



**GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS**  
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# Council Meeting

Friday 28 August 2015  
Teleconference  
Commencing at 8.30am

# MINUTES

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**GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS  
AND  
GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA**

**Teleconference Meeting held on Friday 28 August 2015  
commencing at 8.30am**

# MINUTES

## 1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the Code of Conduct, Councillors and CEOs must declare to the Chairman any potential conflict of interest they may have in a matter before the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils and Goldfields Esperance Country Zone of WALGA as soon as they become aware of it. Councillors, CEOs and Deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils and the Goldfields Esperance Country Zone of WALGA and the WALGA State Council. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

## 2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The purpose of the meeting is to consider and provide advice to the WALGA State Council Representative, Mayor Ron Yuryevich AM, RFD.

## 3. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Mayor Ron Yuryevich (Chair)	Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Cr Suzie Williams	Councillor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder (entered the meeting at 9.04am)
Mr Rob Radosevich	A/CEO, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Cr Mal Cullen	President, Shire of Coolgardie
Mr Paul Webb	CEO, Shire of Coolgardie
Cr Jacquie Best	Deputy President, Shire of Dundas
Mr Richard Brookes	CEO, Shire of Dundas
Mr Matthew Scott	CEO, Shire of Esperance
Mr Steve Deckert	CEO, Shire of Laverton (left the meeting at 9.25am)
Mr Jim Epis	CEO, Shire of Leonora
Mr Pascoe Durtanovich	A/CEO, Shire of Menzies
Mr Chris Paget	CEO, Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku
Cr Ian Goldfinch	Councillor, Shire of Ravensthorpe
Cr Ken Norman	Councillor Shire of Ravensthorpe
Mr Ian Fitzgerald	CEO, Shire of Ravensthorpe
Cr Jim Quadrio	President Shire of Wiluna
Cr Graham Harris	Deputy President, Shire of Wiluna

Ms Helen Westcott, Joint Executive Officer

### 3.1 Apologies

Cr Beverley Stewart, Councillor, Shire of Esperance  
 Cr Patrick Hill, President Shire of Laverton  
 Cr Shaneane Weldon, Deputy President Shire of Laverton  
 Cr Des Cannons, Shire of Laverton

Cr Peter Craig, President Shire of Leonora  
Cr Greg Dwyer, President Shire of Menzies  
Cr Damian McLean, President Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku  
Cr Keith Dunlop, President Shire of Ravensthorpe  
Ms Andrea Nunan, Shire of Wiluna

Mr Bruce Wittber, Joint Executive Officer

### **3.2 WALGA Representatives**

Ms Ricky Burges, CEO  
Mr Paul Schollum, Policy Manager Economics

## **4. WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WALGA) BUSINESS**

*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*

### **4.1 State Councillor / Goldfields Esperance Zone President's Report**

Mayor Ron Yuryevich, AM RFD

### **4.2 WALGA Status Report (Attachment)**

From Executive Officer

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Presenting the Status Report for August 2015 which contains WALGA's responses to the resolutions of previous Meetings (refer also to Item 5.1 of the WALGA State Council Agenda).

#### **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 Meeting.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils notes the:

1. State Councillor / Goldfields Esperance Zone President's Report; and
2. WALGA Status Report.

**Noted**

### **4.3 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Decision**

From Executive Officer

#### **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.

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

#### **5.1 2015 Annual General Meeting Minutes (01-003-02-0003 WS)**

##### **WALGA Recommendation**

That Annual General Meeting Motions:

1. Items 4.2, 4.10, and 4.11 be noted as in accordance with Association Policy
2. Items 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9 be noted and forwarded to the relevant WALGA business unit for consideration; and
3. Item 4.14 be endorsed and referred to the relevant business unit for the development of the policy.

**GVROC COMMENT:**

Item 4.8 relates to the management of Narrow Leafed Cotton Bush. One part of the resolution from the Annual General Meeting reads as follows:

*That WALGA be requested to conduct a state wide forum on issues around biosecurity, including the management of narrow leaved cotton bush, and its impact on Local Governments across the State with all key stakeholders to be invited.*

This request came from GVROC.

It is proposed that the matter be noted and forwarded to the relevant WALGA business unit for consideration. Given the increasing concern around biosecurity across the sector, it is a little disappointing to note that the possibility of the conduct of a state wide forum is not likely to be considered until the December 2015 State Council Meeting, which means that any forum is unlikely to be held until the first quarter of 2016.

Are Member Councils satisfied that such a delay will not impact significantly on the development of a response to biosecurity needs for the local government sector?

With respect to Item 4.14 it is proposed that the matter be endorsed and referred to the relevant business unit for the development of a policy as it relates to rate capping. The resolution from the Annual General Meeting in part reads as follows:

*That WALGA:*

1. *Oppose the introduction of rate-capping for Western Australian Local Governments as reported to be proposed by the current State Government.*
2. *Develops a policy which ensures that the sector is prepared to oppose any attempt by the government to introduce rate-capping in the future.*

The Executive Officer has a concern that the State Government may move more quickly on rate capping than the time WALGA may require for the development and adoption of a policy on the issue. Whilst the WALGA Recommendation above endorses that rate capping be opposed it may be prudent to demonstrate publicly by formally including its opposition in the recommendation/resolution. This will clearly articulate the WALGA position rather than leaving the reader to review the various resolutions from the Annual General Meeting.

The matter is submitted for GVROC's consideration.

#### **ADDITIONAL GVROC MEETING COMMENT:**

Ricky Burges noted that following the WALGA State Council Meeting GVROC would receive a written response to its request for a state-wide forum on issues around biosecurity.

Ricky Burges also provided Member Councils with an update on the work being undertaken around the "rate capping" issue. Information to note from this update included:

- Following the Local Government Convention the Minister for Local Government and Communities requested a meeting with WALGA. An outcome from this meeting has been the establishment of a reference group to look at the role of the Auditor General's office in overseeing the audit process within Local Government and the introduction of compulsory training for elected members. Any changes around both matters would require changes to the *Local Government Act 1995*.
- Membership to the reference group is:
  - ✓ Department of Local Government and Communities;
  - ✓ Officer from the Minister for Local Government's office;
  - ✓ WALGA; and
  - ✓ LGMA.
- For the time being the issue of rate capping is on the "backburner".
- WALGA is and will remain opposed to rate capping. It is one that will affect all local governments.

Support

## 5.2 Grain Freight on Rail (05-006-02-0005 ID)

### WALGA Recommendation

That WALGA write to the Minister for Transport and all Members of Parliament in areas impacted by the grain supply chain calling on the State Government to:

1. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that CBH and Brookfield rail have an interim rail access agreement in place at least three months prior to the expiry of the current interim agreement and support the parties working through and if necessary amending the Railways (Access) Code to facilitate a long term agreement.
2. Initiate and fund an independent review of the grain supply chain, identifying the critical investments (new and renewal) required to ensure the least-cost (including both public and private costs) pathway for grain exported from WA recognising the practical constraints.

### GVROC COMMENT:

The issue of grain on rail was the reason for the establishment of the Local Government Grain Freight Group. Its membership takes in those local governments affected grain rail freight policy. When the issue of CBH and Brookfield Rail was discussed at the Local Government Grain Freight Group Meeting on 6 July 2015 the Group was resolved as follows:

#### RESOLUTION

*Cr D Richards moved and Cr R Forsyth seconded –*

*That the WA Local Government Association be requested to seek a meeting between the President of the WA Local Government Association and the Chairman of the Local Government Grain Freight Group with the Minister for Transport for the purpose of discussing concerns of local government with delays in reaching agreement on grain freight movements including the road freight task and the rail access agreement.*

**CARRIED**

It is noted that this request from the Local Government Grain Freight Group has not been carried through to the above WALGA recommendation.

The Executive Officer would also draw to Member Councils attention an article in the West Australian Newspaper on Wednesday 19 August 2015 headed "Aurizon hits out at access fees". The story relates to Brookfield's monopoly and the need for businesses requiring access to pay higher fees.

Does GVROC wish to amend the WALGA recommendation to incorporate the Local Government Grain Freight Group's Resolution? The Executive Officer believes that members of the Local Government Grain Freight Group would appreciate GVROC's support.

**RESOLUTION:                      Moved: Cr Cullen                      Seconded: Cr Harris**

1. That WALGA write to the Minister for Transport and all Members of Parliament in areas impacted by the grain supply chain calling on the State Government to:
  - a) Take all reasonable steps to ensure that CBH and Brookfield rail have an interim rail access agreement in place at least three months prior to the expiry of the current interim agreement and support the parties working through and if necessary amending the Railways (Access) Code to facilitate a long term agreement; and
  - b) Initiate and fund an independent review of the grain supply chain, identifying the critical investments (new and renewal) required to ensure the least-cost (including both public and private costs) pathway for grain exported from WA recognising the practical constraints.
2. That WALGA seek a meeting between the President of WALGA and the Chairman of the Local Government Grain Freight Group with the Minister for Transport for the purpose of discussing concerns of local government with delays in reaching agreement on grain freight movements including the road freight task and the rail access agreement.

**CARRIED**

## 5.3 Improvement Plans and Improvement Schemes (05-047-01-0014 VJ)

**WALGA Recommendation**

That WALGA seek clarity from the Minister for Planning about the use of Improvement Plans and Improvement Schemes within the WA planning framework, and specifically query the lack of regulations that:

1. Clearly define why, where and when an Improvement Plan should be established;
2. Clearly define what the WAPC/Department of Planning can include in an Improvement Plan area; and
3. Clearly state why, where and when an Improvement Scheme should be established, who is responsible for its development and implementation and how this scenario differs from solely establishing an Improvement Plan.

**GVROC COMMENT:**

Support

**5.4 Interim Submission – Draft Perth and Peel @ 3.5 million - Strategic land use planning documents (05-036-03-0052 VJ)****WALGA Recommendation**

That the interim submission on the Draft Perth and Peel @ 3.5million Strategic land use planning documents be endorsed.

**GVROC COMMENT:**

Support

**5.5 Local Government and Tourism Discussion Paper (05-060-03-0001 NH)****WALGA Recommendation**

That WALGA endorses the following actions (as outlined within the Local Government and Tourism Discussion Paper developed by the Association) for discussion with Tourism WA and the Regional Development Commissions:

- a) WALGA to work with Tourism Western Australia to:
  - i. Develop a Local Government Tourism Strategy to deliver local tourism outcomes;
  - ii. Investigate the development of resources including a destination marketing management toolkit;
  - iii. Investigate tourism education and training options for Local Government;
  - iv. Improve current Local Government tourism data collection including visitor numbers and visitor activities and marketing; and
  - v. Identify funding opportunities for metropolitan and urban growth corridors to deliver tourism outcomes.
- b) WALGA to engage with the Regional Development Commissions to:
  - i. Advocate for funding to implement the Regional Development Commission Investment Blueprints;
  - ii. Undertake a desktop audit of tourism organizations within respective Development Commissions boundaries to facilitate better strategic planning between tourism organizations and Local Government; and
  - iii. Establish a centralized and coordinated network of tourism organizations.

**GVROC COMMENT:**

Support

**5.6 Vision and Framework for Strategic Action for Public Library Services in Western Australia (05-057-02-0051 JH)**

**WALGA Recommendation**

1. That:
  - a. The Vision 2025 and Framework for Strategic Action for Public Library Services in Western Australia be endorsed.
  - b. WALGA seeks the Minister for Culture and Arts and Minister for Local Government and Communities' support for:
    - i. the Vision 2025 and Framework for Strategic Action for Public Library Services in Western Australia;
    - ii. development of a Public Libraries 2025 Strategic Plan; and
    - iii. the establishment of a Public Libraries Taskforce, as a matter of priority, to lead the development and implementation of the strategic plan.
2. That WALGA coordinate and conduct a second phase of research to further develop the strategies and actions outlined in the Framework for Strategic Action and identify the legislative, funding and service models required to achieve the Vision 2025.

**GVROC COMMENT:**

Support

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils endorses all recommendations contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda other than those recommendations separately considered.

**RESOLUTION:**

Moved: Cr Williams

Seconded: Cr Cullen

That the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils endorses all recommendations contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda other than those recommendations separately considered.

**CARRIED**

**4.4 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Noting/Information**

- 6.1 Parliamentary Committee Review, Development Assessment Panels (05-047-01-0016 CG)
- 6.2 Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) (01-006-03-0008 RNB)

**4.5 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Organisational Reports**

**7.1 Key Activity Reports**

- 7.1.1 Report on Key Activities, Environment and Waste Unit (01-006-03-0017 MJB)
- 7.1.2 Report on Key Activities, Governance and Organisational Services (01-006-03-0007 TB)
- 7.1.3 Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure (05-001-02-0003 ID)
- 7.1.4 Report on Key Activities, Planning and Community Development (01-006-03-0014 AH)

**4.6 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Policy Forum Reports****7.2 Policy Forum Reports****7.2.1 Mining Community Policy Forum****7.2.2 Container Deposit Legislation Policy Forum****7.2.3 Metropolitan Mayors Policy Forum****7.2.4 Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act (2007) Review Policy Forum****7.2.5 Freight Policy Forum****4.7 WALGA President's Report (Attachment)**

Presenting the WALGA President's Report

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils notes the following reports contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda:

- Matters for noting/information;
- Organisational reports;
- Policy Forum reports; and
- WALGA President's Report.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Mr Epis**                      **Seconded: Cr Williams**

**That the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils notes the following reports contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda:**

- **Matters for noting/information;**
- **Organisational reports;**
- **Policy Forum reports; and**
- **WALGA President's Report.**

**CARRIED**

**5 AGENCY REPORTS**

Nil

## 6. OTHER BUSINESS

### 6.1 2015 Local Government Elections – Zone Office Bearer Elections

**Reporting Officer:** Helen Westcott, Executive Officer

**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil

**Date:** 18 August 2015

**Attachments:** Nil

**Background:**

WALGA has requested that Zone delegates are made aware of the need to conduct Zone officer bearer elections following the 2015 Local Government elections.

A Chronological overview of the process is detailed below:

- Local Government elections occur on 17 October 2015.
- Member Councils to elect/appoint their Zone Delegates and to advise the Zone Executive Officer, as soon as possible but preferably by 9 November 2015.
- For the purpose of electing their representatives and deputy representatives to the WALGA State Council, the zones are required to hold these elections at their November 2015 meeting.
- Zones to advise WALGA, in writing, of their elected State Council representative and deputy representative immediately following the 2015 November Zone meeting.
- State Councillor Induction Session – morning of **2 December 2015**.
- New State Council will take office at the Ordinary Meeting of State Council on **2 December 2015**.
- The position of President and Deputy President of WALGA will be elected at the March 2016 State Council Meeting.

In relation to the nominations and election process to be followed by each Zone in electing a representative and deputy representative to the WALGA State Council, the below process has been instituted by State Council:

1. Zone Executive Officer to write to all Member Councils no later than 1 month prior to the Zone meeting at which the election is to be held calling for nominations from delegates to the Zone for the positions of representative and deputy representative to State Council. The correspondence is to state that all nominations are to be made in writing to the Zone Executive Officer, and only Elected Members who are a nominated Zone delegates are eligible to nominate. The time period for the receipt of nominations is to be **one week prior** to the Zone meeting at which the election will be held.
2. Zone Executive Officer to receive written nominations from Zone delegates for the positions of representative and deputy representative to State Council and then provide written confirmation to Member Councils of the nominations received.
3. Elections are to be held at the next Zone meeting as the first item of business. Where there is more than one nomination for each vacant position, an election will be conducted using a secret ballot, with the Zone Executive Officer to represent WALGA as the returning officer for the election. Prior to the ballot, nominees for each position are to be extended the opportunity to provide a 2 minute election bid to delegates.
4. All voting delegates to the Zone are entitled to cast one (1) vote in the ballot process. The candidate with the greater or greatest number of votes is elected to the office.
5. **Tied vote** – in the event of a tied vote, election will be determined by drawing names from a box. The Secretariat will put the names of the candidates concerned in a box and the first name drawn is the Elected Member.
6. Zone Executive Officer to advise WALGA in writing immediately following the Zone meeting of the outcome of their elections.

**Executive Officer Comment:**

No further comment required.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That:

1. Member Councils be requested to advise the Executive Officer of their delegates to the Zone as soon as possible after the 2015 Local Government elections; and
2. that the election of the Zone's State Council representative, State Council deputy representative, Zone President and Zone Deputy President and Zone Executive Committee be conducted at the Zone meeting scheduled for Friday 27 November 2015.

**RESOLUTION:**

**Moved: Cr Harris**

**Seconded: Cr Cullen**

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That:

1. **Member Councils be requested to advise the Executive Officer of their delegates to the Zone as soon as possible after the 2015 Local Government elections; and**
2. **that the election of the Zone's State Council representative, State Council deputy representative, Zone President and Zone Deputy President and Zone Executive Committee be conducted at the Zone meeting scheduled for Friday 27 November 2015.**

**CARRIED**

**6.2 WALGA Governance Review Discussion Paper (Attachment)**

**Reporting Officer:** Helen Westcott, Executive Officer  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Date:** 19 August 2015  
**Attachments:** Governance Review Discussion Paper

**Background:**

A review of the governance arrangements for the WALGA State Council and Zones commenced in late June, with a discussion paper prepared and emailed to all Councils to facilitate the review. A copy of the discussion paper forms an attachment to the meeting agenda.

The review focuses on WALGA's three key governance documents – the Constitution, Corporate Governance Charter and Standing Orders – as well as the effectiveness of the relationship between Zones and State Council.

WALGA in its Discussion Paper advises that it is seeking general feedback on the Constitution as well as responses to a number of discussion points that have been listed. Feedback on the issues explored in the discussion paper, as well as any other relevant matter, is sought by **Wednesday 16 September 2015**.

**Executive Officer Comment:**

The issues listed in the Discussion Paper tend to relate more to seeking the views of Member Councils so that a formal position on matters can be prepared for consideration by all Zones at the November round of Meetings.

Against that background there are some issues on which the Zone may wish to comment as they affect the Zone.

**Corporate Governance Charter****2.2.1 Clause 7 – Role of State Councillor**

State Councillors are the Association's Board members, elected by Zones. State Councillors, through collective decisions of State Council, have ultimate responsibility for the successful operation of the Association. This includes responsibility for policy positions, strategic direction and financial operations.

**Discussion Paper Comment:**

Does the role of a State Councillor adequately capture the contemporary requisites and expectations of the position?

**GVROC Comment:**

Submitted for discussion

**2.2.2 Clause 7 – Role of State Councillor – Zone Meetings**

There is scope to consider broadening sub-clause (iii) 'Expectations of State Councillors in State Council Meetings' to include expectations when attending Zone Meetings to reflect the collegiate approach to State Council Policy positions that arise through formal decision-making processes.

**Discussion Paper Comment:**

There is a requirement in Local Government that Elected Members support their Council's formal resolutions, and not speak adversely or negatively on decisions that Council has made. Should this transfer to the expectation of the behaviour of State Councillors?

**GVROC Comment:**

Submitted for discussion

**2.2.6 Clause 13 – State Council Meeting Agenda**

The Corporate Governance Charter currently states:

*The State Council meeting agenda will generally address the following:*

- *Standing matters, including attendance, announcements, previous minutes, business arising minutes and declarations of interest*
- *Emerging Issues*
- *Matters for Decision*
- *Matters for Noting*
- *Organisational Reports including Key Activity Reports and Policy Forum Updates*
- *The President's Report*
- *The Chief Executive Officer's Report, and*
- *Meeting Assessment.*

**Discussion Paper Comment:**

Should there be allocation for a report from an Ex-Officio member? Currently the LGMA (WA) President attends all meetings; however there is no item for a report. WALGA, by comparison, has a reporting item at LGMA meetings through the CEO's Ex Officio capacity.

**GVROC Comment:**

Submitted for discussion

**2.2.11 Clause 33 – Relationship between State Council, Zones and Local Governments**

This clause outlines the relationship between State Council, Zones and Member Local Governments and includes sub clauses on the following:

- State Council
- State Council Co-Chairs
- Forum of Co-Chairs
- Policy Forums
- Zones
- Member Local Governments

**Discussion Paper Comment:**

A potential reform option, which was contemplated in the previous Governance review in 2011, is considering the formation of an Executive Committee.

Under this model, State Council would maintain its primacy as the Association's governing Board but would be able to delegate some powers to an Executive Committee, which would be in a position to meet more regularly than the current two-monthly cycle of State Council meetings.

The Executive Committee could be utilised for policy and advocacy decisions required outside of the State Council meeting cycle and could be delegated powers that are currently the responsibility of the Finance and Services Committee.

Should the formation of an Executive committee be contemplated? Such a committee, if constituted, could then take on the political, policy and advocacy roles and responsibilities of the State Council Co-Chairs (see clause 33(ii) above) and the Forum of Co-Chairs (clause 33(iii) above).

Currently, the Co-Chairs, corresponding to WALGA's four key policy development portfolios (Governance, Infrastructure, Environment and Waste, and Planning and Community Development) consider and provide input to interim submissions prior to their submission to the relevant agency.

The membership of the Forum of Co-Chairs is the President and the two State Councillors who act as Co-Chairs for each of the Association's key policy portfolios: Governance and Strategy, Infrastructure, Environment and Waste and Planning and Community Development.

Consideration could also be given to reviewing the Policy Forum concept as opposed to the previous construct of four portfolio Policy Teams (six members each) where a State Councillor would be allocated to at least one policy team. The four Policy Teams corresponded to each of WALGA's four key policy

development portfolios: Governance, Infrastructure, Environment and Waste, and Planning and Community Development.

The Policy Teams were recently replaced by Policy Forums which are explained in Clause 33(iv) above.

Current Policy Forums are:

- Mining Communities Policy Forum
- Metropolitan Mayors Policy Forum
- WARR Act Policy Forum
- Container Deposit Legislation Policy Forum
- Freight Policy Forum

Comment is invited on Clause 33 generally, and specifically:

- the potential for an 'Executive Committee' to be formed;
- the utility of the Co-Chairs and Forum of Co-Chairs; and,
- a review of the Policy Forum / Policy Teams concept and their appointment processes.

#### **GVROC Comment:**

GVROC may wish to comment on the suggestion that WALGA consider the "creation" of an Executive Committee. This is not a matter that has previously been considered by the Zone.

The creation of Forums on an "as need basis by the Association President" has caused some angst within some Zones, as technically the representatives are not Zone appointees and do not have to report back to the Zone. This could mean that Zones are kept out of loop on what may be a highly significant matter to the Zone. There also seems to be no formal reporting process from the Forums back to local government either individually or through the Zones. The method by which people are appointed to a Forum could be improved as appointments can be perceived as personal appointments.

### **Review of State Council and Zone Effectiveness**

#### **4.1 State Council Decision Making Process**

The current decision making process of State Council is inclusive. Zones consider State Council items and the recommendations to State Council at their meetings. The Zones are able to move amendments to, or oppose, the recommendations to State Council.

At the State Council meeting, every Zone's resolution regarding State Council items will be considered by all State Councillors. This is done by a process of composite resolutions, where the original recommendation is blended with all Zone motions to form a new, 'composite' resolution.

In this way, the input from Zones is crucial to the State Council decision making process and means that, in practice, State Council invariably arrives at a representative and consensus position.

##### **4.1.1 Inclusiveness vs. Timeliness of State Council Decisions**

There has been discussion in recent times about the timeliness of State Council decision making, particularly when State Council seeks to ensure all Zones are able to input into the decision making process. State Council strives to find a balance between timeliness and inclusiveness in their decision making processes and can be reluctant to make decisions without Zone consultation. Notwithstanding, the ability for State Councillors to bring 'Emerging Issues' to the State Council meeting provides State Council with some flexibility to make decisions in a more timely manner when necessary.

Another relevant issue is the treatment of motions from Zones. Currently, State Council considers other Zone resolutions en bloc during their meeting, and then the Zone resolutions are referred to the relevant WALGA business or policy unit for action. This process can also take time for Zones to receive a response. One option would be for State Councillors to raise sector-wide issues when Zone resolutions are considered for State Council to make a more timely decision or for the State Council to formally prioritise Zone resolutions when they are considered.

#### **Discussion Paper Comment:**

1. Does the current State Council decision-making process strike the right balance between timeliness and inclusiveness?

2. Should the method in which State Council considers Zone resolutions be changed?

**GVROC Comment:**

The Executive Officer is aware that some Zones from time to time express concern that a number of matters for decision on the State Council Agenda are endorsing submissions that have already been made due to deadlines set by the inviting organisation. This makes it very difficult to influence a significant change and whilst it is acknowledged that the submissions are always titled "Interim Submission" if the closing date is long past the reality is that any changes are going to carry "little weight".

The other aspect of timeliness of issues being considered by the State Council has been raised on a number of occasions. For example the Shire of Wagin placed a matter on the agenda in February 2014 and the resultant WALGA position did not finally complete its progress until December 2014. Given the significance of the issue around "forced" amalgamations this was an extremely long time lapse before a formal position was reached.

The method by which State Council considers Zone resolutions is also of concern for some Zones as they are of the view that issues are not given as high a priority as they believe the issue may deserve. For example the Zone may pass a resolution in that it is seeking for WALGA to do something "urgently" and yet the resolution is generally voted on "en bloc" to be referred to the relevant policy section with the resultant delay. The next that is heard from WALGA is when the issue appears on the Status Report.

**4.1.2 Zone Motions – Consistency with Council Policy**

There has been discussion on the issue of some Zone representatives bringing forward items that are not supported or are actively opposed by their Council. Some have therefore suggested that motions at Zone meetings should require the support of the mover's Council.

This would ensure that the Zone is confident that the motion being considered has undergone some thought and research. Conversely, requiring a Council resolution to submit a motion to a Zone meeting would increase the time required for policy issues to be considered and would reduce the flexibility of Zones to make their own decisions. Further, as Zones are autonomous in their construct, it may be considered inappropriate to restrict matters that can be considered by Zones.

**Discussion Paper Comment:**

Should zone motions be required to have the Local Government's consent or be consistent with their Council's policy position?

**GVROC Comment:**

Submitted for discussion

**4.2 Zone Autonomy**

While Zones have a requirement to elect one or more State Councillors and to consider the State Council agenda, they have the autonomy to build on or expand this role.

Some Zones are more active than others in this regard. Some Zones expand on the role of the Zone and undertake some of the following activities:

- developing and advocating positions of regional significant affecting Local Government;
- progressing regional Local Government initiatives;
- identifying relevant issues for action by WALGA;
- presentations from external stakeholders;
- networking and sharing information; and
- contributing to policy development.

Other Zones are more minimalist in their approach and have not taken the opportunity to expand their role beyond that defined in the Constitution.

**Discussion Paper Comment:**

Any comment relating to Zone Autonomy is invited.



**9. CLOSURE**

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.44am

DECLARATION

These minutes were confirmed by the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils at the meeting held 8 October 2015

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Person presiding at the meeting at which these minutes were confirmed