

## City of Greater Geraldton

## Incurred Costs from legislative changes:

Project Number	Title	Description	Estimate	Comments
1	Puppy Farming Legislation Financial Support	Create a mechanism to allow local governments to recover the additional cost burden they face with the requirement to de-sex all dogs over two years of age and migrate to the State licencing system.	\$150,000	<p>The new legislation will require local governments to transfer its data into a central system and will mean it cannot release dogs to their owners unless they are registered, microchipped and de-sexed. This will increase the number of upset pet owners that will need to be managed and an increased number of dogs that cannot be returned as owners cannot afford the associated costs. The State should provide the necessary resources to the local government sector to enable it to implement the State's requirements.</p> <p>The amended legislation though supported for its intent to reduce puppy farming will place considerable additional burdens on both Council and our community. The costs of ensuring compliance with the legislation will be extensive and unless fees are set at a cost recovery basis Council will be heavily impacted. However if fees are set at cost recovery basis it is believed this could lead to increased non compliance and higher burdens on our community which could lead again to increased compliance and social costs.</p> <p>The proposal is also likely to impact those who are least well off in our community leading to either them not having pets (a negative way forward for many in our community) or being non-compliant with legislative requirements and thus likely leading to high compliance costs for both council and the community.</p> <p>This legislation will impact the low income earners who currently cannot afford to register and chip their dogs. The cost to register and microchip your dog is approx. \$100. CGG already has very emotional locals coming in saying they cannot afford this cost which results in unpleasantness at the front counter. Imagine when you also add on the cost of de-sexing your pet!</p> <p>The City of Greater Geraldton (the City) thinks they will need an extra Ranger and Customer Experience Officer to manage this.</p>
2	Emergency Service Levy (ESL) Collection Costs Review.	Changes to the current system are required to allow Local Governments to at least recover their actual costs for the collection of the ESL funding.	\$53,000	<p>The Local Governments are a tax collector for the State Government when it comes to the Emergency Services Levy. This level is collected as part of the rates process. The State determines the quantum of the annual percentage increase and the public, who don't understand the system then complain to the local governments about the increases. It would only be fair if the local governments could at least cover their collection costs.</p> <p>In 2023, it cost Geraldton \$76,000 in administration and could only recoup \$23,000.</p>
3	Development Application (DA) Costs	Allow local governments to recover their actual Development Application costs for processing Development applications and JDAP applications by increasing the State set fees.	\$75,000	<p>The State currently sets the fees for DA and JDAP applications. The DA fees have not seen an increase for many, many years. To enable the financial sustainability of the local government sector, the ability to recover costs is essential. This is especially important at the moment when a large number of DA's are being received.</p> <p>As the City doesn't have a sufficient number of planners to manage the workload in a timely manner, the City are using consultant planners at a cost of \$350 per hour.</p>
4	Heritage Legislation	Regional Capitals by their very nature have a large collection of Heritage listed buildings. The legislative red tape and costs associated with maintaining these State benefiting assets is very high.	\$100,000	<p>The Heritage Legislation is all about preventing action or having to maintain. Because of the cost implications, local residents will let the building fall into total structural failure and then get a structural engineer to say it cannot be fixed.</p> <p>If funding was available, this would not happen, and heritage would be preserved.</p>
5	State Audit Requirements	The State's audit changes introduced has placed a significant cost and time burden on local governments.	\$100,000	<p>There is probably no need to provide a comment here as it has been very topical and well communicated to the State. However, actions have not been forthcoming.</p>
6	Electoral Act Changes – Preferential Voting.	The switch to preferential voting, centrally managed, created a great deal of conflict and costs and downtime.	\$100,000	<p>There is probably no need to provide a comment here as it has been very topical and well communicated to the State. However, actions have not been forthcoming.</p>
7	Short Term Rental Accommodation Bill 2024.	The Bill is still being reviewed but requires all short-term accommodation locations to be placed on a central register.	\$10,000	<p>The City expects that the requirements will increase over time once the State has collected their locations and numbers on their register.</p>
8	New Safety Legislation that treats volunteers in the same way as staff. Especially with	The City of Greater Geraldton has approximately 600 volunteers who undertake a wide range of activities for the community and themselves	\$250,000	<p>To manage these new requirements, the City had to employ an officer who only manages the hundreds of volunteers (registering, inductions, training, medicals etc etc). In addition, a training officer had to be employed to ensure the Bush Fire Brigades had ready and suitable access to training as this was required but not offered in an appropriate manner by DFES.</p>

	respect to Bush Fire Volunteers.	(nursery activities, tour guiding, library, theatre, bush fire brigades etc). A number of these volunteers are elderly with numerous health concerns and others (BFV) undertake high risk activities.		
7	Child Safety Reforms from the Royal Commission.	This legislation now requires councils to manage child safety not only within its organisation, but through the local community groups such as sporting groups and puts a requirement on CEO's to report within 7 days.	\$60,000	Even though councils were repeatedly assured that these requirements would come at no cost, these statements have proven to be incorrect. Councils are currently being advised that they will be audited on what measures they have taken to implement the requirements. To manage these obligations as per the requirements in the City of Greater Geraldton requires 0.5 of an FTE.
8	WA State Government Hybrid Vehicle Road User Tax 2027	This proposed legislation will impose 2 cents per km travelled.	One to watch	One to watch.
9	Federal Government New Vehicle Emissions Target 2025	Dependant on manufacturer being able to offset with low emissions sales, potential of up to \$15,000 increase on existing prices.	One to watch	One to watch.
10	eWaste Regulations	Requirement to create and maintain a register of your eWaste.	One to watch	The new regulations will require Significant Businesses (e.g. The City – Collectively as Civic Offices, Library, Mullewa, Depot, etc.) to implement changes to the way it internally collects, stores and disposes of eWaste. Significant businesses must not store regulated (i.e. on the schedule list) e-waste for more than 12 months after it becomes waste (i.e. no cupboards full of redundant cables, lightbulbs, batteries, keyboards, etc). <u>Significant businesses must keep and maintain records of e-waste generated in line with the schedule and where is went to e-waste service provider and/or landfill operator. The schedule list of regulated e-waste has expanded with these regulations and is likely to expand further.</u>
11	Industrial Relations (IR) Legislation	Requirement for local governments to move from the Federal Award to the State Award.	100,000	The transition to the State Award has not only come at a significant financial cost, but it has also increased mental health issues in the City. This change has been expensive to implement and has been expensive in its outcomes. For instance, even though the majority of officers by vote approved management's offer, it was rejected by the union membership and hence over twelve months later, The City are still awaiting an opportunity to go to the Fair work Commission who now are being asked to arbitrate our pay increases for years 2 and 3 as the 13% increase over three years was rejected. The administrative cost alone is estimated at \$75,000, not including the potential higher wage increases which will need to be passed along to the community.
12	Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing (PRIS) Legislation	The aim of this legislation is to protect personal information.	\$200,000 Implement Readiness (one off) \$100,000 manage this function (recurrent)	Following the recommended PRIS Readiness Plan – 18 Item Action List will require whole of organisation internal resourcing plus procuring external assistance in relation to data discovery and register development.  CGG expectation that it will require 1FTE to effectively manage this function once implemented.
13	Multiculture Act	Currently in development	One to watch	One to Watch. The proposed legislation has been announced recently.
14	WA Local Government Act Reforms	These reforms have been rolling out over the last few years in a series of tranches.	\$100,000	The reforms are advertised as improving efficiency, transparency and government. However, they have and are continuing to increase the level of administrative burden as they appear to be drafted by a mind that does not trust the lg sector. It has required more registers, more reporting, changes to policies and processes while not addressing issues such as the management of rates exemptions to charitable organisations that result in other local residents being required to pay more.
15	Cyber Security Requirements	These reforms have been rolling out over the last few years in a series of tranches.	\$150,000	Local Government manage residents' personal information which must be managed very carefully and is at risk of Cyber Security risks. As a result, the City has a cyber officer, an officer training program and annual audits to try and prevent the theft of data and funding.
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL ANNUAL COST</b>			<b>\$1,400,000 per annum</b>	<b>In Geraldton, this equates to 3% rate rise.</b>

## Cost from being a Regional Capital (HUB):

Project Number	Title	Description	Estimate	Comments
A	Community Sport and Recreational Facility Fund (CSRFF).	Increase the total annual State allocation to \$35 Mill	\$40 Million	<p>The funding has recently been increased to its previous level. However, further increases are necessary to facilitate regional sport. Regional sport facilities are critical assets to ensure liveability standards are maintained. The reduction in funding to this grant pool has resulted in more costs being covered by local governments.</p> <p>The City of Greater Geraldton facilities are used by the entire mid west with many clubs based in other Shires training and playing in Geraldton.</p>
B	Coastal Adaptation Grants Increase	Increase CAP grants to \$1 Mill from the current \$615,000	\$20 Million	The costs associated with coastal management are very high. Financial support for coastal local managements is essential if our foreshore areas are to be preserved.
C	Reinstate the operational funding for the Regional Art Gallery to allow it to continue to function as a Class A facility.	<p>Reinstate previous level of funding of \$340,000 per annum plus CPI increases.</p> <p>An increase of \$200,000 per annum on current grant allocation.</p>	\$170,000 per annum	\$340,000 was the amount previously funded by State Government to CGG for its Class A regional art gallery until the decision was made, without any known rationale, to reduce the contribution by 50%. The City is now struggling to keep this regional facility operating at its current high level.
D	Queens Park Theatre (QPT) Funding	Provision of on-going, consistent State operational funding to allow the QPT to operate efficiently and effectively.	\$250,000	Being a large regional local government, the City of Greater Geraldton is forced to fund and deliver many services that in the capital cities are delivered by the State government. An example is the Queens Park Theatre. The theatre relies on one off State Government grants to keep functioning. An on-going commitment of annual indexed operational funding would allow the Theatre to reach its potential.
E	Walkaway and Greenough Museums.	Provision of on-going, consistent State operational funding to allow these iconic small regional museums to operate efficiently and effectively.	\$15,000 per annum, per museum.	<p>Being a large regional local government, the City is forced to fund and deliver many services that in the capital cities are delivered by the State government. An example are small regional museums.</p> <p>The Walkaway Museum and Greenough Museums are critical parts of these communities' social fabric and obtain no State Government support. The City makes an annual contribution to both of these critical operations, and are seeking matching funding from the State so they can keep functioning.</p> <p>The operational cost to the council is \$30,000 per annum. The City is currently spending \$300,000 on one of the historic buildings to try and keep it from falling over.</p>
F	Financial support for library consortium model currently being operated by Geraldton City Council which really should be a State Government role.	Establish a Statewide Consortium model, generating economies of scale.	\$100,000	<p>The Midwest Libraries Consortium offers access to a shared online catalogue of Library resources, which gives patrons access to all Library collections within the Consortium. In 2022-2023 there were loans of over some 62,000 items across the Consortium. There are over 15,000 active members using the Consortium resources. Patrons can use their Library card at any member library of the Consortium, although items must be returned by the member to the Library from which they were originally borrowed. In addition, the Geraldton Regional Library (Tier One Library) provides support for Library Management System enquiries and SLWA statistical collection, plus some professional and para-professional support for general Library related enquiries, for example questions relating to local history collections, collection development, interlibrary loans and general client services.</p> <p>The current membership includes the City of Greater Geraldton, the Shires of Carnarvon, Dandaragan, Northampton, Chapman Valley and Mingenew, the Shires of Coorow and Cue, the Shires of Irwin and Exmouth, plus Shark Bay Resources/Useless Loop, and the Shires of Mount Magnet, Yalgoo, Morawa and Perenjori are wanting to join.</p> <p>Consortium Shires contribute annually to the overall cost of the LMS platform by paying an "Additional Institution Fee". For the subscription period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023, Consortium members contributed \$20,732 in fees. In addition, the City introduced a new Support Services Fee of \$397 per annum to contribute towards with staff costs associated with providing support provided to partner members. The cost to the City for the 2022-23 subscription period was \$41,470.</p>