Dear LG Reform Officers,

I would like to add my voice to the submission from the Urban Bushland Council WA (UBC) with regards to enhancing how local government interacts with local Friends groups who spend so much time caring for bushland and wetlands where a LGAS is the land manager.

UBC is the key community organisation in WA providing a public voice on the need for retention of what remains of our urban bushland and wetlands which is critical for a healthy and prosperous future. I am part of a Friends group that works with our LGA to protect our patch. It is my belief that every bushland needs a Friends group to champion (and improve) how it is managed.

Along with the UBC, I am disappointed that the following reforms have not been considered and ask that these are included in the final document for a healthier and more resilient future:

1. Better outcomes for the natural environment.
2. No further net loss or degradation of native vegetation on the Swan Coastal Plain.
4. Compulsory development and application of a Local Biodiversity Strategy and Local Biodiversity Plan by each LGA and associated formal incorporation into their Town Planning Scheme (TPS).
5. Introducing ‘local biodiversity conservation land use’ category in Model Scheme Text (MST) and Local Planning Schemes (LPS) that has appropriate protections.
7. Protecting and enhancing green space to ensure adequate, resilient ecological linkages.
8. Reducing the ‘heat-island-effect’ whilst actively demonstrating accountability to State Government and Local Government Laws, Policies and Strategies to reduce ‘heat -island-effect’ such as application of each LGA’s Urban Forest Strategy and Native Vegetation Protection Policy.
9. Establishing a “Tree Protection By-law on private and public lands” (including penalties for damage or removal).
10. Limiting population growth and urban sprawl.
11. Carbon neutral status for all LGAs.
12. Compulsory voting for all LGA elections.
13. Introducing Third Party Appeal Rights (TPARs).
14. Stopping political donations from property developers.
15. Amending Integrity (Lobbyists) Act 2016 (WA) to apply it to “local governments” and “town planning”.

I support the details in Attachment 1 of the Urban Bushland Council WA’s submission.

Christine Richardson