

Central Country Zone Minutes

Friday, 12 June 2026

**Hosted by the Shire of Dumbleyung
32 Harvey St, Dumbleyung
Commencing at 9:30am**

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ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

The full State Council Agenda can be found on the [WALGA website](#).

1. OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1. OPENING

The Chair, Cr Des Hickey opened the meeting at 9:31am.

1.2. ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS	2 Voting Delegates from each Member Local Government
Shire of Brookton	President Cr Rod Wallis Cr Gary Crouch Mr Stuart Billingham, Manager of Corporate & Community, non-voting
Shire of Corrigin	President Cr Sharon Jacobs Cr Des Hickey (Chair) Ms Natalie Manton, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Cuballing	President Cr Adrian Kowald Deputy President Cr Rob Harris
Shire of Dumbleyung	President Cr Amy Knight Cr Emily Edwards, non-voting Mr Gavin Treasure, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Kulin	Cr Robbie Bowey Mr Alan Leeson, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Lake Grace	President Cr Len Armstrong Mr Alan George, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Narrogin	Mr Michael Cole, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Pingelly	Mr Andrew Dover, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Quairading	President Cr Trevor Stacey Deputy President Cr Jo Hayes Mr Nic Warren, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Wagin	President Cr Phillip Blight Dr Kenneth Parker, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Wandering	President Cr Sheryl Little

Cr Peter Latham
Dr Alistair Pinto, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of West Arthur President Cr Karen Harrington
Deputy President Cr Duncan South
Mr Vin Fordham Lamont, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

Shire of Wickepin President Cr Julie Russell
Mr David Burton, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

GUESTS

Local Government Inspector Department of Fire and Emergency Services Main Roads WA	Mr Tony Brown OAM Mr Murray Carter, Executive Director, Rural Fire Division Mr Mohammad Siddiqui, Director Wheatbelt Region Ms Vicky Eckersley, Customer Service Manager
Regional Development Australia WA	Mr Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Mr Grant Arthur, Director Regional Development
WALGA RoadWise	Mr Rodney Thornton, Regional Road Safety Advisor

WALGA

Mayor Mark Irwin AM	WALGA President
Ms Kathy Robertson	Manager Association and Corporate Governance
Ms Rebecca Brown	Policy Manager Environment and Waste
Ms Sammy Bevan	Member Services Executive Administrator

1.3. APOLOGIES

MEMBERS

Shire of Beverley	President Cr Dee Ridgway Deputy President Cr Alan Sattler Mr Stephen Gollan, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Brookton	Cr Lachlan McCabe, McCabe Mr Gary Sherry, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Cuballing	Mr Chris Paget, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Dumbleyung	Deputy President Cr David Head
Shire of Narrogin	President Leigh Ballard Cr Clive Bartron
Shire of Lake Grace	Deputy President Cr Stephen Hunt

Shire of Pingelly	Deputy President Cr Peter Wood
Shire of Wagin	Deputy President Cr Bryan Kilpatrick
Shire of Wandering	Deputy President Cr Alan Price
Shire of Wickepin	Cr Tyron Miller
Shire of Williams	Cr Heidi Cowcher President Cr Jarrad Logie Peter Stubbs, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

GUESTS

CBH Group	Ms Kellie Todman, Manager Governance and Industry Relations
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Ms Renee Manning, Acting Chief Executive Officer Ms Emma Everett, Local Content Adviser

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

- Mr Peter Rundle, MLA, Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA
- Mr Lachlan Hunter, Member for the Central Wheatbelt
- Hon Parwinder Kaur
- Hon Amanda Dorn
- Hon Anthony Spagnolo
- Hon Jackie Jarvis
- Hon Sophie McNeill
- Hon Nick Goiran
- Hon Rob Horstman
- Hon Sandra Carr, MLC
- Hon Phil Twiss
- Hon Steve Martin

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil.

3. HOST COUNCIL PRESENTATION

Shire of Dumbleyung President, Cr Amy Knight, welcomed Delegates and guests and delivered a presentation on the Shire, highlighting the current delivery of \$15 million in projects, the Strategic Community Plan 2022–2032, and the 50-Year Roads Strategy. The Shire also acknowledged and thanked outgoing Chief Executive Officer, Mr Gavin Treasure, for his service to Dumbleyung.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cr Des Hickey acknowledged the Shire of Pingelly for hosting the May Regional State Council meeting and commended the considerable effort made in hosting State Councillors and WALGA staff, as well as representing the Zone to a high standard.

5. GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS

All Deputations have a time limit of 20 minutes, which includes time for questions.

5.1. SPEAKERS FOR THE JUNE ZONE MEETING

5.1.1. MR TONY BROWN, LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR

The inaugural Local Government Inspector, Mr Tony Brown, provided a brief presentation on the Local Government Inspector, his priorities and expectations. The update also included details of the current Monitors in place around the state. A copy of the slides were circulated with the Minutes.

Noted

5.1.2. DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (DFES)

Mr Murray Carter, DFES Executive Director Rural Fire Services, provided a presentation summarising the 2025/26 Fire Season and an update on bushfire mitigation support to Zone Members. Murray also acknowledged the recent Central Country Zone item relating to bushfire mitigation along the rail corridor, noting that this is an issue on the DFES Priority Plan.

Noted

5.2. SPEAKERS FOR THE AUGUST ZONE MEETING

5.2.1. WATER CORPORATION

Due to the Zone Strategic Priorities Workshop scheduled for the August Zone meeting, the Executive Committee requested that the speaker from Water Corporation be rescheduled to a later meeting. The November meeting at the Shire of Lake Grace, was identified as the preferred alternative (depending on the availability of Water Corporation).

The Executive Officer has contacted Water Corporation to confirm their availability for the November meeting. Should they be unavailable, the 2027 meeting dates will be provided to identify a suitable alternative scheduling opportunity.

Noted

5.2.2. LUMEN WHEATBELT REGIONAL UNIVERSITY STUDY HUB

The Executive Officer has received a request from Hannah Crute, Project and Communications Officer at the Lumen Wheatbelt Regional University Study Hubs to speak at the November Zone meeting. Lumen Wheatbelt Study Hubs is a federally funded, place-based program operating under the auspices of RDA Wheatbelt, focused on supporting university and TAFE students who reside in regional communities to successfully commence and complete their studies. Lumen are eager to attend a Zone meeting to

provide an update on the Wheatbelt Study Hubs and the work that they have been doing within the region. Further information about the project can be found [here](#).

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Karen Harrington

Seconded: President Cr Amy Knight

That the Central Country Zone SUPPORTS the proposal from Lumen Wheatbelt Regional University Study Hubs to speak at the November Zone meeting.

CARRIED

6. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Nil.

7. AGENCY REPORTS

7.1. DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY REGULATIONS AND SAFETY (LGIRS)

The LGIRS Local Government Division report was attached to the Agenda.

Noted

7.2. WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Mr Grant Arthur, Director Regional Development

Mr Arthur provided a verbal report to the Zone.

Noted

7.3. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

Mr Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development

The Regional Development Report was attached to the Agenda.

Noted

7.4. MAIN ROADS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Mr Mohammad Siddiqui, Director Wheatbelt Region

Mr Siddiqui provided a verbal report to the Zone.

Noted

8. MINUTES

8.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 17 APRIL 2026

The Minutes of the Central Country Zone meeting held on 17 April 2026 have previously been circulated to Delegates.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Phil Blight

Seconded: President Cr Adrian Kowald

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Central Country Zone held on 17 April 2026 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

8.2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 17 APRIL 2026

Item Number and Title	Resolution	Action/s
8.4.1 - Standing Invites for Members of Parliament	<p>That the Central Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. requests the Executive Officer to write to each MP listed above, providing the remaining meeting dates for 2026; and 2. supports, in principle, the proposal to host a future Zone meeting in Metropolitan Perth to encourage greater attendance from MPs. 	<p>The Executive Officer sent letters to all relevant MPs inviting them to the remaining Zone meetings for 2026. A copy of an invite was attached to the Agenda. Apologies for all remaining 2026 Zone meetings have been received from the following MPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon Parwinder Kaur - Hon Amanda Dorn - Hon Anthony Spagnolo - Hon Jackie Jarvis - Hon Sophie McNeill - Hon Nick Goiran - Hon Rob Horstman <p>Additionally, Mr Lachlan Hunter has provided his apologies for the June and August meetings. Mr Hunter will confirm his attendance for the November meeting closer to the date.</p>
8.4.2 - Zone Strategic Priorities	<p>That the Central Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports the holding of a Strategic Planning Workshop immediately prior to the August Zone meeting in the Shire of Kulin; and 2. Endorses the engagement of an external consultant to facilitate the workshop. 	<p>Caroline Robinson from 150 Square has provided a quote for facilitating the proposed workshop, this quote was attached to the agenda. The Executive Committee endorsed the quote at its June meeting. An item has been included within this Agenda to discuss the format of the workshop.</p>
9.2 - Bush Fire Risk Mitigation along the rail corridors	<p>That the Central Country Zone write to the Minister for Transport, PTA and ARC Infrastructure requesting them to urgently address the matter of bushfire mitigation along the rail corridors, both used and unused, in regional Western Australia.</p>	<p>The Executive Officer wrote to the PTA and ARC Infrastructure; copies of these letters were attached to the Agenda.</p> <p>Additionally, a letter was written to Hon Rita Saffioti, Minister for Transport in the same letter provided in relation to item 13.1 Heavier Load. A copy of this letter was attached to the Agenda. A response was received from ARC Infrastructure on 22 May, a copy of which was</p>

		attached to the Agenda. No response from PTA or Hon Rita Saffioti has been received to date. A response from Minister Papalia was received, a copy of this letter was attached the Agenda.
9.3 - Replacement Delegates - WALGA Central Country Zone and District Leadership Group	<p>That the Central Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes that Dale Stewart, CEO of the Shire of Narrogin, will cease as the Zone's representative on the Wheatbelt District Leadership Group at the end of April 2026 due to relocation. 2. Requests nominations from member Local Governments for a replacement Elected Member or officer delegate to represent the Zone on the Wheatbelt District Leadership Group. 3. Appoints a new delegate (and, if considered appropriate, an alternate delegate) to ensure continued representation of the Zone on the District Leadership Group. 	During discussion of this item at the April Zone meeting, Mr Nic Warren from the Shire of Quairading volunteered for this position. The Executive Officer wrote to Mr Dale Stewart to advise of this replacement and to make arrangements. A copy of this correspondence was attached to the Agenda.
13.1 - Ministerial Decision to Allow Heavier Loads on Local Government Rodas	<p>That the Central Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writes to the Minister for Transport to express concern about this decision. 2. Notes the Ministerial decision to temporarily upgrade RAV networks to AMMS permit on local government roads. 3. Expresses concern that the decision was made without consultation with local governments or WALGA. 4. Requests WALGA advocate to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads Western Australia seeking clarification on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. risk assessments without route-specific road safety or asset capacity assessment for local government roads, b. compliance and enforcement arrangements, c. duration and process for revocation of the upgrade, d. opt-out options for local government roads, and e. additional funding support for impacted local government road assets. 	The Executive Officer wrote to the Hon Rita Saffioti, Minister for Transport on this matter, as well as bushfire mitigation along the rail corridor (as per item 9.2 above). A copy of this letter was attached to the Agenda. No response has been received to date.

Noted

8.3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE CENTRAL COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 2026

8.3.1. ZONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES WORKSHOP

Ms Caroline Robinson from 150 Square attended the June Executive Committee meeting to discuss the proposed format and structure of the upcoming Zone Strategic Priorities Workshop. The workshop will be held immediately prior to the August Zone meeting in Kulin.

Discussions with the Executive committee considered delivery options, with a preference for small group table formats supported by an Executive Committee member at each table to facilitate discussion, encourage participation, and assist in identifying key priorities.

Caroline will explore circulating pre-workshop questions or a survey to gather insights on delegate challenges and priorities prior to the workshop. Proposed survey questions include identifying whether key issues are regional (Zone level), statewide (WALGA level), or the responsibility of other advocacy bodies, as well as how efforts can be coordinated and how the Zone can work collaboratively to progress priority actions.

The workshop is proposed to run for approximately 1.5 hours, from 9:30am to 11:00am, followed by a short break prior to the commencement of the formal Zone meeting.

Outcomes from the workshop will be compiled by Caroline and presented to the Executive Committee at the November meeting. These findings will subsequently be tabled as a formal item at the November Zone meeting to consider next steps for implementation and action.

Noted

9. ZONE BUSINESS

9.1. WATER CORPORATION – VEGETATION MAINTENANCE OF SCHEME PIPELINES AND REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ADVOCACY

By Shire of Kulin

BACKGROUND

The Shire of Kulin raises concern regarding the apparent lack of, or deterioration in, vegetation management and practices and corridor management surrounding sections of exposed Water Corporation scheme pipeline infrastructure throughout rural and regional Western Australia. Vegetation encroachment affects the integrity, accessibility and preservation of important regional infrastructure assets servicing rural and regional communities.

Photographs taken on 18 May 2026 along Williams Kondinin Road within the Shire of Kulin (copies attached) demonstrate vegetation growth occurring directly adjacent to, underneath and through sections of exposed pipeline infrastructure.

It is noted that the examples identified are not isolated occurrences and similar conditions can reportedly be observed across many sections of the broader regional pipeline network.

The Shire of Kulin Council acknowledges the importance of Water Corporation infrastructure servicing rural and regional communities and recognises the challenges associated with maintaining extensive infrastructure networks across regional Western Australia.

Notwithstanding this, concerns have been raised regarding:

- vegetation encroachment impacting pipeline infrastructure;
- restricted access for inspection and maintenance purposes;
- increasing fuel loading surrounding critical infrastructure;
- reduced visibility and accessibility of assets; and
- potential long-term impacts on the integrity and preservation of regional infrastructure.

The Shire of Kulin Council considers the matter to be broader than routine vegetation clearing and instead one concerning the long-term maintenance, resilience and protection of essential infrastructure servicing rural and regional communities.

The matter is considered significant from an infrastructure preservation, emergency management and regional community safety perspective.

The Shire of Kulin Council resolved on 20 May 2026 to submit a motion to the forthcoming WALGA Central Country Zone Meeting in Dumbleyung seeking broader regional advocacy on the matter and to request that WALGA engage with and advocate to both Water Corporation and the State Government regarding improved maintenance and vegetation management practices associated with regional scheme pipeline infrastructure.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The matter raised in this item pertains to any Local Governments with above-ground Water Corporation pipeline infrastructure and may affect Shires across the Wheatbelt, Great Southern, and South West regions.

Water Corporation pipeline infrastructure maintenance is not the subject of any current WALGA advocacy positions, though the WALGA Infrastructure team is currently in discussion with the Water Corporation on other issues relevant to Local Governments. The team will raise this issue in future engagements with the Water Corporation, including as an item at the Utility Providers Services Committee meeting. Pending the Zone’s approval, the Team will draft a letter on this issue to the Water Corporation requesting urgent action.

It is noted that native vegetation clearing permits may be required when vegetation to be cleared is 10 years or older, which may add additional urgency and/or complexity to any maintenance around critical water infrastructure.

Images provided:







RECOMMENDATION

That the Central Country Zone requests WALGA to:

1. Note concerns relating to vegetation encroachment and apparent lack of maintenance surrounding sections of Water Corporation regional scheme pipeline infrastructure; and
2. Advocate to the Water Corporation, State Government, Minister for Water and Shadow Minister for Water for improved vegetation management, corridor maintenance and preservation of regional scheme pipeline infrastructure assets servicing rural and regional communities.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Robbie Bowey

Seconded: President Cr Phil Blight

That the Central Country Zone requests WALGA to:

1. **Note concerns relating to vegetation encroachment and apparent lack of maintenance surrounding sections of Water Corporation regional scheme pipeline infrastructure; and**
2. **Advocate to the Water Corporation, State Government, Minister for Water and Shadow Minister for Water for improved vegetation management, corridor maintenance and preservation of regional scheme pipeline infrastructure assets servicing rural and regional communities, as a matter of urgency.**

CARRIED

9.2. ADVOCACY FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

By the Shire of Pingelly

BACKGROUND

Rural and regional communities across Western Australia face significant and growing challenges in accessing essential healthcare services. Residents in the Wheatbelt and other regional areas experience poorer health outcomes, reduced life expectancy, and substantial barriers to primary care, specialist services, mental health support, aged care, and maternity services compared to their metropolitan counterparts.

WALGA has already undertaken foundational work to quantify this issue. Its 2023 Local Government Healthcare Services Survey (covering 2021-22 expenditure) and its 2025 General Practice Support Survey (covering 2024-25 expenditure) provide comprehensive data on the financial burden being borne by WA councils. The 2025 Survey – conducted across 108 mainland non-metropolitan Local Governments with a 69% response rate – found that 41 Local Governments (55% of respondents) provided support to GP services in 2024-25, up from 47% in 2021-22. Total gross expenditure rose from \$7.8 million to \$9.5 million over the same period. Of that, 91% (\$8.6 million) was contributed by 38 Local Governments with populations under 5,000 – demonstrating that it is the smallest, most resource-constrained councils that are bearing the greatest burden. A further 58% of respondents anticipated continuing to provide GP support over the next two years. WALGA's

revised rural and remote healthcare advocacy position, endorsed by State Council in September 2025, calls for reforms to remove this financial impost from Local Governments.

WALGA's survey work and revised advocacy position provide a strong foundation for the next step. The local government sector now has robust, current data on the scale of the problem, a clear policy mandate from State Council, and strong member appetite for action – with 65% of 2025 Survey respondents indicating they wished to be involved in further advocacy work. The logical progression is to translate this evidence base into a coordinated, high-profile campaign that matches the ambition of the problem: one with clear asks directed at the State and Federal Governments, visible public messaging, and practical tools that enable member councils to advocate in their own communities.

Local Government NSW (LGNSW) provides a compelling model for what this next step could look like. In 2026, LGNSW launched "Caring for Our Regions" – a Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health that translates survey evidence and sector experience into a clear, publicly visible advocacy platform. The plan sets out six costed priority actions directed at the NSW Government, detailing the following six actions:

1. Strengthen the regional health workforce through sustained and targeted investment.
2. Establish a GP guarantee to ensure reliable access to primary care in rural and regional communities.
3. Reimburse councils for filling health service gaps, where councils are forced to intervene to maintain local access to care.
4. Fund patient transport as core health infrastructure, recognising its essential role in accessing health services.
5. Restore safe, local maternity care in rural and regional communities.
6. Invest in community-based aged care and ageing-in-place supports to reduce pressure on hospitals and enable people to remain in their communities.

Critically, LGNSW has backed the plan with a full suite of member resources – including template council motions, letters to the State and Federal Governments, and media materials – enabling individual councils to add their voice to a coordinated statewide campaign. The result is an advocacy effort that is greater than the sum of its parts, creating political visibility and sector momentum that internal policy positions alone cannot achieve.

The issues driving the LGNSW campaign are directly mirrored across WA's regions, and the survey data makes this vivid. The Wheatbelt WACHS region accounts for 61% of all statewide GP support expenditure, with 25 of 33 Wheatbelt respondents (76%) providing support totalling \$5.76 million in 2024-25 – a 14% increase on 2021-22. The Central Country Zone, recorded \$1.70 million in gross expenditure on GP services in 2024-25 (a 5% increase on 2021-22), with 8 of 12 respondents (67%) providing support. Great Southern expenditure increased 175% over the same period, and Goldfields Esperance expenditure more than doubled (103% increase). In total, 65% of 2025 Survey respondents indicated they wished to be involved in further work with WALGA on rural and remote healthcare – a clear signal of sector appetite for stronger, coordinated advocacy. WALGA is well-placed to build on its research base and September 2025 advocacy position to deliver a campaign that achieves the visibility and momentum needed to compel government action.

It is requested that WALGA escalate its existing rural and regional health advocacy into a coordinated, high-profile campaign comparable to the LGNSW “Caring for Our Regions” model, tailored to WA’s legislative, funding, and service delivery context.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Rural and remote primary healthcare remains a key advocacy priority for WALGA. Since publishing the 2025 General Practice Support Survey Report, WALGA has actively progressed advocacy through:

- WALGA [2026-27 Federal Budget Submission](#)
- WALGA [2026-27 State Budget Submission](#)
- Lodging a submission to the [Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability](#)
- Providing a submission and presenting evidence at a public hearing to the [Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee Inquiry into rural, regional and remote Medicare access and funding](#)
- Meeting with the State Health Minister and the Shadow Ministers for Communities and Regional Development
- Meeting with the Federal Minister for Local Government and Regional Development and Shadow Federal Minister for Regional Health
- Providing briefings to State Ministers with portfolios that intersect with health and regional matters

Building on this advocacy, WALGA is now leading collaborative work to identify and promote healthcare reform solutions that remove the need for Local Government to financially support GP services in rural and remote communities. This work will underpin clear, solution-focused advocacy.

WALGA is progressing this work in partnership with key health sector stakeholders, including Rural Health West, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners WA, Australian Medical Association WA Rural Doctors Group, Health Consumers' Council WA, and Curtin University Medical School. The group is also incorporating input from the WA Country Health Service and the Office of the Chief Medical Officer.

WALGA has briefed the State Health Minister on this initiative, who has requested further updates as the group develops its Options Paper.

To support the next phase of this work, WALGA is developing a targeted advocacy plan. This will include practical materials and tools to enable and strengthen Local Government involvement.

WALGA is aware of the Caring for our Regions Action Plan and has proactively engaged with ALGA and other state Local Government Associations, including LGNSW, to explore opportunities for aligned national advocacy to the Federal Government.

Members are encouraged to reach out to Hannah Godsave, Community Policy Manager, on [hgodsava@WALGA.asn.au](mailto:hgodsave@WALGA.asn.au) for further information.

MOTION

Moved: President Cr Sheryl Little

Seconded: Mr Michael Cole

That the Central Country Zone requests that WALGA:

1. Develops a suite of advocacy documents similar to "Caring for Our Regions" Six Point Action Plan on Rural and Regional Health developed by Local Government NSW that articulates a clear set of priority actions and investment asks directed at the State and Federal Governments;
2. Engage with Local Government NSW and ALGA to share intelligence, align messaging, and coordinate joint advocacy directed at the Federal Government on rural and regional health;
3. Provides member Local Governments with coordinated advocacy tools including template motions, letters to government, and media resources; and
4. Actively engages allied organisations and other state Local Government Associations to amplify the campaign's reach and impact.

LOST

10. ZONE REPORTS

10.1. CHAIR REPORT

Zone Chair, Cr Des Hickey

The Chair provided a verbal update to the Zone.

Noted

10.2. WALGA ROADWISE

Mr Rodney Thornton, Regional Road Safety Advisor

Mr Thornton provided a verbal update to the Zone.

Noted

11. WALGA STATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE REPORTS

11.1. WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

WALGA President, Mayor Mark Irwin AM, presented the President's Report.

Noted

11.2. STATE COUNCILLOR REPORT

Dr Alistair Pinto, Shire of Wandering Chief Executive Officer

Dr Pinto provided a verbal report to the Zone on the May State Council Regional meeting held at the Shire of Pingelly and hosted by the Central Country Zone.

Noted

11.3. STATUS REPORT

Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update Last Provided	WALGA Contact
<p>17 April 2026 Zone Agenda Item 13.1 Ministerial Decision to Allow Heavier Loads on Local Government Roads</p>	<p>That the Central Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Writes to the Minister for Transport to express concern about this decision. 6. Notes the Ministerial decision to temporarily upgrade RAV networks to AMMS permit on Local Government roads. 7. Expresses concern that the decision was made without consultation with Local Governments or WALGA. 8. Requests WALGA advocate to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads Western Australia seeking clarification on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. risk assessments without route-specific road safety or asset capacity assessment for Local Government roads, b. compliance and enforcement arrangements, c. duration and process for revocation of the upgrade, d. opt-out options for Local Government roads, and e. additional funding support for impacted Local Government road assets. 	<p>Local Government delegates to the State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee (SAC) communicated the concerns raised regarding short and medium term risks arising from the decision to allow more heavier vehicles to access the local road network, without the controls purported to be in place with accredited vehicle operators.</p> <p>Main Roads confirmed that this was a Ministerial decision and to date there is no process in place to review the benefits and the impacts.</p> <p>Delegates were advised that compliance and enforcement activities continue to be undertaken.</p>	<p>June 2026</p>	<p>Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031</p>
<p>17 April 2026 Zone Agenda Item 9.1 Urgent Advocacy: Forest Products Commission (FPC) “Rates-Equivalent” Payments Diverted to State Treasury – Immediate Local Government Budget Impacts (2025/26)</p>	<p>That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to advocate as a matter of urgency, prior to the Local Government Budget cycle, to the State Government (including the Treasurer, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Forestry) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a formal cross-portfolio arrangement (Treasury/Local Government/ Forestry, with WALGA and affected Local Governments) to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. confirm a transparent method for calculating and timing the rates-equivalent amounts under the current legislative settings; and b. implement an agreed mechanism to allocate and remit the rates-equivalent payments to 	<p>This item will be referred to the Governance Policy Team for consideration.</p> <p>The Zone will be informed of the outcome.</p>	<p>June 2026</p>	<p>Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager, Member Services 9213 2051 kmartin@walga.asn.au</p>

	<p>the impacted Local Governments from 2026/27 onward.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Provide impacted Local Governments with certainty and forward estimates regarding: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the FPC's land acquisition / plantation expansion trajectory; and b. modelling of the projected financial impact on affected rating bases, so Councils can undertake responsible long-term financial planning. 3. (If required) Progress options for policy and/or legislative amendment to ensure ongoing equity and financial sustainability for communities hosting FPC freehold landholdings, including ensuring outcomes that do not unfairly transfer costs to remaining ratepayers. 			
13 February 2026 Zone Agenda Item 9.3 Main Roads WA Speed Zoning Policy	That the Central Country Zone supports the Shire of Kulin and resolves to request WALGA to formally approach Main Roads Western Australia seeking a review of the policy-based removal of speed transition buffers across rural and regional Western Australia.	<p>Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) is gradually removing intermediate "Speed Buffer Zones" (e.g., 80 km/h) on the approach to towns, replacing them with "Speed Limit AHEAD" signs to warn drivers of a sudden transition to lower speeds such as 60 km/h or 50 km/h through townsites.</p> <p>This policy shift, which began in mid-2020, aims to align with the latest Australian Standards and enhance consistency in speed zoning across WA and Australia.</p> <p>Previously, a 300-400 metre intermediate speed zone was used when dropping speeds by more than 30 km/h. This intermediate speed zone is being progressively replaced by two sets of "Speed Limit AHEAD" signs to warn drivers, allowing a direct reduction from high-speed zones to lower town speeds.</p> <p>This is a gradual, state-wide process. The changes harmonize WA speed zones with other Australian states.</p>	April 2026	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
13 February 2026 Zone Agenda Item 9.10 Western Power Pole Top Fires and Network Response	That the Central Country Zone: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognises the recent spate of pole top fires during the ex-Tropical Cyclone Mitchell weather event as a serious regional and State-wide rural safety concern. 2. Notes that while this matter has been raised by the Central Country Zone, the issues identified are not confined to Zone Local Governments and are likely to 	<p>The frequency and impacts of pole top fires is noted.</p> <p>Safe and reliable power supply, particularly in regional WA is a key theme in WALGA's submission to the Economic Regulation Authority in context of the next regulated Access Agreement covering Western Power.</p>	April 2026	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031

	<p>affect rural and regional communities across Western Australia.</p> <p>3. Requests WALGA to assume a State-wide advocacy role on behalf of rural and regional local governments in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pole top mitigation effectiveness in high-risk agricultural environments; b. Network performance; c. Timely isolation of downed or compromised power lines during emergency incidents; d. Protection of volunteer bush fire brigade members operating near live electrical infrastructure; and e. Improved transparency, reporting and communication protocols between Western Power and local governments. <p>4. Requests WALGA to formally engage with Western Power and the Minister for Energy seeking systemic review, strengthened operational response protocols and enhanced safety protections for volunteer emergency responders across rural and regional Western Australia.</p> <p>5. Requests that WALGA report back to Member Local Governments on advocacy actions undertaken and outcomes achieved.</p>	<p>Further operational engagement with Western Power is required and an update will be provided at a future Zone meeting.</p>		
<p>21 November 2025 Zone Agenda Item 9.6.1 Cost Shift Compliance Project Update</p>	<p>That the Central Country Zone refer Position 1 in the Zone's Cost Shifting and Compliance Report to State Council for consideration as a WALGA Advocacy Position. That is, to "reinstate the requirement for a Regulatory Impact Assessment for all amendments to legislation and regulation".</p>	<p>This item will be referred to the Governance Policy Team for consideration.</p> <p>The Zone will be informed of the outcome.</p>	<p>April 2026</p>	<p>Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager, Member Services 9213 2051 kmartin@walga.asn.au</p>
<p>22 August 2025 Zone Agenda Item 9.3 To Rationalise the Audit Function for Local Government in WA</p>	<p>That the Zone request WALGA to advocate for the choice of an auditor of Local Governments in Western Australia be opened to individuals who are Registered Company Auditors with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) as well as the Office of Auditor General OAG).</p>	<p>This item has been referred to the Governance Policy Team for consideration.</p> <p>For the last 3 years WALGA has partnered with Local Government Professionals (LG Pro) to survey the Local Government sector on experiences during the annual financial audit process. LG Pro has decided not to participate further.</p> <p>WALGA has sent the survey on the most recent financial audit cycle to Local Government CEOs. This motion will be addressed in the</p>	<p>June 2026</p>	<p>Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager, Member Services 9213 2051 kmartin@walga.asn.au</p>

		context of feedback received through this survey, which will be reported to the September State Council meeting. COMPLETE		
22 August 2025 Zone Agenda Item 9.2 To Address Anomalies Arising from Changes to the Audit Function of Local Government in WA	That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to support a representation to the State Government to remove the Office of Auditor General (OAG) as the sole auditor of Local Government in Western Australia.	This item has been referred to the Governance Policy Team for consideration. For the last 3 years WALGA has partnered with Local Government Professionals (LG Pro) to survey the Local Government sector on experiences during the annual financial audit process. LG Pro has decided not to participate further. WALGA has sent the survey on the most recent financial audit cycle to Local Government CEOs. This motion will be addressed in the context of feedback received through this survey, which will be reported to the September State Council meeting. COMPLETE	June 2026	Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager, Member Services 9213 2051 kmartin@walga.asn.au
14 February 2025 Zone Agenda Item 9.1.3 Support for Public Ownership of WA Freight Rail Network	That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to: 1. Supports State Government efforts to ensure the on-going sustainability and growth of freight rail in Western Australia; 2. Seeks a commitment from the in-coming State Government to: a. focus on ensuring a competitive freight rail network and services reduce freight on roads; providing road safety, environmental benefits; and b. work with Local Governments and other stakeholders to maximise the local economic growth opportunities provided through effective management of the rail network and corridors.	The Infrastructure Policy Team supported including the proposed advocacy position in a new or consolidated policy statement in relation to freight rail following consultation with Local Governments and other stakeholders to better define the social, economic and environmental benefits sought from a publicly controlled freight rail network. Any proposed new or consolidated advocacy position will be put through the Zone process for consideration and feedback prior to State Council endorsement. COMPLETE	June 2026	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031

Noted

12. WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA

Zone Delegates are invited to read and consider the WALGA State Council Agenda, which can be found via the link [here](#).

The Zone can provide comment or submit an alternative recommendation on any of the items, including the items for noting. The Zone comment will then be presented to the State Council for consideration at their meeting.

The State Council Agenda items requiring a decision of State Council are extracted for Zone consideration below.

12.1. MATTERS FOR DECISION

12.1.1. CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCACY POSITION

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A new climate change Advocacy Position is proposed to replace the position endorsed by State Council in 2018.
- WALGA released a Consultation Paper and draft Climate Change Advocacy Position in January 2026 for Council endorsed feedback by 1 May 2026.
- 39 Council endorsed submissions and two officer level comments were received:
 - 18 (44%) supported the draft Position.
 - 18 (44%) supported the draft Position with comments and/or proposed changes.
 - four (10%) did not support the draft Position and proposed an alternative.
 - one (2%) did not support the Advocacy Position.
- The draft Advocacy Position has been refined in response to the feedback received, noting that the majority of submissions either supported the draft position in its entirety or supported with comment and/or amendment:
 - *"to meet the needs of their communities"* has been added to Point 1 to better reflect Local Government context.
 - Point 2b has been revised to:
 - Include explicit reference to increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements and align with language in the *Local Government Act* (mitigation, rather than emissions reduction).
 - Be clear that Local Government must be provided with the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and legislative requirements.
- At its meeting on 25 May 2026, the Environment Policy Team considered this item and recommended that State Council replace the current Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 4.1 with the new Advocacy Position.

ATTACHMENT

- [Climate Change Advocacy Position Consultation Report](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item aligns with WALGA's Strategic Pillars:

- **Influence:** Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government and lead policy development for the Local Government sector.
- **Support:** Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the [Climate Change Policy Statement](#) and **current** Advocacy Position 4.1 Climate Change as follows:

Local Government acknowledges:

1. *The science is clear: Climate change is occurring and greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are the dominant cause.*
2. *Climate change threatens human societies and the Earth's ecosystems.*
3. *Urgent action is required to reduce emissions, and to adapt to the impacts from climate change that are now unavoidable.*
4. *A failure to adequately address this climate change emergency places an unacceptable burden on future generations.*

Local Government is committed to addressing climate change.

Local Government is calling for:

1. *Strong climate change action, leadership and coordination at all levels of government.*
2. *Effective and adequately funded Commonwealth and State Government climate change policies and programs.*

be **replaced** with (changes following consultation underlined):

1. *Local Government acknowledges the risks associated with, and is committed to addressing, climate change to meet the needs of their communities.*
2. *WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to:*
 - a. *provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination and action to ensure an orderly transition to achieve emission reduction targets and address the impacts of climate change.*
 - b. *ensure that Local Government has the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements to plan for, mitigate and adapt to climate impacts.*

BACKGROUND

In 2018, State Council endorsed a [Climate Change Policy Statement](#) and Advocacy Position, following extensive sector consultation. Since this position was adopted there have been significant legislative, policy, technological and scientific changes, including:

- The national *Climate Change Act 2022* and the Western Australian Climate Change Bill 2023.
- Increased legislative responsibilities, including the *Local Government Amendment Act 2023*, which expanded Western Australian Local Governments' general function under Part 3 s3.1(1A) of the *Local Government Act 1995*:
 - a. To promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the district;
 - b. To plan for, and to plan for mitigating, risks associated with climate change; and
 - c. In making decisions, to consider potential long-term consequences and impacts on future generations

- The release of the Australian Government's [National Climate Risk Assessment](#) and [National Adaptation Plan](#) in 2025.
- Escalation of the transition to renewable energy, uptake of electric vehicles and energy efficiency standards under the National Construction Code.
- Climate science and projections ([international](#), [national](#) and [WA specific](#)) have also become clearer regarding the risks posed by climate change and the need for action to address the consequential impacts.

Work commenced on the review of the current position in 2024. An updated draft position was considered at the March 2025 State Council meeting, with the position referred back to the Environment Policy Team for further development. In January 2026, WALGA released a Consultation Paper and draft Advocacy Position, with Council endorsed feedback requested by 1 May 2026.

COMMENT

Responses were received from 41 Local Governments, 39 Council endorsed submissions and two officer level comments (Karratha and Melville):

- 18 (44%) supported the draft Advocacy Position:
 - Metropolitan: Joondalup, Stirling, Bayswater, Kalamunda, Bassendean, Canning, Cockburn, Melville, Rockingham, Cambridge, Subiaco and Serpentine Jarrahdale.
 - Regional: Harvey, Victoria Plains, Gnowangerup, Kalgoorlie Boulder, Ngaanyatjarraku and Karratha.
- 18 (44%) were supported with comment and/or proposed changes:
 - 7 sought minor wording refinements or small additions:
 - Metropolitan: Belmont, Gosnells and Kwinana.
 - Regional: Dumbleyung, West Arthur, York and Mingenew.
 - 11 proposed more substantial amendments:
 - Metropolitan: Mundaring, Armadale, Victoria Park, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Perth and Vincent.
 - Regional: Augusta Margaret River, Busselton, Kent and Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- Four (10%) did not support the draft Advocacy Position and proposed an alternative position:
 - Regional: Waroona (alternative position). Quairading, Wagin and Cue provided the Central Country Zone position.
- One (2%) did not support the draft Advocacy Position and did not provide an alternative:
 - Regional: Collie.

Responses were received from Local Governments across all Metropolitan Zones and from all but two Country Zones.

Across both metropolitan and regional submissions, Local Governments emphasised that the roles and responsibilities of each level of government in climate change mitigation and adaptation remain unclear, while legislative obligations placed on Local Governments have expanded without a sustainable funding model to support implementation. Small, rural and remote Local Governments raised concerns about their communities' heightened exposure to heat, extreme weather and infrastructure failure, combined with limited local capacity and resources to respond effectively.

The draft Advocacy Position has been refined in response to the feedback received, noting that the majority of submissions either supported the draft position in its entirety or supported with comment and/or amendment:

- *"to meet the needs of their communities"* has been added to Point 1 to better reflect Local Government context.
- Point 2b has been revised to:
 - Include explicit reference to increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements and align with language in the Local Government Act (mitigation, rather than emissions reduction).
 - Be clear that Local Government must be provided with the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and legislative requirements.

The Position has been kept high level, noting that many of the specific matters raised in the feedback are included in other WALGA Advocacy Positions (or will be incorporated when these positions are reviewed) and/or will inform WALGA's more detailed climate advocacy.

A [Climate Change Advocacy Position Consultation Report](#) providing a summary of feedback received and rationale for the changes to the position is attached.

At its meeting on 25 May 2026, the Environment Policy Team considered this item and recommended that State Council replace the existing Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 4.1 with the new Climate Change Advocacy Position.

RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace the Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 4.1 with a new Climate Change Advocacy Position as follows:

1. *Local Government acknowledges the risks associated with, and is committed to addressing, climate change to meet the needs of their communities.*
2. *WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to:*
 - a. *Provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination and action to ensure an orderly transition to achieve emission reduction targets and address the impacts of climate change.*
 - b. *Ensure that Local Government has the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements to plan for, mitigate and adapt to climate impacts.*

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Len Armstrong

Seconded: President Cr Adrian Kowuld

That the Central Country Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.2 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

12.1.2. TRAIN STATION PRECINCTS ADVOCACY POSITION

By Coralie Claudio, A/Manager Planning and Building

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In November 2025, the State Government [announced](#) it would commence the preparation of Improvement Plans and Improvement Schemes for ten train station precincts across the Perth metropolitan region.
- A new Train Station Precinct Advocacy Position is proposed, which identifies the need for collaborative, place-based, and infrastructure-led precinct planning that enables housing delivery while respecting local planning frameworks and maintaining community confidence, supported by strong State Government coordination and funding.
- The position is intended to support timely and direct engagement with the State Government on sector priorities for current and future State-led train station precincts.
- The draft position has been informed by a review of Council resolutions and feedback from Local Governments, including those associated with the initial ten identified train station precincts.
- The Environment Policy Team endorsed the position at its meeting on 18 May 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- [Rationale New Advocacy Position: Train Station Precincts](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item aligns with WALGA's Strategic Pillars:

- **Influence** – Lead advocacy on issues that are important to Local Government, including coordinated precinct planning and housing delivery.
- **Support** – Anticipate, understand, and respond to Member needs, ensuring Local Governments are effectively engaged in State-led precinct planning processes.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the **new** Train Station Precincts Advocacy Position be **endorsed**.

This draft position is consistent with, and builds upon, Advocacy Position 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform:

1. *The Local Government sector supports an efficient and effective planning system guided by legislation, policy, and processes that:*
 - a. *facilitates the creation of sustainable and liveable communities and places;*
 - b. *has a focus on strategic planning that delivers on long-term objectives and outcomes that balance social, environmental, cultural, and economic interests;*
 - c. *is easy to understand, accessible and transparent;*
 - d. *recognises the diversity of Western Australia and ensures that local environment, context, communities and character are appropriately reflected in planning frameworks and decision making;*
 - e. *ensures decisions are made by the level of government closest to and most impacted by a planning proposal; and*
 - f. *establishes consistent planning frameworks and streamlines planning processes where there is a demonstrated benefit in doing so.*
2. *Reforms to the planning system should:*
 - a. *be guided by the above principles;*

- b. deliver community benefit;*
- c. promote system efficiency, including through the use of technology;*
- d. be evidence-based and informed by robust, transparent data;*
- e. proceed at an appropriate pace to enable effective implementation;*
- f. be informed by engagement with the community; and be amended only with WALGA involvement and consultation with Local Government.*

BACKGROUND

Planning around train stations, including the establishment of local planning frameworks and the determination of development applications, has historically been the responsibility of Local Governments.

In November 2025, the State Government announced it was commencing the establishment of Improvement Plans and Schemes around ten train station precincts across the Perth metropolitan region to streamline planning and development and facilitate housing development. Through this process, the State would become responsible for setting planning frameworks, including elements such as height and zoning, and determining development applications.

The ten station precincts, involving 14 directly affected Local Governments, are listed below:

- Ballajura (City of Swan);
- Bassendean (Town of Bassendean);
- Carlisle/Oats Street (Town of Victoria Park);
- Claisebrook (City of Perth and City of Vincent);
- Cottesloe (Town of Cottesloe and Shire of Peppermint Grove);
- Glendalough (City of Vincent and City of Stirling);
- Morley (City of Bayswater);
- Mosman Park (Town of Mosman Park and Shire of Peppermint Grove);
- Redcliffe (City of Belmont); and
- Swanbourne (Town of Claremont, City of Nedlands and Town of Cottesloe).

Improvement Plans and Schemes for the Ballajura and Redcliffe stations were already underway prior to this announcement. Importantly, the announcement noted these were only the first stations, indicating additional state-led station precincts may be identified in the future.

At its December 2025 meeting, State Council resolved that:

- 1. State Council request WALGA to prepare an Advocacy Position in consultation with Members, regarding the transport and planning principles required to ensure quality outcomes in the newly announced "Station Precinct Improvement Plans and Schemes" in Metropolitan Perth and regional stations if included.*
- 2. The Advocacy Position will include transport and place-making outcomes on both government controlled and private land that maximise liveability and use of the public transport network.*

RESOLUTION 069.5/2025

To inform the development of the Advocacy Position, WALGA sought feedback from Local Governments associated with the initial ten station precincts, including collecting and reviewing relevant Council reports and resolutions from ten Local Governments.

The draft position supports a coordinated approach to station precinct planning and makes the following key recommendations to support effective development and implementation of Improvement Plans and Schemes:

- Promote housing density, diversity and delivery while ensuring place-responsive and transit-oriented development outcomes.
- Recognise the State Government's critical role in coordination and investment, including redevelopment of underutilised State land.
- Call for recognition of existing and progressing local planning frameworks and meaningful engagement with Local Governments and communities.
- Support a strategic, evidence-based and transparent approach to identifying and delivering future State-led station precincts.

The draft advocacy position was circulated to the sector for feedback over a two-week period until 7 May. WALGA received 22 responses, all from metropolitan Local Governments, including nine of the 14 Local Governments directly affected by the initial ten identified train station precincts.

COMMENT

This Advocacy Position is intended to enable WALGA to make timely and direct representations to the State Government on the sector's priorities for State-led train station precincts.

The proposed new Advocacy Position will complement WALGA's planning Advocacy Position, 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform, which notes that planning frameworks and decision-making should reflect local environment, context, communities and character, and that decisions should be made by the level of government closest to and most impacted by a planning proposal.

The draft position has been informed by a review of relevant Council resolutions and Local Government officer input, including feedback from WALGA's Planning Advisory Group.

The draft advocacy position was refined following sector consultation to emphasise that a planning framework alone will not deliver on-the-ground outcomes. Instead, it highlights the substantial scale of State Government collaboration, coordination and funding required to enable and accelerate precinct delivery, including a stronger focus on the redevelopment of underutilised State Government land.

The position was also refined to avoid blanket support for all State Improvement Plans and Schemes, instead clarifying the circumstances in which State-led planning may be appropriate for future station precincts.

The Environment Policy Team recommended that State Council endorse the position at its meeting on 18 May 2026.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Train Station Precincts

1. *Local Government supports a coordinated approach to the planning and development of train station precincts that is transport-orientated, place responsive and provides for increased housing density and diversity.*
2. *In developing Train Station Precinct Improvement Plans and Schemes the State Government should:*
 - a. *Respect, acknowledge and build on existing and progressing local planning frameworks.*
 - b. *Ensure effective collaboration, partnerships and coordination across Government agencies and with Local Government.*
 - c. *Prioritise redevelopment of State-owned land to deliver optimal housing and mixed-use outcomes.*
 - d. *Undertake meaningful and ongoing community engagement.*
 - e. *Directly fund and/or implement funding mechanisms to deliver public realm and infrastructure requirements.*
3. *Decisions on any future State-led train station precincts must be evidence-based, transparent and made in consultation with Local Government.*

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Phil Blight
Seconded: President Cr Adrian Kowald

That the Central Country Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.2 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

12.1.3. SUBMISSION ON THE CAT ACT REVIEW

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 13 February 2026 the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) opened consultation on the second statutory review of the *Cat Act 2011* (the Cat Act).
- All elements of the Cat Act are under review, including registration, enforcement/compliance, sterilisation, microchipping, breeding and limits on the number of cats.
- WALGA used current Advocacy Positions, previous submissions, a webinar with the sector and opportunity to comment on a draft submission to gather feedback.
- The submission identifies that reform to the legislation is required, in relation to:
 - Consolidation of the Cat Act and *Dog Act 1976*;
 - Stronger provisions for consistent non-compliance;
 - Clear definitions for owned and unowned cats;
 - Development of a Model Cat Local Law;
 - A limit on the number of cats; and
 - Lowering the age of sterilisation.
- Consultation by LGIRS closes at 5:00pm on Monday, 31 August 2026.
- A joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy Teams on 25 May 2026 recommended that State Council endorse the submission.

ATTACHMENT

- [Submission on the Review of the *Cat Act 2011*](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item aligns with WALGA's Strategic Pillars:

- **Influence:** Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government and lead policy development for the Local Government sector.
- **Support:** Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission has been developed based on current WALGA [Advocacy Positions](#):

- 2.12.1 Review of the *Cat Act 2011* and *Dog Act 1976*; and
- 2.12.2 Dog and Cat Management.

And previous submissions and positions on the legislation.

BACKGROUND

On 13 February 2026, the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) opened [consultation](#) on the review of the *Cat Act 2011* (the Cat Act), the second statutory review of the legislation. The previous review was undertaken in 2019. The Cat Act provides for the control and management of cats and aims to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of cats, and for related matters.

As articulated in the Second Reading Speech, the Cat Act was introduced with the aim to reduce the number of stray cats being euthanised each year, encourage responsible cat ownership and provide for better management of the unwanted impacts of cats on the community and environment.

The submission provides recommendations on provisions in the Cat Act and identifies some of the issues Local Governments experience with implementing the legislation. WALGA used current Advocacy Positions, previous submissions, a webinar with the sector and opportunity to comment on a draft submission to gather feedback.

The webinar, held on 26 March 2026, had 61 registrations from Local Government. Feedback was received, and incorporated, on the draft submission.

The submission was considered, and is recommended to State Council for endorsement, by a joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy Teams on 25 May 2026.

COMMENT

In this submission WALGA has identified several areas where reform to the legislation is required, including:

- Consolidation of the Cat Act and *Dog Act 1976*;
- Stronger provisions for consistent non-compliance;
- Clear definitions for owned and unowned cats;
- Development of a Model Cat Local Law;
- A limit on the number of cats; and
- Lowering the age of sterilisation.

In drafting the submission, WALGA has also identified implementation challenges for the sector in particular low registration rates for cats, the lack of a centralised database for registration and limited resourcing.

Cat containment is out of scope of this submission, as the State Government is progressing the [Cat Amendment \(Local Laws\) Bill](#) 2026 to enable Local Governments to make cat containment Local Laws. WALGA is engaging separately with the sector on this matter.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission on the Review of *Cat Act 2011*.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Karen Harrington

Seconded: President Cr Len Armstrong

That the Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.3 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

12.2. OTHER STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

Zone Delegates are invited to raise for discussion, questions or decision any of the items in the State Council Agenda, including the items for noting, Policy Team and Committee Reports or the Key Activity Reports.

12.2.1. WALGA 2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SURVEY FINDINGS – STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 10.1

The 2025 WALGA Local Government Emergency Management Survey, undertaken in partnership with Edith Cowan University (ECU), highlights ongoing resource, workforce and funding pressures across the Local Government sector, including rising emergency management expectations, structural funding challenges, grant access difficulties, and increasing staffing and capacity constraints.

An additional confidential attachment is available for Zone Delegates, available at the link below.

- [Local Government Emergency Management Survey Report](#)

Noted

13. EMERGING ISSUES

13.1. LATE ITEM - MAJOR LAND TRANSACTION PROVISIONS – REGIONAL WORKFORCE HOUSING PROJECTS

By the Shire of Kulin

PURPOSE

To seek WALGA Central Country Zone support for advocacy to the State Government regarding amendment of the *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996* to provide greater flexibility for local government-led workforce housing projects undertaken for a public purpose.

BACKGROUND

Rural and regional local governments across Western Australia are increasingly being required to take a direct role in facilitating housing delivery due to ongoing housing shortages, workforce attraction challenges and limited private sector development in smaller communities.

Many local governments are now investing significant capital into workforce housing projects to support the attraction and retention of essential personnel including teachers, police officers, health professionals, emergency service personnel and local government employees.

Under the current legislative framework, workforce housing projects may become subject to the Major Land Transaction provisions contained within section 3.59 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Whilst the policy intent of the Major Land Transaction provisions is understood and supported, the provisions can unintentionally capture relatively modest workforce housing projects in regional communities.

The Major Land Transaction threshold is currently the lesser of \$2,000,000 or 10% of a local government's annual operating expenditure. For many rural and regional local governments, the applicable threshold is therefore significantly less than \$2,000,000.

For example, a local government with annual operating expenditure of approximately \$9.5 million would be captured at a threshold of approximately \$950,000. In today's construction market, this may equate to as few as two or three workforce dwellings.

As a consequence, local governments seeking to deliver housing for teachers, police officers, health professionals, local government employees and other essential workers can quickly become subject to Major Land Transaction requirements despite the project being undertaken for a clear public purpose and without any commercial profit motive.

A practical challenge is that workforce housing projects are often captured because a long-term lease is considered a form of land transaction or disposal under the legislation, notwithstanding the local government retains ownership of both the land and dwellings.

In many cases, the local government is not selling land, divesting assets or undertaking a commercial venture. Rather, it is investing significant capital and assuming financial risk to deliver housing outcomes that support essential government services and broader community wellbeing.

DISCUSSION

The current housing shortage across regional Western Australia has resulted in local governments increasingly partnering with State Government agencies and other stakeholders to deliver workforce housing solutions.

Recent examples include Government Regional Officers Housing (GROH), key worker housing initiatives and regional workforce accommodation projects being pursued by individual local governments and regional groupings such as ROEROC & 4WDL.

There may be merit in reviewing the exemption provisions contained within the *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996* to determine whether local government workforce housing projects delivered for a public purpose should be afforded separate consideration (be exempt) from Major Land Transaction Provisions).

Any such amendment could be limited to projects where:

- The primary purpose is workforce attraction and retention;
- The housing supports essential government services or identified workforce shortages;
- The local government retains ownership of the land and housing assets;
- The project is not being undertaken for commercial profit; and
- The project demonstrably addresses housing market failure within regional communities.

Such an approach would continue to preserve transparency and accountability whilst reducing unnecessary administrative burden and supporting the delivery of regional housing outcomes.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Due to the late receipt of this item, WALGA was unable to provide comment.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Robbie Bowey

Seconded: President Cr Karen Harrington

That the WALGA Central Country Zone:

1. Supports advocacy to the Minister for Local Government and to the Minister for Planning and Lands; Housing and Works seeking a review of the Major Land Transaction exemption provisions contained within the *Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996* as they relate to local government-led workforce housing projects undertaken for a public purpose.
2. Requests WALGA State Council investigate and advocate for regulatory amendments which recognise workforce housing projects delivered by local governments to support essential services, workforce attraction and workforce retention in regional Western Australia.
3. Requests WALGA engage with the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulations and Safety and relevant State Government agencies to identify opportunities to reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers impacting delivery of local government workforce housing projects.

CARRIED

14. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, 4 August 2026 commencing at 7:30am, via MSTeams.

The next Central Country Zone meeting will be held on Friday, 14 August 2026 commencing at 9:30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Kulin.

15. CLOSURE

The Chair thanked outgoing Shire of Dumbleyung Chief Executive Officer, Mr Gavin Treasure for his service to the Shire and the Central Country Zone.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 12:35pm.