achieve this it is essential that this Strategic Plan be regularly reviewed.

The review is primarily to gauge the Group's actual achievement against the proposed achievement to provide direction as to where the necessary effort is required in order to achieve the desired outcomes by the end of the Strategic Plan validity period.

A secondary component of the review is to assess the validity of the Strategic Plan direction in comparison to the Group's direction and the Waste Authority's direction. It is acknowledged that during the five-year validity period of this Strategic Plan, there is the possibility that some aspects of this plan may lose relevance and may need to be amended to suit the latest Group or Waste Authority direction.

As a minimum, this Strategic Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis, with a summary review presented to a quarterly Group meeting.