

Central Country Zone

Minutes

Friday, 16 February 2024

Commenced at 9.30am

Venue

**Hosted by the Shire of Narrogin
Narrogin Reception Centre
Federal Street Narrogin**

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1. Opening and Welcome

The Chair declared the meeting open at 9.30am.

1.1 Housekeeping – Zone Chair

1. Welcome:

The Zone Chair, *President Cr Des Hickey*, welcomed Zone members and provided OSH/bathroom/exit information to those in attendance.

2. Share your name and Local Government:

Delegates are reminded to ensure that they call their name and Local Government when taking the floor to allow for accurate Minutes to be recorded.

1.2 Host Council Presentation

President Leigh Ballard, President from the Shire of Narrogin extended a welcome to delegates and guests and provided a presentation on projects and issues facing the Shire of Narrogin.

This presentation is attached to the Minutes – Attachment 1.

2. Attendance and Apologies

Attendance

Shire of Beverley	President Cr David White Deputy President Cr Dee Ridgway Mr Steve Gollan Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Brookton	President Cr Katrina Crute Cr Tamara de Lange (Lilly) Mr Gary Sherry Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Corrigin	President Cr Des Hickey (Chair) Deputy President Cr Sharon Jacobs Ms Natalie Manton Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Cuballing	Cr Adrian Kowald
Shire of Dumbleyung	President Cr Amy Knight Mr Les Morgan, Director of Infrastructure
Shire of Kulin	Cr Robbie Bowey Taryn Scadding, Executive Manager Community Services
Shire of Lake Grace	President Cr Len Armstrong Deputy President Stephen Hunt Mr Chris Paget, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Narrogin	<p>President Leigh Ballard (Deputy Chair) Deputy President Cr Graham Broad Mr Dale Stewart Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Shire of Pingelly	<p>Deputy President Cr Peter Wood Mr Andrew Dover Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Shire of Quairading	<p>President Cr Jo Haythornthwaite Deputy President Cr Trevor Stacey Ms Natalie Ness, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Shire of Wagin	<p>President Cr Phillip Blight (State Councillor) Deputy President Bryan Kilpatrick Dr Kenneth Parker, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Shire of Wandering	<p>President Cr Ian Turton Deputy President Cr Sheryl Little Mr Alan Hart Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Shire of West Arthur	<p>President Cr Neil Morrell Mr Vin Fordham Lamont, Chief Executive Officer Ms Sharon Bell, Community Development Officer</p>
Shire of Wickepin	<p>President Cr Julie Russell Mr Tim Clynych, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Shire of Williams	<p>Cr Jarrad Logie Mr Peter Stubbs Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>
Guests	
<p>Lotterywest and Healthway Main Roads WA Regional Development Australia WA</p>	<p>Lisa Jackson, Grants Development Manager Kate Morris, Grants Development Officer Mohammad Siddiqui, Director Wheatbelt Region Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development</p>
Members of Parliament	<p>Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region Hon Peter Rundle MLA, Member for Roe</p>
WALGA	<p>Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services Daniel Thomson, Acting Manager Economics Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance Rodney Thornton, Regional Road Safety Advisor</p>
Apologies	
<p>Shire of Cuballing</p>	<p>Deputy President Cr Rob Harris President Cr Eliza Dowling Mr Stan Scott Chief Executive Officer, non-voting</p>

Shire of Dumbleyung	Deputy President Cr Grant Lukins Mr Gavin Treasure Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Kulin	President Cr Grant Robins
Shire of Kulin	Mr Alan Leeson Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Lake Grace	Mr Alan George Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Pingelly	President Cr Jackie McBurney
Shire of West Arthur	Deputy President Cr Karen Harrington
Shire of Wickepin	Deputy President Cr Wes Astbury
Members of Parliament	Hon Sandra Carr MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Shelley Payne MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Colin de Grussa MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Mia Davies MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt Rick Wilson MP, Federal Member for O'Connor Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Shelley Payne MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Darren West MLC, Member for Agricultural Region
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Susan Hall, Chief Executive Officer Renee Manning, Principal Regional Development Officer - Central East
Department of Local Government, Sport, & Cultural Industries	Samantha Cornthwaite, Regional Manager Wheatbelt
Water Corporation	Michael Roberts, Regional Manager Goldfields & Agricultural Region

Attachments to Minutes

The following are provided as attachments to the Minutes:

1. Item 1.2 Narrogin Host Council presentation
2. Item 5.1 Lotterywest presentation
3. Item 5.2 WALGA Economic Update
4. Item 5.3 Zone Induction Overview

The full State Council Agenda can be found via link: [State Council Agenda 6 March 2024 \(walga.asn.au\)](https://www.walga.asn.au)

3. Declarations of Interest

Nil

4. Announcements

Nil

5. Guest Speakers / Deputations

5.1 Lotterywest

Lisa Jackson, Grants Development Manager

Lisa manages the Wheatbelt Grants Development team at Lotterywest. Along with her colleague, Kate Morris, Grants Development Officer, Lisa presented to the Zone on funding process and any potential areas of support Lotterywest can offer to the Central Country Zone region.

This presentation is attached to the Minutes – Attachment 2.

NOTED

5.2 Daniel Thomson, Acting Manager Economics - WALGA

WALGA's Acting Manager Economics, Daniel Thomson will provide an Economic update to the Zone

This presentation is attached to the Minutes – Attachment 3.

NOTED

5.3 Zone induction overview - Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services - WALGA

Tony Brown's portfolio at WALGA oversees the Associations Governance, including State Council and Zones. The Zone at its planning day last year, requested a presentation, particularly for new Zone delegates on the Zone and its relationship with WALGA.

This presentation will cover the role of a Delegate in relation to the Zone and the Zones input to WALGA's State Council. The presentation will also include some information on recent issues for the Central Country Zone.

This presentation is attached to the Minutes – Attachment 4.

NOTED

6. Members of Parliament

Members of Federal and State Government, representing the Zone Member Local Government Districts, were invited to provide a brief update on matters relevant to Zone Members.

Hon Peter Rundle MLA, Member for Roe

Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for Central Wheatbelt

NOTED

7. Agency Reports

7.1 Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries (DLGSC)

Samantha Cornthwaite, Regional Manager Wheatbelt was an apology. A report was provided.

NOTED

7.2 Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt (RDAW)

Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development was in attendance at the meeting.

NOTED

7.3 Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC)

Pip Gooding, Regional Development Officer Wheatbelt South was an apology.

NOTED

7.4 Main Roads Western Australia

The Main Roads WA report was tabled. Mohammad Siddiqui, Director Wheatbelt Region took questions.

NOTED

8. Minutes

8.1 Confirmation of Minutes from the Central Country Zone meeting held on Friday, 17 November 2023

The Minutes of the Central Country Zone meeting held on Friday, 17 November 2023 have previously been circulated to Member Councils.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Phil Blight
Seconded: President Leigh Ballard

That the Minutes of the Central Country Zone meeting held on Friday, 17 November 2023 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

8.2 Business Arising from the Minutes from the Central Country Zone Meeting held on Friday, 17 November 2023

8.2.1 (Item 10.3.4) Minister for Local Government

With a change in Local Government Minister, the Executive wrote to the Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government; Youth; Minister Assisting the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, to attend the April meeting of the Zone. Minister Beazley has accepted the invitation to speak at the April Zone meeting, hosted by the Shire of Pingelly.

Members are welcome to discuss topics they wish to hear the Minister speak on.

With the next 'notice of meeting' e-mail alert, Zone Members will be prompted to provide questions for the Minister in advance of the next meeting.

NOTED

8.3 Minutes of the Central Country Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 7 February 2024

The recommendations from the Executive Committee Meeting that require Zone consideration have been extracted for the Zones consideration.

8.3.1 (Item 5.2.1) Waste Management Funding

As per the November Minutes:

The Minister for the Environment has advised that the State Government will consult later this year with businesses and the community on a proposal to expand the waste levy boundary into regional areas.

The Ministers Office has agreed to a meeting with the Zone's deputation during this consultation window - Cr Leigh Ballard, Cr Des Hickey, Cr Phil Blight, and Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Environment, WALGA. We are awaiting suggested dates for the meeting and will update the Committee at the earliest.

Comment:

As recently as 23 January 2024, the Executive again contacted the office of Minister Whitby. With a turnover of staff within the office, our meeting request has not been processed. It has been reissued again.

Executive Committee Comment:

The Executive Officer will request WALGA CEO Nick Sloan, and WALGA President Karen Chappel to assist in obtaining a meeting with the Minister for the Zone.

NOTED

8.3.2 (Item 6.8.2) Challenges faced by Band 4 Local Governments after LGA amendments

Background:

As per the November Zone Minutes:

Cr Ian Turton from the Shire of Wandering

- *Raised with previous LG Minister, concerns that the current Act amendments are a 'one size fits all' approach*
- *Lack of support for small band 4 LGs*
- *Cr Turton met with Tim Fraser from DLGSC and passed on a letter of concern to the new LG Minister*
- *Hoping to instigate some kind of gathering for small LGs to discuss common challenges*
- *Likely to progress in early part of next year*

President Cr Jackie McBurney expressed her support for Cr Turton's suggestion of the formation of a new group to represent and advocate for small band 4 LGs.

Cr Blight suggested that when the new LG Minister attends in April, the Zone should do a presentation about the challenges of band 4 LGs. Cr Crute suggested that the focus should be broader – focus on the cost shift and impost on regional LGs to do more with the same bucket of money. The cost shifting is becoming more prevalent and is having a greater impact on communities in terms of service delivery.

ACTION:

The WALGA Secretariat will work with the Shire of Wandering to develop a plan and presentation – will report back to the February meeting (first to the Executive Committee, with an invitation to Cr Turton).

Cr Turton further supplied the below comments to the Executive Officer:

I believe an email to you is appropriate as the zone seeks to follow up on my concerns aired about a year ago to the then Minister for Local Government, John Carey, regarding the challenges for our Shire and I guessed other shires particularly of similar size. I was really concerned when the Minister said his aim for the changes to the LG ACT was to have a "one size fits all" approach. I am not sure that is possible.

As you know, at the LG convention I presented the new LG Minister, David Michael, a letter outlining my general concerns. In his reply received 17th October, he quoted some changes to the Act that should meet some of the concerns that I had raised. From my position evaluation of any reforms are very difficult. Shire administration (CEOs in particular) are generally the persons who bring the difficult and often expensive problems of compliance etc to Councils notice.

Of course, in an endeavour to come to any solutions that may address any of the challenges of particularly the Band 4 Shires, we must get the now third LG minister of recent times to understand the relevant issues and support change.

My suggestions to achieve positive results, firstly requires identification of the common challenges. To do this means gathering those who are interested in pursuing the associated issues. I have had some support, but WALGA and all Country Zones would need to play a large part in promoting the opportunity to meet, find the challenges and plan future direction. Not a small task but long overdue I suspect.

Cr Turton and Wandering CEO Alan Hart have been invited to this meeting to discuss this further. Attached was a letter sent by Cr Turton to the then Minister for Local Government, Hon David Michael.

Comment

In respect to Compliance requirements on Local Governments, the Compliance Calendar and Compliance Calendar implementation Guide was provided to provide a schedule of the current requirements.

The Local Government sector is one of the most highly regulated sectors and further information was provided at the meeting.

Executive Committee Comment:

The Executive Committee had a lengthy discussion on cost shifting and compliance as pertinent to State, Federal and Local Government. This is a major topic of concern for the Zone and likely THE ENTIRE Local Government sector. A definitive outline of what is a State, Federal or Local Government obligation needs to be established, as well as highlighting how changes to State and Commonwealth legislation and regulations can financially impact Local Governments as well as using up Local Government resources which should truly sit within State or Federal budgets.

The Committee believe that these 'small' cost shifts are placing a lot of pressure on Local Government resources. Costs shift such as ensuring compliance to standard, providing housing, doctors, aged care etc. Local Governments are carrying the weight of many areas that should sit within State or Federal.

The meeting discussed that there are two pieces of information that are required from the sector to assist in progressing this matter.

The two items are as follows;

1. Examples of cost shifting where State and Commonwealth services are now being provided by Local Governments and the cost of providing these services.
2. Examples of current compliance requirements that are not required.

Action:

The Executive Officer will gather data from the Local Government sector, relating to;

1. Examples of cost shifting where State and Commonwealth services are now being provided by Local Governments and the cost of providing these services.
2. Examples of current compliance requirements that are not required.

Once this information is collated it will be brought back to the Executive Committee and the Zone for further consideration.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Ian Turton

Seconded: President Cr Phil Blight

That the Central Country Zone:

1. **Requests the Executive Officer to gather data via survey to all Central Country Zone Local Governments relating to:**
 - a. **Examples of cost shifting where State and Commonwealth services are now being provided by Local Governments and the cost of providing these services.**
 - b. **Examples of current compliance requirements that are not required.**

CARRIED

Comment

If survey data is available, information will be provided to Zone Delegates prior to discussion with the Minister for Local Government at the April Zone meeting.

8.4 Minutes of the Central Country Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 7 February 2024
--

The Minutes of the Central Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 7 February 2024 were attached to the Agenda.

The remainder of the items are for the Zones consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute

Seconded: President Leigh Ballard

That the Minutes of the Central Country Zone Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 be noted, and the items not considered above (Item 8.3.2) be endorsed.

CARRIED

9. Zone Business

9.1 Zone Strategic Priorities

Background:

Areas of importance raised during the Strategic Forum held in August 2023, was the Zone's priority list.

The 2023 Zone Priorities are listed below;

1. Local Government Act — New Act or Amendments
2. Red Tape Reduction
3. Regional Collaboration and resource sharing
4. Local Government staff shortages
5. Telecommunications
6. Housing
7. Work Health & Safety
8. Disaster Preparedness

The Executive Committee discussed the above priorities and believe that eight (8) priorities are too many to fully focus on. The Zone should focus on three core priorities. Acknowledging priorities can change based on recent events and current situations, priorities will be updated/amended as needed.

The three suggested core priorities are:

1. *Challenges faced by Band 4 Local Governments relating to State/Federal Government services being provided by Local Governments together with Local Government compliance requirements.*
2. Essential Services – power, telecommunication and water.
3. Housing

Executive Committee Comment:

The Committee feel 8 priorities are too many to fully focus on. Instead three core priorities should be actioned with focus and energy. Acknowledging priorities can change based on recent events and current situations, priorities will be updated/amended as needed.

The three suggested core priorities are:

1. *Challenges faced by Band 4 Local Governments relating to State/Federal Government services being provided by Local Governments together with Local Government compliance requirements.*
2. Essential services/power, telecommunication and water.
3. Housing

The Chair welcomes discussion from the floor on the suggested core priorities for the Zone.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute

Seconded: Cr Graham Broad

That the Central Country Zone endorse the following priorities for 2024:

1. **Challenges faced by Band 4 Local Governments relating to State/Federal Government services being provided by Local Governments together with Local Government compliance requirements.**
2. **Essential services/power, telecommunication and water.**
3. **Housing**

CARRIED

9.2 Central Country Zone delegate - Wheatbelt District Leadership Group

Background:

The Executive Officer received the following two page letter from Sue Chapman, Senior Project Officer-District Leadership Group.

Sue requests the Executive Committee to discuss the Zone's appetite in having a Zone representative on the Wheatbelt District Leadership Group.

In summary, the purpose of the group is to;
develop and deliver coordinated, place-based human service responses to achieve better outcomes for the Wheatbelt region.

The Chair now opens the floor for discussion on if the Central Country Zone would like to have a representative on this Group.



Mr Tony Brown
Executive Officer
Central Country Zone of the WA Local Government Association
170 Railway Parade
WEST LEEDERVILLE WA 6007

Dear Mr Brown

Expression of Interest: Wheatbelt District Leadership Group Local Government Representative

I write in my capacity as Chair of the Wheatbelt [District Leadership Group](#) (DLG).

You may be aware that DLG's exist across 17 regions in Western Australia, with the Wheatbelt DLG area covering three Local Government Zones: Avon-Midland, Great Eastern Country, and Central Country.

The purpose of the Wheatbelt DLG is to develop and deliver coordinated, place-based human service responses to achieve better outcomes for the Wheatbelt region.

Currently, the membership of the Wheatbelt DLG is comprised of regional executive leads from the core human services agencies in State Government: Department of Communities, Education, Health and Justice and WA Police Force; Wheatbelt Development Commission CEO; Chair of the Wheatbelt Human Services Managers Forum; and CEOs from Yued, Ballardong and Gnaala Karla Booja Aboriginal Corporations.

Developing a collaborative relationship between all levels of government, Aboriginal community, community services sector, not-for-profit sector, and community leaders is a key function of the Wheatbelt DLG.

The members of the Wheatbelt DLG believe a Local Government representative will be a valuable addition to the membership to represent community interest, facilitate communication between Local Government and the DLG and to participate in shared decision making



As such, the Wheatbelt DLG is seeking an expression of interest from one Local Government representative from each of the three Zones to serve as a member on the DLG.

A recognised strength of Local Government is its closeness to the community and its ability to consider and act on local opinions and perspectives. Council members, being the grass roots level of government, are in a perfect position to observe the shifting needs of local communities and to design strategies to satisfy those needs.

As a member of the Wheatbelt DLG a representative would have responsibilities such as:

- Commit to regular attendance at meetings and active support of the Wheatbelt DLGs activities.
- Align key initiatives and strategic priorities across the region.
- Provide updates from agencies, organisations, and other related groups of which they are a member.
- Commit to building the collective knowledge, skills, and capability of the Wheatbelt DLG.

Further details regarding the role of members and function of the Wheatbelt DLG can be found in the attached Terms of Reference.

The Wheatbelt DLG meet six times a year with three meetings held in Northam (two hours) and three meetings held in various Wheatbelt locations (one day). Members may attend meetings via video conference.

If you have any questions about the committee or the role of its members, please contact me at Jamie.Strickland@communities.wa.gov.au or 0438 923 605. Otherwise, I look forward to your response to this request.

Yours sincerely



Jamie Strickland
Chair, Wheatbelt District Leadership Group
Regional Executive Director, Great Southern & Wheatbelt, Department of Communities

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Leigh Ballard
Seconded: President Cr Katrina Crute

That the Central Country Zone:

1. Elect a representative for the Wheatbelt District Leadership Group.
2. Elect Mr Dale Stewart as the Central Country Zone representative.

CARRIED

9.3 Local Government Elections Review
--

Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services – WALGA

WALGA's governance staff are conducting a review of Local Government elections for the period 2015-2023. This includes examining the cost of conducting elections and the method of vote counting.

A number of Zones had raised concerns with the election process and the cost.

A report, together with proposals for an alternative engagement strategy that provides for an independent assessment of WALGA's election advocacy is being prepared.

This report is anticipated to be submitted for the April/May round of Zone and State Council meetings.

NOTED

9.4 Power and Telecommunications Roundtable
--

Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services, WALGA

Local Governments impacted by recent power outages and associated telecommunication failures across the Wheatbelt, Goldfields and Perth Hills participated in a roundtable on 6 February 2024. This provided an opportunity for WALGA to collate and distil feedback on the impact of recent power outages, as well as inform future responses and measures to improve resilience for such events.

A presentation that provided a summary of the issues considered at the Roundtable was attached to the Agenda.

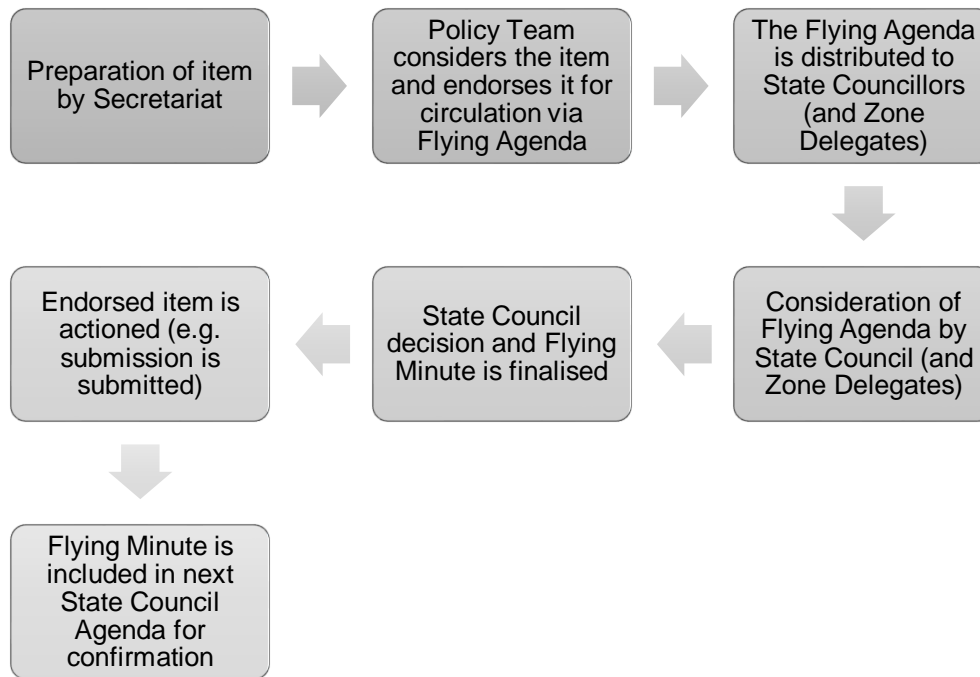
NOTED

9.5 State Council Flying Agenda/Minute Process

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Corporate and Association Governance

State Council has five ordinary meetings per year. As a result, there are occasions when decisions need to be made or submissions need to be endorsed to meet external deadlines which do not fit within the existing State Council meeting schedule.

The first preference is always to seek an extension of time to enable the item to be considered by Zones and State Council through the usual Agenda process. However, if an extension of time is not granted, the item will need to be endorsed by State Council by way of a Flying Agenda. The process for a Flying Agenda is summarised as:



Flying Agendas are generally open to responses for 7 days.

At the request of State Council, the Flying Agenda process has recently been amended to better include Zone Delegates in the decision-making process. The Zone Executive Officer will alert Delegates via email when a Flying Agenda is out for consideration by State Council and request that any comments or feedback be directed to the Zone’s State Council representative(s). State Councillors are then able to consider the feedback of Zone Delegates when making their final decision.

Please note that any comments or feedback sent directly to WALGA, rather than the Zone’s State Council representative(s), will not go towards the Flying Agenda. There is no requirement to respond to an email circulating a Flying Agenda, however if you would like to contribute this should be directed to your State Council representative(s).

All completed Flying Minutes are available to view on the WALGA website [here](#), and are included in the subsequent State Council Agenda as both previous Minutes (for confirmation) and as an Item for Noting.

For any questions about the State Council Flying Agenda process, please contact Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance on krobertson@walga.asn.au or (08) 9213 2036.

NOTED

9.6 2024 Local Government Honours Program

By Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance

The annual Local Government Honours Program affords public recognition and celebration of the outstanding achievements and lasting contributions made by Elected Members and Local Government officers to their respective Councils, the WA Local Government sector and the wider community.

There are six awards in the 2024 Program:

1. Local Government Medal
2. Life Membership
3. Eminent Service Award
4. Merit Award
5. Local Government Distinguished Officer Award
6. Young Achievers Award

Nominations will open on **Friday, 8 March 2024** and close at **5:00pm on Friday, 31 May 2024**.

Details on the 2024 Honours Program and Nomination Forms will be available from Friday, 8 March 2024 on the [WALGA website](https://www.walga.asn.au).

For more information contact Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance, on 9213 2050 or via email at honours@walga.asn.au.

NOTED

10. Zone Reports

10.1 Zone President Report

Cr Des Hickey provided the Zone President Report.

NOTED

10.2 Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC)

President Cr Jackie McBurney was an apology for the meeting.

NOTED

10.3 Wheatbelt Interagency Health and Wellbeing Plan Advisory Group

President Cr Jackie McBurney was an apology for the meeting.

NOTED

10.4 WALGA RoadWise

Rodney Thornton, Regional Road Safety Advisor was in attendance and provided a road safety report to the Zone.

NOTED

11. Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) Business

11.1 State Councillor Report

State Councillor, President Cr Phillip Blight provided a report.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Leigh Ballard

Seconded: Cr Graham Broad

That the State Councillor Report be received.

CARRIED

11.2 WALGA Status Report

By Tony Brown, Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

Presenting the Status Report for February 2024 which contains WALGA’s responses to the resolutions of previous Zone Meetings.

February 2024

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	Background	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
<p>Central C T Brown</p>	<p>17 November 2023 Zone Agenda Item 11.4 2023 Resolution for changes to Electoral Process</p>	<p>That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to advocate for a change to the current electoral system for Local Government to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> remove the compulsion of those Local Government entities within the Band 3 and 4 categories to opt out of the Optional Preferential Voting System to return to the First Past the Post voting system; and remove the compulsion for internal elections to be carried out by optional preferential voting and return to First Past the Post method of voting. 	<p>With changes brought into the amended Local Government Act to make compulsory the use of an Optional Preferential system of voting through Postal Voting, the Shire of Beverley found the experience frustrating and costly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It proved difficult to explain to the community; It also mandated the engagement of the West Australian Electoral Commission at significant cost; The staff member engaged as Returning Officer found the system confusing and somewhat burdensome; The count on the night took two hours and then a wait of one and a half hours before the Commission indicated that the process was successfully completed; and, 	<p>WALGA’s governance staff are conducting a review of Local Government elections for the period 2015-2023. This will include the issue of vote counting system for Local Government elections and for internal elections.</p> <p>A report, together with proposals for an alternative engagement strategy that provides for an independent assessment of WALGA’s election advocacy is being prepared.</p> <p>This report is anticipated to be submitted for the April/May round of Zone and State Council meetings.</p>	<p>February 2024</p>	<p>Tony Brown Executive Director, Member Services 9213 2051 tbrown@walga.asn.au</p>

		<p>5. The Commission did not declare the result until 10:00 am Sunday morning via email which the Returning Officer did not see until she attended the office at midday.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Shire of Beverley</td> <td>2015</td> <td>2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2019</td> <td>2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2021</td> <td>2023</td> </tr> </table> <p>WAEC quote -</p> <p>\$18,000.00</p> <p>WAEC actual cost -</p> <p>Invoice not received</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Vacancies</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Candidates</td> <td>6</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Status of election (Y/N)</td> <td>Y</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Y</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Y</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Electors</td> <td></td> <td>1,323</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1,357</td> <td>1,365</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1,410</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Votes received</td> <td>167</td> <td>392</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>249</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>669</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost for in-house</td> <td colspan="2">\$1,961.96</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="2">\$2577.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="2">\$2,799.29</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="2">\$2,126.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Additional staff 2023</td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="2">\$940.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost per vote</td> <td>\$11.75</td> <td>\$6.58</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$11.24</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$28.31*</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost per Elector</td> <td>\$1.48</td> <td>\$1.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$2.05</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>\$13.43*</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>*Final cost awaiting invoice</p>	Shire of Beverley	2015	2017		2019	2021		2021	2023	Vacancies	5	6		4	6		6	3	Candidates	6	10		6	6		6	4	Status of election (Y/N)	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	N		Y		Number of Electors		1,323		1,357	1,365		1,410	-	Votes received	167	392		249	-			669	Cost for in-house	\$1,961.96			\$2577.76			\$2,799.29			\$2,126.30		Additional staff 2023				\$940.00		Cost per vote	\$11.75	\$6.58		\$11.24			\$28.31*		Cost per Elector	\$1.48	\$1.90		\$2.05			\$13.43*			
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			<p>Previous elections conducted by the Shire have always provided an opportunity for those community members interested, to attend the count on the Saturday night after which the Shire would provide some light refreshments. At that point the election had been declared and candidates being aware of their success or otherwise.</p> <p>On the Saturday night of the recent election there were only two members of the community present and even they had had enough by the end!</p> <p>In fairness; the postal voting method proved positive with so many more electors participating. At this stage it is not known whether the postal voting method implied compulsion to do so given the Referendum the week before or not. This was evidenced by a few votes having no markings on them.</p> <p>In summary, it is the cost above all other matters that concerns the Shire of Beverley when the final analysis revealed that, apart from greater participation, nothing else was gained and by no measure could it be described as being "fairer".</p>			
Central C	23 June 2023 Zone Agenda Item 9.4 - Line Marking and Road Safety	That WALGA be requested to engage with Main Roads WA with a view to providing Local Government with greater flexibility and autonomy in relation to line marking thresholds and approval guidelines for rural and		A proposed policy and advocacy position regarding line marking on low traffic volume rural Local Government roads will be considered by Zones in February and State Council in March 2023.	February 2024	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure

		regional roads, consistent with the body of the report presented to the Central Country Zone meeting on 23 June 2023.				jduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
Central C	26 August 2023 Zone Agenda Item 9.3 Heavy Vehicles – Accredited Mass Management Scheme	That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to investigate the establishment of an Industry Working Group associated with Main Roads WA Accredited Mass Management Scheme across the Restricted Access Vehicle Network, with a view to reducing accelerated degradation and damage to rural and regional road networks as well as improving road safety for all users. Working Group membership shall be representative of relevant industry stakeholders but not necessarily be limited to (WALGA, Local Government, Main Roads WA, Department of Transport, CBH, relevant Heavy Vehicle Operators Association).		Main Roads has the sole authority for regulating heavy vehicle access under the AMMS and RAV Notices. Leadership or engaged participation from Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services is important to success. An initial discussion with HVS highlighted limitations in both regulation and enforcement capacity under the audit based arrangements. Direct engagement between the Shires and Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services facilitated by WALGA a useful next step. Note that this Zone resolution will be formally considered by the Infrastructure Policy Team at their next meeting.	February 2024	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure re jduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
Central C T Brown	6 December 2023 State Council Agenda Item 7.6 Waste Education Policy Statement and Advocacy Position	That the Central Country Zone supports WALGA's Waste Education Policy Statement and Advocacy Position recommendation 1-2d inclusive as listed above in the December 2023 State Council Agenda with the addition of 2e, Hypothecation of the waste levy for waste management purposes only and not to go to consolidated revenue.		The Zones' recommendation is consistent with WALGA's existing position, under the <u>Waste Levy Policy Statement</u> , and therefore does not need to be included in the Waste Education Advocacy Position. The Waste Levy Policy Statement is being reviewed in early 2024 and the comment for the Zone will be included in that process.	February 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy @walga.asn.au 9213 2039
Central C	26 August 2023 Zone Agenda Item 9.2 Water Corporation – Non-Standard Water Services	That the Central Country Zone: 1. Rejects Water Corporation attempts to classify regional sites as a 'Non-Standard Water Service' (unless specific agreement is reached with a Local Government Authority); 2. Formally writes to Water Corporation and the Minister for Water confirming this position; 3. Requests that WALGA supports the position of the Central Country Zone and rejects the Water		The Zone has sent correspondence regarding this matter. WALGA has also raised the matter with WaterCorp WALGA is continuing to advocate on this matter including raising the issues as part of the consultation on the Review of the National Water Initiatives to inform the next National Water Agreement.	February 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy @walga.asn.au 9213 2039

		<p>Corporation's attempts to classify regional sites as a 'Non-Standard Water Service'; and</p> <p>4. Requests WALGA to engage with the Minister for Water to retain the current services, unless specific agreement is reached with a Local Government Authority.</p>				
Central C	26 August 2023 Zone Agenda Item 12.2 Contaminated Sites	<p>That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. investigate the extent that this issue is impacting regional Local Governments with registered landfill sites; and 2. engage with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, on behalf of the sector, to ensure that the Department's requirements are proportionate to the risk associated with a particular site. 		<p>The Environment and Waste Policy Team considered this matter at their September meeting and resolved.</p> <p>That the Environment and Waste Policy Team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the Central Country Zone recommendation; and 2. Agree that WALGA: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Investigate the extent that this issue is impacting regional Local Governments with registered landfill sites; and b. Engage with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, on behalf of the sector, to ensure that the Departments requirements are proportionate to the risk associated with a particular site. <p>WALGA staff continue to follow up with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation on this issue and will be hosting a webinar for the sector in February. WALGA has requested a list of impacted Local Governments from DWER but has yet to receive a response.</p>	February 2024	<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039</p>
Central C	23 June 2023 Zone Agenda Item 9.1 - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	<p>That the Central Country Zone request:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Department of Planning Lands and Heritage to provide information on the cost to Local Governments of implementing the regulations; 2. WALGA to collate the information from the Local Governments 		<p>The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act (2021) is to be repealed and the amended Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972) is to be reintroduced.</p> <p>WALGA continues to advocate for Local Government exemption for costs associated with compliance with the Aboriginal Heritage</p>	November 2023	<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>

		<p>feedback on the Aboriginal Heritage Act and the implementation of the Regulations; and</p> <p>3. the State Government to underwrite any potential costs of Local Government complying with the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act.</p>		<p>legislation, in particular the fees payable for section 18 applications,</p>		<p>nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039</p>
Central C	<p>14 April 2023 Zone Agenda Item 9.1 Financial Burden to Local Governments of Optional Preferential Voting</p>	<p>That WALGA forms a policy position and advocates that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> any Western Australian Electoral Commission fee increases for the 2023 Local Government elections are capped at 10% when compared with the 2021 rates; and the CountWA software from Western Australian Electoral Commission is provided to Local Governments free of charge for the 2023 and subsequent Local Government elections. 		<p>WALGA's Governance Policy Team has considered this matter and has requested WALGA staff to conduct a review of Local Government elections 2015 – 2023 and provide a summary of findings in a future report, together with proposals for an alternative engagement strategy that provides for an independent assessment of WALGA's election advocacy.</p> <p>This work will inform advocacy to the State Government on the cost and processes involved in the WAEC conducting the elections including cost.</p> <p>Report expected to be prepared in time for the April 2024 Governance Policy Team meeting.</p>	February 2024	<p>Tony Brown Executive Director, Member Services 9213 2051 tbrown@walga.asn.au</p>
Central C	<p>2021 November Zone Agenda Item 12.1 Sector ICT solution</p>	<p>That the Zone request WALGA to research providers and the viability of an in-house IT system.</p>		<p>The idea of an all-of-sector model ICT solution is not viable for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different size Local Governments – no one size fits all; Local Government's being at different levels of need and maturity in the ICT requirements; We are unlikely to get the requisite LG buy-in to warrant the investment; and The inherent complexity of a custom-built system is time and cost-prohibitive. <p>A more workable suggestion is for a group of similar size/maturity level Local Governments to engage a consultant to define a model set that meets their needs. Any recommendations could be reviewed by a representative of the LG ICT Managers Network to ensure it is appropriate.</p>	November 2023	<p>Tony Brown Executive Director, Member Services 9213 2051 tbrown@walga.asn.au</p>

				<p>It would be expected that the following range of recommendations are achievable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable hardware requirements (including remote options where appropriate) • Suggested lightweight accounting software • Baseline model directory structure • Security options • Backup software and procedures • Suitable internet options <p>WALGA is looking to assist in facilitating discussions on a shared service model to research this with a group of Local Governments further. Due to work priorities this work was not carried out in 2022, however work is scheduled this year.</p>		
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Zone Comment

This is an opportunity for Member Councils to consider the response from WALGA in respect to the matters that were submitted at the previous Zone Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute
Seconded: President Cr Phil Blight

That the Central Country Zone, WALGA Status Report for February 2024 be noted.

CARRIED

11.3 WALGA President's Report

The WALGA President's Report will be circulated prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Phil Blight
Seconded: Cr Graham Broad

That the Central Country Zone notes the WALGA President's Report.

CARRIED

11.4 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Decision

11.4.1 State Council Agenda Items – 6 March 2024

Background

WALGA State Council meets five times each year and as part of the consultation process with Member Councils circulates the State Council Agenda for input through the Zone structure.

Zone delegates to consider the Matters for Decision contained in the WA Local Government Association State Council Agenda and put forward resolutions to Zone Representatives on State Council

11.4 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Decision

11.4.1 State Council Agenda Items – 6 March 2024

Background

WALGA State Council meets five times each year and as part of the consultation process with Member Councils circulates the State Council Agenda for input through the Zone structure.

Zone delegates to consider the Matters for Decision contained in the WA Local Government Association State Council Agenda and put forward resolutions to Zone Representatives on State Council

The full State Council Agenda can be found via link: [State Council Agenda 6 March 2024 \(walga.asn.au\)](http://walga.asn.au)

The Zone is able to provide comment or submit an alternative recommendation that is then presented to the State Council for consideration.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

8.1 Separation (Centre) and Edge Line Markings by Local Government on Low Volume Rural Roads

Executive Summary

- The Main Roads WA warrant does not currently allow edge line or separation (centre) line markings on Local Government roads that carry less than certain traffic volume thresholds.
- Local Governments would like to enhance the safety of their roads by installing line markings in instances where only the traffic volume criterion under the warrant is not met.
- A process is proposed in this item whereby Local Governments would pay for the installation and maintenance and Main Roads would perform the necessary inspections to ensure that the markings adhere to the applicable standard.
- Local Governments would not be required to undertake these works, but rather would have the option to install line markings on qualifying roads that do not meet the traffic volume criterion at their own cost.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA endorse the below Advocacy Position:

1. **Main Roads Western Australia allow Local Governments to install edge line and separation (centre) line markings on roads that meet all relevant criteria, but do not meet the criterion on traffic volume.**
2. **For this exemption, Local Governments must adhere to the following conditions:**
 - a) **The Local Government contact Main Roads via the Regional Network Manager with their intent to undertake line marking on specific roads that do not meet the traffic volume criterion, but meet all the other criteria.**
 - b) **The Local Government obtain a Council resolution, committing to fund all installation and maintenance costs.**
 - c) **Local Government undertake spotting/surveying.**
 - d) **Main Roads to undertake an inspection following the survey/spotting work, confirm the start and finish points for the longitudinal line markings, and record the sections of road with line markings to be maintained by Local Government in the relevant database.**
 - e) **Main Roads approve the final layout prior to line marking occurring.**
 - f) **Local Government undertake the works.**
 - g) **Local Government maintain the works in accordance with Main Roads WA standards.**
 - h) **Local Government remove the lines if maintenance works are not performed to the standard.**

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute
Seconded: Cr Adrian Kowald

That WALGA endorse the below Advocacy Position:

1. **Main Roads Western Australia allow Local Governments to install edge line and separation (centre) line markings on roads that meet all relevant criteria, but do not meet the criterion on traffic volume.**
2. **Main Roads Western Australia to consider reducing the traffic volume threshold in the Main Roads warrant for installing separation (centre) lines to 100 vehicles per day on rural roads.**

3. For this exemption, Local Governments must adhere to the following conditions:
 - a) The Local Government contact Main Roads via the Regional Network Manager with their intent to undertake line marking on specific roads that do not meet the traffic volume criterion, but meet all the other criteria.
 - b) The Local Government obtain a Council resolution, committing to fund all installation and maintenance costs.
 - c) Local Government undertake spotting/surveying.
 - d) Main Roads to undertake an inspection following the survey/spotting work, confirm the start and finish points for the longitudinal line markings, and record the sections of road with line markings to be maintained by Local Government in the relevant database.
 - e) Main Roads approve the final layout prior to line marking occurring.
 - f) Local Government undertake the works.
 - g) Local Government maintain the works in accordance with Main Roads WA standards.
 - h) Local Government remove the lines if maintenance works are not performed to the standard.

CARRIED

8.2 Recovered Materials Framework Advocacy Position

Executive Summary

- The [Standards for Recycled Organics Applied to Land Policy Statement 2007](#) was developed at a time when the main option for landfill diversion of organic material in Western Australia was through mixed waste Alternative Waste Treatment (AWT) facilities.
- The Policy Statement provides principles for the development of standards for recycled organics applied to land, however these principles are potentially broadly applicable to any recovered material applied to land.
- The approach taken is that the principles/approach in the Policy Statement have been reviewed and used inform the development of the Recovered Materials Framework Advocacy Position.
- The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is developing a Recovered Materials Framework to cover the application of recovered materials to land.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Advocacy Position in December 2023.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA:

1. Rescind the existing WALGA *Standards for Recycled Organics Applied to Land Policy Statement 2007* and Advocacy Position 7.9:

Local Government:

1. Acknowledges the benefits of applying recycled organics to land, especially as a means of diverting organic material from landfill; and,
 2. Supports the development of standards for applying recycled organics to land, to ensure a fit for purpose product is developed.
2. Endorse a new *Recovered Materials Framework Advocacy Position* as follows:

The use of recovered materials, across a range of applications, is essential in reducing the use of basic raw materials, meeting State Waste Strategy Targets and increasing diversion of waste from landfill. To ensure end users have high confidence in the quality and safety of products derived from recovered materials, consistent, outcomes-based standards and investment certainty are required.

The State Government, in consultation with Local Government and the waste management industry, should take a leadership role in facilitating the use of recovered material by:

1. Developing a regulatory framework which:
 - a. Outlines clear, outcomes-based specifications for individual products which take into consideration the receiving environment and allow for site-specific assessment.
 - b. Minimises risk to human health and the environment from the use of recovered material.
 - c. Establishes robust systems to provide quality assurance and ongoing surveillance throughout the supply chain.
2. Providing guidance and support mechanisms for the successful implementation of the framework.
3. Supporting the development of, and access to, sustainable end markets and long-term offtake agreements through initiatives such as active engagement with potential end users and the inclusion of recovered material content targets in Government procurement and large infrastructure projects.

8.3 Review of Cemeteries Act 1986 and Cremation Act 1929 Discussion Paper

Executive Summary

- The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries released the Review of *Cemeteries Act 1986* and *Cremation Act 1929* Discussion Paper in November 2023 for public submission.
- WALGA was granted an extension to the submission closing period of 16 February 2024 to permit sector involvement in providing feedback from the Zone process and State Council consideration.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA:

1. Supports the intent of the Review of Cemeteries Act 1986 and Cremation Act 1929 Discussion Paper to reduce red tape, modernise legislation and standardise administrative practices; and
2. Advocates that Local Government cemetery managers retain the capacity to impose cemetery fees and charges under Part 6 of the Local Government Act.

POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 9.1 Environment Policy Team Report
- 9.2 Governance Policy Team Report
- 9.3 Infrastructure Policy Team Report
- 9.4 People and Place Policy Team Report
- 9.5 Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Report

MATTERS FOR NOTING / INFORMATION

- 10.1 2024-25 Federal Budget Submission
- 10.2 Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan (EM-SAP) Local Government Consultation Project

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr David White

Seconded: President Leigh Ballard

That the Central Country Zone:

- 1. Supports all Matters for Decision as listed above in the March 2024 State Council Agenda, excluding Item 8.1 Separation (Centre) and Edge Line Markings by Local Government on Low Volume Rural Roads which was determined via separate resolution; and**
- 2. Notes all Matters for Noting, Policy Team and Committee Reports and Organisational Reports as listed in the March 2024 State Council Agenda.**

CARRIED

12. Emerging Issues

12.1 Road Works during a Total Fire Ban Regulatory Review Update

By Max Bushell, Senior Policy Advisor, Road Safety and Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has announced that changes to the Bush Fires Regulations 1954 dealing with grading and bituminising works during a Total Fire Ban have come into effect.*
- All conditions on conducting road works during a Total Fire Ban have been removed, except for the following three conditions: 24Y, 24ZA, and 24ZB.*
- Local Governments should still employ robust risk management and assessment strategies when deciding whether to proceed with roadworks during a Total Fire Ban.*

BACKGROUND

Following consultation with WALGA and Local Governments, Main Roads, and contractors, DFES have removed all conditions on conducting road works during a Total Fire Ban, except for:

- Regulation 24Y: road work remains prescribed for the purposes of section 22B(2) of the Bush Fires Act 1954; meaning business, industry and public authorities (which include Local Governments) can continue to conduct road work during a total fire ban without requiring an exemption.
- Regulation 24ZA: road work must stop during a Total Fire Ban where there is a Catastrophic fire danger rating – with exceptions for essential services.
- Regulation 24ZB: notification is still required via the online notification form which notifies DFES and the Local Government where the works are occurring during a Total Fire Ban. If working within 3kms of DBCA managed land, notification to DBCA is also required.

Local Governments should continue to employ their own thorough risk assessment and risk management practices that consider fire prevention and mitigation when programming road works during a Total Fire Ban.

Additional information can be found on the DFES [website](#). The DFES road work [factsheet](#) may be particularly useful for Local Governments.

NOTED

12.2 Elected Member Training

Mr Andrew Dover, CEO Shire of Pingelly advised that the Shire of Pingelly is hosting a number of modules of the WALGA Council Member Essentials training on 15 and 16 April. Council Members are encouraged to attend and bookings are required to be made through [WALGA Training website](#).

13. Date, Time, and Place of Next Meetings

The next Central Country Zone meeting will be held on Friday, 12 April 2024 commencing at 9.30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Pingelly.

14. Closure

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.35pm.