

# **Central Country Zone MINUTES**

## **Friday, 12 April 2024**

**Hosted by the Shire of Pingelly  
Pingelly Recreation & Cultural Centre**

**Commenced at 9.32am**

## Table of Contents

1.	OPENING AND WELCOME .....	4
1.1	Housekeeping – Zone Chair .....	4
1.2	Host Council Presentation .....	4
2.	ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES .....	5
	ATTACHMENTS TO MINUTES .....	7
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST .....	7
4.	ANNOUNCEMENTS .....	7
5.	GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS .....	7
6.	MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.....	7
7.	AGENCY REPORTS.....	7
7.1	Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) .....	7
7.2	Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt (RDAW).....	8
7.3	Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) .....	8
7.4	Main Roads Western Australia .....	8
8.	MINUTES .....	8
8.1	Confirmation of Minutes from the Central Country Zone meeting held on Friday, 22 February 2024.....	8
8.2	Business Arising from the Minutes from the Central Country Zone Meeting held on Friday, 22 February 2024 .....	8
8.2.1	(Item 8.3.2) Challenges faced by Band 4 Local Governments after LGA amendments .....	8
8.2.2	Local Government Elections Reviews .....	9
8.3	Minutes of the Central Country Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 3 April 2024.....	9
8.3.1	(Item 5.2.1) Waste Management Funding .....	9
8.3.2	(Item 6.4.1) Guest Speakers – Minister for Local Government .....	9
8.3.2	(Item 6.5.1) Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee .....	10
8.4	Minutes of the Central Country Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 3 April 2024.....	10
9.	ZONE BUSINESS.....	11
9.1	Enhanced and Alternative Education Opportunities for Regional WA .....	11
9.2	Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability .....	12
9.3	Wind Energy Facilities .....	15
9.4	Importance of WALGA becoming a registered employer organisation .....	16
9.5	Adoption of Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework .....	17
9.6	Band 4 Local Governments Proposed Forum.....	19
10.	ZONE REPORTS.....	20
10.1	Zone President Report.....	20

10.2	Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC)	20
10.3	Wheatbelt Interagency Health and Wellbeing Plan Advisory Group	20
10.4	WALGA RoadWise	20
11.	<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WALGA) BUSINESS 20</b>	
11.1	State Councillor Report	20
11.2	WALGA Status Report	22
11.3	WALGA President's Report	29
11.4	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Decision	29
	11.4.1 State Council Agenda Items – 6 May 2024	29
12.	<b>EMERGING ISSUES</b>	<b>31</b>
13.	<b>DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>	<b>31</b>
14.	<b>CLOSURE</b>	<b>31</b>

## 1. Opening and Welcome

The Chair declared the meeting open at \_\_\_\_.

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### 1.1 HOUSEKEEPING – ZONE CHAIR

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#### 1. Welcome:

The Zone Chair, President Cr Des Hickey, welcomed Zone members

#### 2. Share your name and Local Government:

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

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### 1.2 HOST COUNCIL PRESENTATION

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President Cr Jackie McBurney, President from the Shire of Pingelly extended a welcome to delegates and guests. She along with Andrew Dover, Chief Executive Officer, provided a presentation on projects and issues facing the Shire of Pingelly. The Presentation is attached (Attachment 1)

A number of areas of interest were highlighted during the presentation;

- Gave an overview of the Pingelly Recreation & Cultural Centre building
- Since last hosting the Central Country Zone, Memorial Park, a focal point on the main street was opened in 2021
- Creation of a heritage festival which includes opening homes to the public to speak to the homeowner to learn about their building as well as 12 video stories of history on display.
- Events – Pingelly Christmas Village; Flowers Arts Music; Party in the oval; WA Day .
- Virtual Village – supports seniors to stay in their home, managed by a local concierge. In May, the Virtual Village are doing a presentation on how this can be done in other towns.
- Intergenerational project - *Age is Just a Number*.
- Gnalla Wangkiny Pocket Park revamp – a space of inclusion.
- Dual use green route connecting the town.
- Industry Attraction Business plan – \$50,000 per year on a 50/50 basis to attract business to town or expand existing businesses.
- Redeveloping a new childcare centre to facilitate more days of care for residents.
- Culture and the Arts Hub - 18 month framework to bring groups together to focus on a particular project. Two current target projects are;
  - art and craft hub
  - Constructing a display space for historical agricultural items in the museum.
- Youth precinct development with a pump track as well as a skate park in the future.
- Currently investigating if an independent secondary school would be feasible in Pingelly.
- Age appropriate accommodation
- New community garden opened 13 April 2024
- Pingelly were the winners of WA Tidy Town 2023.

## 2. Attendance and Apologies

### Attendance

<b>Shire of Beverley</b>	President Cr David White Deputy President Cr Dee Ridgway Mr Stephen Gollan Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Brookton</b>	President Cr Katrina Crute Cr Tamara de Lange Mr Gary Sherry Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Corrigin</b>	President Cr Des Hickey <b>(Chair)</b> Deputy President Cr Sharon Jacobs Ms Natalie Manton Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Cuballing</b>	President Cr Eliza Dowling Deputy President Cr Rob Harris
<b>Shire of Dumbleyung</b>	President Cr Amy Knight Mr Gavin Treasure Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Kulin</b>	Cr Robbie Bowey Mr Alan Leeson Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Lake Grace</b>	President Cr Len Armstrong Deputy President Stephen Hunt Mr Alan George Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Narrogin</b>	President Leigh Ballard Deputy President Cr Graham Broad
<b>Shire of Pingelly</b>	President Cr Jackie McBurney Deputy President Cr Peter Wood Mr Andrew Dover Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Quairading</b>	President Cr Jo Haythornthwaite Deputy President Cr Trevor Stacey
<b>Shire of Wagin</b>	President Cr Phillip Blight <b>(State Councillor)</b> Deputy President Cr Bryan Kilpatrick Mr John Fathers, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Wandering</b>	President Cr Ian Turton Deputy President Cr Sheryl Little Mr Alan Hart Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of West Arthur</b>	President Cr Neil Morrell Deputy President Cr Karen Harrington Mr Vin Fordham Lamont, Chief Executive Officer

<b>Shire of Wickepin</b>	President Cr Julie Russell Kellie Barley, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Williams</b>	Cr Tracey Price Mr Peter Stubbs, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Members of Parliament</b>	Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region Hon Shelley Payne MLC, Member for Agricultural Region
<b>WALGA</b>	Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services WALGA President, Karen Chappel Rachel Horton, Executive Manager Advocacy Naoimh Donaghy, Governance and Organisational Officer
<b>Apologies</b>	
Shire of Brookton	Cr Charlene Hayden
Shire of Cuballing	Mr Stan Scott Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Dumbleyung	Deputy President Cr Grant Lukins
Shire of Kulin	President Cr Grant Robins
Shire of Narrogin	Cr Clive Bartron
Shire of Narrogin	Mr Dale Stewart Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Quairading	Ms Natalie Ness, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Wickepin	Deputy President Cr Wes Astbury
Shire of Williams	Cr Jarrad Logie
Regional Development Australia WA	Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development
Main Roads WA	Mohammad Siddiqui, Director Wheatbelt Region
WA Country Health Services Wheatbelt	Russell Colyer-Cockburn, A/Executive Director Sheldon Paice, Regional Manager Infrastructure and Support Services
Health WA	Nancy Bineham, Director Strategy, Change & Service Development – Wheatbelt
CBH	Kellie Todman, Manager Government and Industry Relations
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Rob Cossart, Chief Executive Officer
Water Corporation	Michael Roberts, Regional Manager Goldfields & Agricultural Region
Department of Local Government, Sport, & Cultural Industries	Samantha Cornthwaite, Regional Manager Wheatbelt
	Hon Peter Rundle MLA, Member for Roe Hon Colin de Grussa MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Mia Davies MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt Hon Sandra Carr MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Rick Wilson MP, Federal Member for O'Connor Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Member for Agricultural Region Hon Darren West MLC, Member for Agricultural Region
WALGA	Rodney Thornton, Regional Road Safety Advisor

**The Zone wished to acknowledge the passing of Ray Marshall, Shire of Pingelly,**

## Attachments to Minutes

The following are provided as attachments to the minutes:

1. Item 1.2 Host Council Presentation
2. Item 10.2 Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee Report

The full State Council Agenda can be found via link: [State Council Agenda - 1 May](#)

## 3. Declarations of Interest

NIL

## 4. Announcements

The Minister for Local Government, Hon Hannah Beazley MLA unfortunately had to withdraw from attending this meeting. We have invited the Minister to the June 2024 meeting.

## 5. Guest Speakers / Deputations

WA Country Health and Health WA were apologies for this meeting.

## 6. Members of Parliament

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

Hon Shelley Payne MLC, Member for Agricultural Region

Hon Shelley Payne had a number of talking points, with emphasis on asking the Zone's consideration in inviting *Powering WA* to the next meeting of the Zone. Powering WA would be able to talk to current Zone issues in regard to safe Zone's for windmill turbines and how they'll be working toward the energy transition.

Ho Shelley Payne also took questions from the floor.

Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region

Hon Steve Martin reminded Members to check in on their sheep farmers as restrictions are still in place.

Also advised on:

Changes coming to harness racing standards.

Firearms – legislations coming in about SIX weeks. The Opposition will be moving a suite of exemptions.

**NOTED**

## 7. Agency Reports

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71 DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SPORT, AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES  
(DLGSC)

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

**NOTED**

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**7.2 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT (RDAW)**

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Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development was an apology for this meeting. A report was provided.

**NOTED**

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**7.3 WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (WDC)**

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Rob Cossart, Chief Executive Officer, was an apology.

**NOTED**

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**7.4 MAIN ROADS WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

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Mohammad Siddiqui, Director Wheatbelt Region was an apology. A report was provided.

**NOTED**

**8. Minutes**

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**8.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2024**

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The Minutes of the Central Country Zone meeting held on Friday, 22 February 2024 had previously been circulated to Member Councils.

**RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Leigh Ballard**

**Seconded: Deputy President Karen Harrington**

**That the Minutes of the Central Country Zone meeting held on Friday, 22 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.**

**CARRIED**

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**8.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FROM THE CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2024**

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

**BACKGROUND:**

At the February meeting, it was resolved;

*That the Central Country Zone:*

*1. Requests the Executive Officer to gather data via survey to all Central Country Zone Local Governments relating to:*

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

**Executive Officer Comment:**

The Zone Executive Officer issued an e-mail survey to all Central Country Zone CEO's.



A revised more detailed survey will be distributed.

Zone CEO's are encouraged to reply in order for responses to be compiled in readiness for the potential attendance of the Minister of Local Government at the June meeting in Quairading.

**Executive Officer comment at the meeting:**

A new survey will be distributed following the meeting. Encourage all CEO's to complete the survey.

**NOTED**

### **8.2.2 Local Government Elections Reviews**

**BACKGROUND:**

At the February meeting, the Zone was provided the below information;

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

*A number of Zones had raised concerns with the election process and the cost. A report, together with proposals for an alternative engagement strategy that provides for an independent assessment of WALGA's election advocacy is being prepared.*

*This report is anticipated to be submitted for the June/July round of Zone and State Council meetings.*

**Executive Officer comment at the meeting:**

WALGA will be providing a comprehensive report for the June/July Zone meetings.

**NOTED**

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## **8.3 MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 3 APRIL 2024**

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

### **8.3.1 (Item 5.2.1) Waste Management Funding**

As per the February Minutes:

*Action:*

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

Secretariat Comment:

In March 2024, WALGA President Karen Chappel, met with Minister Whitby while attending the opening of the WA hub in Canberra. President Chappel received verbal reassurance that the Minister was very eager to meet with the Central Country Zone delegates.

The Executive Officer wrote to Minister Whitby on 4 April 2024, referencing the verbal agreement President Chappel obtained. We are awaiting a reply.

**NOTED**

### **8.3.2 (Item 6.4.1) Guest Speakers – Minister for Local Government**

The Minister contacted the Executive Officer and sent her apologies for the April meeting of the Zone.

Minister Beazley has been invited to the June Central Country Zone meeting in Quairading.

#### **NOTED**

#### **8.3.2 (Item 6.5.1) Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee**

All Regional Executive Officers have been approached by the *Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee*.

This committee is tasked with conducting a review of the adequacy of telecommunications services in regional, rural, and remote parts of Australia

Zone's have been asked to consider having a Member of this committee attend a Zone meeting in order to initiate consultation for this review, with a report completion date of 31 December 2024.

Further information can be found here; [Terms of Reference](#).

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute**

**Seconded: Deputy President Cr Bryan Kilpatrick**

**That the Central Country Zone invite a Member of the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee to the June meeting of the Zone.**

**CARRIED**

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#### **8.4 MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 3 APRIL 2024**

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The Minutes of the Central Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 3 April 2024 were attached.

The remainder of the items are for the Zones consideration.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Leigh Ballard**

**Seconded: Deputy President Karen Harrington**

**That the Minutes of the Central Country Zone Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 3 April 2024 be noted, and the items not considered above be endorsed.**

**CARRIED**

## 9. Zone Business

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### 9.1 ENHANCED AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL WA

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*By the Great Southern Country Zone*

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Great Southern Country Zone has written to the Minister for Education, Hon. Tony Buti MLA. The Great Southern Country Zone is seeking support to prioritise increased State Government investment to improve regional education, including:

- Increased access to alternative programs for students disaffected by main-stream education, those at risk or who have specific learning needs, who may be disruptive, falling behind and at risk of failing to learn; providing these students with intensive support, active, empathic, and practical instruction, combined with health and other services to enable their success.
- Increased secondary education distance ATAR, VET and other WACE subject courses, if necessary supplemented by private providers, with qualified teacher mentoring and support provided in schools closest to students, supplemented with online access to subject specialist teachers to enable student success.
- Implement strategies to attract and retain quality teachers and subject specialists in remote communities, including:
  - Subsidised high standard GROH housing.
  - Increased financial bonuses, for remote locations and to encourage longer term retention.
- Providing sufficient GROH housing for State Government employees to reduce pressure on regional private rental availability and improve housing security for teachers and all Government service staff when transferring to regional locations.

The Great Southern Country Zone's call to action from State Government, seeks to reduce disadvantage for students living in regional Western Australia, so they can access the same quality educational opportunities available in metropolitan and regional centres, without need to attend boarding schools. In addition, these strategies will also deliver substantial economic and social benefit for regional communities.

#### **COMMENT**

If your region also experiences disadvantage in educational opportunities, the Great Southern Country Zone now seeks your consideration of the below recommendations and if the Central Country Zone accepts the recommendations below, then your Zone may use the above content to assist in developing your submissions.

The Great Southern Country Zone have requested that the Central Country Zone consider the following request;

1. Supports the call to action to reduce regional disadvantage in educational opportunities,
2. Agrees to write to the Minister for Education requesting action; and
3. Requests the WALGA Secretariat to advocate to State Government on this matter.

#### **Executive Committee comment:**

The Committee had lengthy discussion, highlighting that the focus of the investigation is potentially too broad. The Committee suggested that the Zone consider supporting the Great Southern Country Zone's suggestion with a focus on

- The allocation of permanency to teachers who are then not based in the school for which they have been granted permanency.
- Requesting clarity about how schools are classified as "hard to staff"

- What is being done to adequately staff and house teachers in regional WA.

## **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Cr Phil Blight**

**Seconded: Deputy President Cr Bryan Kilpatrick**

**That the Central Country Zone:**

- 1. Supports the call to action to reduce regional disadvantage in educational opportunities, with a focus on:**
  - I. The allocation of permanency to teachers who are then not based in the school for which they have been granted permanency.**
  - II. Requesting clarity about how schools are classified as “hard to staff”**
    - a. What is being done to adequately staff and house teachers in regional WA.**
- 2. Agrees to write to the Minister for Education requesting action; and**
- 3. Requests WALGA to advocate to State Government on this matter.**

**LOST**

**Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute**

**Seconded: President Cr Jackie McBurney**

**That the Central Country Zone:**

- 1. Supports the call to action to reduce regional disadvantage in educational opportunities, with a focus on:**
  - a. Disruption to schools arising from policies relating to permanency for teachers;**
  - b. Requesting clarity about how schools are classified as “hard to staff; and**
  - c. Improving housing for teachers in regional WA;**
- 2. Agrees to write to the Minister for Education requesting action; and**
- 3. Requests the WALGA Secretariat to advocate to State Government on this matter.**

**CARRIED**

*The Chair called a five minute break at 11.05am*

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## **9.2 INQUIRY INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY**

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*By the Shire of Narrogin*

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport has commenced a new inquiry into local government sustainability.

As part of the inquiry the Committee will examine financial sustainability and funding frameworks of local governments, alongside changing infrastructure requirements and service delivery obligations. The Committee is seeking to understand the challenges faced by local governments in servicing infrastructure requirements across regional, rural, and remote locations.

Workforce shortages across Australia relating to infrastructure and other service areas more broadly, particularly in regional, rural, and remote areas, will also be a focus of the inquiry. The Committee will also inquire into issues relating to skills development and job security, along with labour hire and retention trends and practices to identify barriers and opportunities to support job security and local government service delivery obligations.

The Committee welcomes your views on any or all of the attached terms of reference, depending on your areas of interest and expertise. Further information about the inquiry is available at: [www.aph.gov.au/rdit](http://www.aph.gov.au/rdit)

If you have an interest in any of these issues, we encourage you to lodge a submission to the inquiry by close of business **Friday 3 May 2024**. It is preferred that submissions are uploaded electronically, through: [www.aph.gov.au/Committee/Submissions](http://www.aph.gov.au/Committee/Submissions)

Further information is available from the inquiry website. Please contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 2232 or [rdit.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:rdit.reps@aph.gov.au) if you have any questions.

### **Terms of reference**

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport will inquire into and report on local government matters, with a particular focus on:

- The financial sustainability and funding of local government
- The changing infrastructure and service delivery obligations of local government
- Any structural impediments to security for local government workers and infrastructure and service delivery
- Trends in the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce in the local government sector, including impacts of labour hire practices
- The role of the Australian Government in addressing issues raised in relation to the above
- Other relevant issues.

#### *Request for Thorough Submission on Local Government Sustainability Inquiry*

##### Background:

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport has initiated an inquiry into local government sustainability. This inquiry will delve into crucial aspects such as financial sustainability, funding frameworks, changing infrastructure requirements, service delivery obligations, and workforce shortages, especially in regional, rural, and remote areas. The Committee aims to understand the challenges faced by local governments in meeting infrastructure needs and ensuring job security and skill development for workers. This motion is proposed to ensure that the voices and concerns of local governments in Western Australia are effectively represented in the inquiry on local government sustainability.

**Motion:** The Shire of Narrogin moves that the WALGA Zone requests WALGA to prepare and submit a comprehensive submission on behalf of local governments in Western Australia to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport inquiry on local government sustainability as follows;

1. WALGA is requested to address the following areas in its submission: a. Financial sustainability and funding mechanisms for local governments. b. Changing infrastructure and service delivery requirements faced by local governments. c. Structural impediments to job security and infrastructure delivery in local government. d. Trends in attracting and retaining skilled workforce in the local government sector, including the impact of labour

- hire practices. e. The role of the Australian Government in addressing the above issues. f. Any other relevant matters related to local government sustainability.
2. The submission should be aligned with the Terms of Reference outlined by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport.
  3. WALGA is encouraged to collaborate with local governments across Western Australia to gather diverse perspectives and insights for the submission.
  4. The deadline for WALGA to submit the comprehensive submission is set for close of business on Friday, 3 May 2024.
  5. Local governments within the WALGA Zone are urged to support and contribute to the development of the submission through active participation and sharing of relevant information and expertise.

#### **Executive Officer Comment:**

WALGA has carried out the following;

- LG Direct item on 26 March 2024, advising the Local Government sector on the enquiry.
- WALGA CEO has written to all Local Government CEO's advising of the enquiry and suggesting Local Government provide a submission to the Federal Government with a copy to WALGA.
- WALGA has written to the Committee Chair requesting an extension to 31 May 2024.
- WALGA has commenced preparing a submission for the WA Local Government sector and will be contributing the ALGA submission.

The Central Country Zone Committee discussed the Zone considering providing a submission.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Leigh Ballard**

**Seconded: Deputy President Karen Harrington**

**That Central Country Zone requests WALGA to prepare and submit a comprehensive submission on behalf of local governments in Western Australia to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport inquiry on local government sustainability as follows;**

1. **WALGA is requested to address the following areas in its submission: a. Financial sustainability and funding mechanisms for local governments. b. Changing infrastructure and service delivery requirements faced by local governments. c. Structural impediments to job security and infrastructure delivery in local government. d. Trends in attracting and retaining skilled workforce in the local government sector, including the impact of labour hire practices. e. The role of the Australian Government in addressing the above issues. f. Any other relevant matters related to local government sustainability.**
2. **The submission should be aligned with the Terms of Reference outlined by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport.**
3. **WALGA is encouraged to collaborate with local governments across Western Australia to gather diverse perspectives and insights for the submission.**
4. **Local governments within the WALGA Zone are urged to support and contribute to the development of the submission through active participation and sharing of relevant information and expertise.**

**CARRIED**

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## 9.3 WIND ENERGY FACILITIES

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*By the Shire of Narrogin*

*Request for Submission on Better Approach to Guide Wind Energy Facility Placement*

### **Background:**

The placement and management of wind energy facilities have become contentious issues in local communities across Western Australia. Concerns have been raised regarding the location of these facilities on viable agricultural land, their proximity to rural boundaries and residences, and their potential impact on right-to-farm practices such as aerial spraying activities. The existing State Government Position Statement on Renewable Energy Facilities is perceived as inadequate in addressing these concerns, leading to inconsistent application and approvals of wind energy projects across the State. This motion is proposed to advocate for a more inclusive and effective approach to the management and placement of wind energy facilities in Western Australia, addressing community concerns and ensuring sustainable development in the renewable energy sector.

The Shire requests the Zone considers the following motion;

1. The submission should highlight the following key areas of concern: a. The impact of wind energy facilities on viable agricultural land. b. The proximity of wind energy facilities to rural boundaries and residences, including potential visual, noise, and safety impacts. c. The potential negative effects on right-to-farm practices, such as aerial spraying activities, due to the presence of wind energy facilities. d. The inconsistencies in the application and approvals of wind energy projects across different regions of Western Australia. e. The inadequacies of the existing State Government Position Statement on Renewable Energy Facilities in addressing these concerns.
2. The submission should propose recommendations for a better approach to guide the placement and management of wind energy facilities, taking into account community concerns and ensuring a balanced approach that supports renewable energy while protecting agricultural interests and rural lifestyles.
3. WALGA is encouraged to collaborate with local governments, industry stakeholders, and community representatives to gather diverse perspectives and insights for the submission.
4. The submission should emphasize the importance of a transparent and consultative process in decision-making related to wind energy projects to address community concerns and achieve better outcomes for all stakeholders.

*WALGA's Chris Hossen, Policy Manager, Planning and Building provided the following comment:*

The State Government through the Western Australian Planning Commission's *Position Statement: Renewable energy facilities*, published in March 2020, provides general and specific guidance to planning decision makers when:

1. considering statutory proposals for renewable energy facilities, and
2. seeking to address renewable energy facilities through the strategic planning framework

The Position Statement should be read with other relevant planning documents, such as *State Planning Policy 2.5 Rural Planning*, when making planning decisions. However, Position Statements are afforded a lower level of regard in planning decision making, than other documents such as State Planning Policies and Local Planning Schemes.

Considering the expected growth in renewable energy facilities, both in size and number, and the potential for these to impact amenity, and existing land uses, there is merit in exploring if the current State Government policy settings are contemporary and fit-for-purpose.

WALGA, in response to a motion from the 2023 WALGA Annual General Meeting on the impact of non-agricultural land uses on prime agricultural land, recently finalised the *Research Paper: Protection of Agricultural Land Uses*. As part of this work, WALGA is investigating its current advocacy positions to determine whether they are fit-for-purpose to inform proactive discussions around this topic. Following further discussions with stakeholders, including Local Governments, WALGA will present options to the Environment Policy Team of State Council, before progressing further.

## **RESOLUTION:**

**Moved: President Leigh Ballard**

**Seconded: President Cr Katrina Crute**

**That the Central Country Zone requests WALGA to make a submission on behalf of local governments in Western Australia to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC), urging the State Government, through its agency Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH), to develop a more comprehensive and effective approach to guide the management and placement of renewable energy facilities; including but not limited to wind, solar, battery renewable diesel and any associated infrastructure.**

**CARRIED**

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## **9.4 IMPORTANCE OF WALGA BECOMING A REGISTERED EMPLOYER ORGANISATION**

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*By Tony Brown, Executive Director, Member Services,*

### **Background**

Currently, WALGA is a registered industrial agent under the [Industrial Relations Act 1979 \(WA\) \(IR Act\)](#) which allows us to:

- appear as an agent for a WA Local Government or Regional Council (Local Government) in the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC), Industrial Magistrate's Court or Industrial Appeal Court (State Courts); and
- provide advice or other services to Local Governments in relation to 'industrial matters' as defined in s.7 of the IR Act.

Since the mandate for Local Governments to operate in the State industrial relations (IR) system from 1 January 2023, unions have commenced various Local Government State awards (**LG State Awards**) variation claims in the WAIRC to amend industry employment conditions including to:

- increase minimum wages for outside workers;
- introduce Fair Work standards in the State system (increase casual loading from 20 to 25%; insert casual conversion; and insert flexible working arrangements) and other conditions (insert employment equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons; insert cultural and ceremonial leave; and amend severance pay for regional redundancies); and
- increase industry allowance for compensation for disabilities on construction and maintenance work.



In addition the WASU, LGRCEU and other unions (such as the **Construction, Forestry, and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU)**) as 'employee organisations' can make industrial agreements with Local Government employers under the IR Act.

A [recent decision of the WAIRC](#) has outlined although WALGA may intervene in award matters we are unable to represent named LG State Award employers and the broader Local Government sector in our own right.

Despite WALGA's advocacy since December 2022, the State Government has not agreed a pathway for WALGA to be provided with standing as an employer organisation under the IR Act.

For WALGA to represent Local Governments' views and have the same standing as the unions under the IR Act it has become vital for WALGA to seek to amend its constitution to apply to become an employer organisation.

If WALGA was to become an employer organisation it would provide more opportunity for WALGA to modernise the LG State Awards and intervene in industrial matters concerning the Local Government sector. In addition, the WAIRC is more likely to notify WALGA of award applications or variations and industrial agreement changes reducing the risk of unions being able to change the terms and conditions of the sector, with limited to no input from Local Governments or WALGA.

#### **Comment;**

WALGA will be looking to amend its constitution to enable WALGA to become a registered employer organisation at the AGM in October 2024.

An agenda item will be prepared for the June/July round of Zone/State Council meetings detailing the proposed amendments.

This item is for the Zones awareness of the need for WALGA to become an employer organisation and to note that constitutional amendments will be required.

For any questions about the constitutional amendment process, please contact Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services, [tbrown@walga.asn.au](mailto:tbrown@walga.asn.au) or (08) 9213 2051.

#### **NOTED**

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## **9.5 ADOPTION OF POLICY AND ADVOCACY PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK**

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*By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance*

### **Background**

State Council uses a Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to guide discussion and decision-making on policy and advocacy issues. The Framework was developed in 2020 on the request of State Council to assist State Councillors in determining the priority of a particular issue relative to existing (and competing) policy and advocacy priorities.

The Framework (included below) utilises 11 criteria to sharpen thinking (e.g. the impact on the Local Government sector, the number of Member Local Governments affected, the level of support amongst the public or other stakeholders, etc.), and encourage decision-makers to consider the wider context and impacts of the issue before settling on a pathway forward.

The Great Southern Country Zone also adopted the Prioritisation Framework not long after it was developed in 2020.

The Central Country Zone received a presentation on the WALGA Zone and State Council processes at the February Zone meeting that included the Prioritization Framework.

**Comment**

It is proposed that all Zones consider adopting the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework as included below.

If the Zone were to adopt the Prioritisation Framework, Zone Delegates could use it to guide their decision-making when determining whether or not to request action or advocacy from WALGA on a particular issue (that is, sector-wide issues). Issues that are not sufficiently prioritised (that is, regional issues) could instead be dealt with at the Zone level (e.g. through direct advocacy efforts on behalf of the Zone).

The Prioritisation Framework could also be used by Zone Delegates when drafting Agenda items and motions on policy or advocacy issues, using the criteria as prompts for what kind of information to include.

The Prioritisation Framework does not remove the need for judgements to be made and is intended to *guide*, not replace, decision-making.

How to use the Framework:

- If the majority of the factors are towards the left column, the issue is a high priority.
- If the majority of the factors are towards the middle, the issue requires action, but is not a high priority.
- If the majority of the factors are towards the right column, the issue is a low priority.

Following prioritisation, an appropriate and proportionate policy and advocacy approach can be determined.

<b>Potential Impact on Local Government Sector</b> Impact on Local Government sector without intervention	High	Medium	Low
<b>Reach</b> Number of member Local Governments affected	Sector-wide	Significant (multiple regions, Zones, or bands)	Few
<b>Influence</b> Capacity to influence decision makers	High	Medium	Low
<b>Principles</b> Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence	Strong	Partial	Peripheral
<b>Clarity</b> Policy change needed is clear and well-defined	Clear	Partial	Unclear
<b>Decision-maker support</b> Level of support among decision-makers (political and administrative)	High	Medium	Low

<b>Public support</b> Level of support among the public or other stakeholders	High	Medium	Low
<b>Positive consequences for WALGA</b> Prospect of positive consequences for WALGA. E.g. enhanced standing among members or leverage for other issues.	High	Medium	Low
<b>Negative consequences for WALGA</b> Prospect of negative consequences for WALGA for not undertaking the advocacy effort. E.g. diminished standing among members or other stakeholders.	High	Medium	Low
<b>Partnerships</b> Potential for partnerships with other stakeholders	Yes (3+)	Possibly (1-2)	No (0)

## RESOLUTION

**Moved: President Cr Katrina Crute**

**Seconded: President Cr Julie Russell**

**That the Central Country Zone adopt the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to determine the priority of a particular policy or advocacy issue, and guide future decision-making.**

**CARRIED**

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## 9.6 BAND 4 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS PROPOSED FORUM

*By Shire of Pingelly*

Further to the discussion on the Challenges faced by Band 4 Local Governments at the previous Zone meeting. A further concern has begun to emerge over recent months in respect to the problems or issues that relate specifically to Band 4 local governments. These issues can be, and often are, significantly different to those of Bands 1,2,3 local governments, and is even more pertinent to the smaller band fours.

The Shire of Pingelly would like to gauge the level of interest and support for the development of a network group of Band 4 LGAs across the state.

The formation of which, would be akin to forming a Voluntary Regional Council (VROC), with the ultimate goal of garnering like-minded concerns from across the state, which could then be presented back through our own zones.

If it was thought that the number of statewide Band fours would be too unwieldy, we could possibly look at a cut-off point with smaller Local Governments.

Band 4 LGs in general and more specifically the smaller Band 4s are highly efficient and effective, as they are as close to their community as any level of government is likely to be. They don't have the luxury of having large administrative staff to share the workload and compliances, and therefore have to find efficiencies to get the work carried out. Often one staff member is dealing with many different portfolios.

The Zone could consider whether it is best to form a VROC or a network group.

## RESOLUTION

**Moved: President Cr Jackie McBurney**

**Seconded: President Cr Ian Turton**

**That the Central Country Zone recommend to WALGA to form a Band 4 Local Governments Network Group to consider matters bespoke to smaller Local Governments.**

**LOST**

Zone Members encouraged the Shire of Pingelly and the Shire of Wandering to consider establishing a VROC.

## 10. Zone Reports

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### 10.1 ZONE PRESIDENT REPORT

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Zone Chair, Cr Des Hickey provided a report.

#### For Noting

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### 10.2 GREAT SOUTHERN DISTRICT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DEMC)

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President Jackie McBurney tabled the attached report (**Attachment 2**)

#### NOTED

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### 10.3 WHEATBELT INTERAGENCY HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN ADVISORY GROUP

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Nancy Bineham was an apology for this meeting.

#### NOTED

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### 10.4 WALGA ROADWISE

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Rodney Thornton, Regional Road Safety Advisor was an apology for this meeting

#### NOTED

## 11. Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) Business

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### 11.1 STATE COUNCILLOR REPORT

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*Cr Phillip Blight*

State Councillor Phillip Blight provides the following report;

State Council Meeting 6 March 2024

Strategic Forum items;

- A presentation from Minister Hannah Beasley in which highlighted the reform agenda and timeline to complete.

- Then Commissioner Darren Klemm gave a summary of the Dfes year and plans for the future.

### Meeting

- President Karen Chappel was re-elected Chair of Walga in a ballot with Mayor Patrick Hall.
- Cr Paul Kelly was then elected unopposed as Deputy Chair.
- An emerging item of the Polyphagous Shothole Borer was brought to State Council attention. This is a real and looming problem because it is a difficult pest to control. All West Australians should be aware of the threat of this infestation.
- Item - Line Marking  
The CC Zone amendment to review vehicle counts thresholds was accepted.

Little else to report of the meeting however the following day we undertook a strategic workshop for the upcoming state election.

### Three priorities of the State are:

1. Cost of Living
2. Health Services
3. Housing.

We focused on these as low hanging fruit that both State and Local Governments can benefit from.

### **RESOLUTION:**

**Moved: President Cr Phil Blight**

**Seconded: President Cr Katrina Crute**

**That the State Councillor Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 11.2 WALGA STATUS REPORT

By Tony Brown, Executive Officer

### BACKGROUND

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

## COMPLETE ZONE STATUS REPORT April 2024

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Central C	23 June 2023 Zone Agenda Item 9.4 - Line Marking and Road Safety	That WALGA be requested to engage with Main Roads WA with a view to providing Local Government with greater flexibility and autonomy in relation to line marking thresholds and approval guidelines for rural and regional roads, consistent with the body of the report presented to the Central Country Zone meeting on 23 June 2023.	<p>State Council accepted the Zones proposed amendments and resolved as follows: That WALGA advocate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Main Roads Western Australia policy allow Local Governments to install edge line and separation (centre) line markings on roads that meet all relevant criteria, but do not meet the criterion on traffic volume set out in the Australian Standard.</li> <li>2. Main Roads Western Australia to consider reducing the traffic volume threshold in the Main Roads warrant for installing separation (centre) lines to recognise the proven safety benefits.</li> <li>3. For this exemption, Local Governments must adhere to the following conditions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Local Government contact Main Roads via the Regional Network Manager with their intent to undertake line marking on specific roads that do not meet the traffic volume criterion, but meet all the other criteria.</li> <li>b) The Local Government obtain a Council resolution, committing to fund all installation</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	July 2024	<p><b>Ian Duncan</b> Executive Manager Infrastructure <a href="mailto:iduncan@walga.asn.au">iduncan@walga.asn.au</a> 9213 2031</p>

			<p>and maintenance costs.</p> <p>c) Local Government undertake spotting/surveying.</p> <p>d) Main Roads to undertake an inspection following the survey/spotting work, confirm the start and finish points for the longitudinal line markings, and record the sections of road with line markings to be maintained by Local Government in the relevant database.</p> <p>e) Main Roads approve the final layout prior to line marking occurring.</p> <p>f) Local Government undertake the works.</p> <p>g) Local Government maintain the works in accordance with Main Roads WA standards.</p> <p>h) Local Government remove the lines if maintenance works are not performed to the standard.</p>		
<b>Central C</b>	26 August 2023 Zone Agenda Item <b>9.3 Heavy Vehicles – Accredited Mass Management Scheme</b>	That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to investigate the establishment of an Industry Working Group associated with Main Roads WA Accredited Mass Management Scheme across the Restricted Access Vehicle Network, with a view to reducing accelerated degradation and damage to rural and regional road networks as well as improving road safety for all users. Working Group membership shall be representative of relevant industry stakeholders but not necessarily be limited to (WALGA, Local Government, Main Roads WA, Department of Transport, CBH, relevant Heavy Vehicle Operators Association).	<p>The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved that:</p> <p>WALGA formally write to Main Roads WA setting out the observations made by Local Governments and requesting provision of evidence through the compliance audits that vehicles operating in rural areas are not operating off the approved AMMS network and can demonstrate loading within allowable axle mass.</p>	<b>July 2024</b>	<p><b>Ian Duncan</b>  <b>Executive Manager</b>  <b>Infrastructure</b>  <a href="mailto:iduncan@walga.asn.au">iduncan@walga.asn.au</a>  <b>9213 2031</b></p>
<b>Central C</b>	6 December 2023 State Council Agenda Item <b>7.6 Waste Education Policy Statement and Advocacy Position</b>	That the Central Country Zone supports WALGA's Waste Education Policy Statement and Advocacy Position recommendation 1-2d inclusive as listed above in the December 2023 State Council Agenda with the addition of 2e, Hypothecation of the waste levy for waste management purposes only and not to go to consolidated revenue.	<p>The Zone's recommendation is consistent with WALGA's existing position, under the <u>Waste Levy Policy Statement</u>, and therefore does not need to be included in the Waste Education Advocacy Position.</p> <p>The Waste Levy Policy Statement has been reviewed and is on the State Council May Agenda for discussion.</p>	<b>April 2024</b>	<p><b>Nicole Matthews</b>  <b>Executive Manager</b>  <b>Policy</b>  <a href="mailto:nmatthews@walga.asn.au">nmatthews@walga.asn.au</a>  <b>9213 2039</b></p>

<p><b>Central C</b></p>	<p>26 August 2023 Zone Agenda Item <b>9.2 Water Corporation – Non-Standard Water Services</b></p>	<p>That the Central Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rejects Water Corporation attempts to classify regional sites as a 'Non-Standard Water Service' (unless specific agreement is reached with a Local Government Authority);</li> <li>2. Formally writes to Water Corporation and the Minister for Water confirming this position;</li> <li>3. Requests that WALGA supports the position of the Central Country Zone and rejects the Water Corporation's attempts to classify regional sites as a 'Non-Standard Water Service'; and</li> <li>4. Requests WALGA to engage with the Minister for Water to retain the current services, unless specific agreement is reached with a Local Government Authority.</li> </ol>	<p>WALGA is continuing to advocate on this matter including raising the issues as part of the consultation on the Review of the National Water Initiatives to inform the next National Water Agreement. WALGA has also requested that ALGA raise this matter as part of the Meeting of Water Minister. WALGA is reviewing the Water Advocacy Position and will include the need for equitable access to drinking water, as a key pillar.</p> <p>The Shire of Dumbleyung provided the following information, as per the Minutes of the Rural Water Council of WA meeting, 5 April 2024:</p> <p>In relation to the Moulyinning Non-Standard Water Service declaration by Water Corporation -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water Corporation has never provided a standard water service to Moulyinning residents since the scheme was established, circa early 1970's.</li> <li>- Is has therefore taken Water Corporation approximately 50 years to identify this standard water service shortcoming (lucky no-one has been impacted by consuming poor quality water).</li> <li>- The first that the Shire (and residents) became aware of this situation was when Water Corporation contacted the Shire mid-2023.</li> <li>- To comply with health requirements, Water Corporation either have to resolve the matter ie install chlorinated water treatment system or withdraw from standard water servicing. Water Corporation has chosen the latter option (for economic reasons).</li> <li>- The withdrawal position mitigates risk to Water Corporation but transfers this risk to others ie Shire &amp; local residents.</li> <li>- Water Corporation has offered to fund the once-off installation of localised water</li> </ul>	<p><b>April 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Nicole Matthews</b> <b>Executive Manager</b> <b>Policy</b> <b>nmatthews@walga.a</b> <b>sn.au</b> <b>9213 2039</b></p>
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			<p>treatment solutions to offset some of this risk ie rainwater tanks, water filtration systems, etc (30 June 2024 deadline set for Shire and local residents to respond).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water Corporation will not contribute to ongoing maintenance or eventual replacement costs of these local water treatment systems.</li> <li>- Footnote: Decision by Water Corporation has potential major ramifications for communities with low population ie doesn't appear to matter whether you are scheme supplied, if Water Corporation determine that it is cost prohibitive to provide standard water servicing, they may not opt to supply.</li> </ul>		
<b>Central C</b>	26 August 2023 Zone Agenda Item <b>12.2</b> <b>Contaminated Sites</b>	That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to: 1. investigate the extent that this issue is impacting regional Local Governments with registered landfill sites; and 2. engage with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, on behalf of the sector, to ensure that the Department's requirements are proportionate to the risk associated with a particular site.	<p>That the Environment and Waste Policy Team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the Central Country Zone recommendation; and</li> <li>2. Agree that WALGA: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Investigate the extent that this issue is impacting regional Local Governments with registered landfill sites; and</li> <li>b. Engage with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, on behalf of the sector, to ensure that the Departments requirements are proportionate to the risk associated with a particular site.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>WALGA has requested a list of impacted Local Governments from DWER but has yet to receive a response.</p> <p>WALGA held a webinar with the sector in March on this matter, and useful clarification was provided by the DWER on the process they are using to assess risk. Subsequent to the webinar, WALGA met with DWER and an impacted Local Government to discuss their specific situation and</p>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Nicole Matthews</b> <b>Executive Manager</b> <b>Policy</b> <b>nmatthews@walga.a</b> <b>sn.au</b> <b>9213 2039</b>

			were able to gain agreement regarding a risk appropriate response.		
<b>Central C</b>	23 June 2023 Zone Agenda Item <b>9.1 - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage</b>	That the Central Country Zone request: 1. the Department of Planning Lands and Heritage to provide information on the cost to Local Governments of implementing the regulations; 2. WALGA to collate the information from the Local Governments feedback on the Aboriginal Heritage Act and the implementation of the Regulations; and 3. the State Government to underwrite any potential costs of Local Government complying with the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WALGA continues to advocate for Local Government support and guidance to implement the requirements under the legislation, with particular reference to Regulation 10 processes.</li> <li>In February 2024, WALGA facilitated a roundtable discussion between the Gascoyne Zone and DPLH which all parties found useful.</li> <li>Contact details for the Regional Heritage Directors across the State are available on the <a href="#">WALGA website</a>, should the Central Zone wish to invite a DPLH representative to present to a Zone meeting.</li> </ul> <p>COMPLETED</p>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Nicole Matthews</b> <b>Executive Manager Policy</b> <b>nmatthews@walga.asn.au</b> <b>9213 2039</b>
<b>Central C</b>	17 November 2023 Zone Agenda Item <b>11.4 2023 Resolution for changes to Electoral Process</b>	That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to advocate for a change to the current electoral system for Local Government to: 1. remove the compulsion of those Local Government entities within the Band 3 and 4 categories to opt out of the Optional Preferential Voting System to return to the First Past the Post voting system; and 2. remove the compulsion for internal elections to be carried out by optional preferential voting and return to First Past the Post method of voting.	<p>WALGA's governance staff are conducting a review of Local Government elections for the period 2015-2023. This will include the issue of vote counting system for Local Government elections and for internal elections.</p> <p>A report, together with proposals for an alternative engagement strategy that provides for an independent assessment of WALGA's election advocacy is being prepared.</p> <p>WALGA has surveyed staff and Elected Members and Officers and is currently collating the feedback.</p> <p>This report is anticipated to be submitted for the June July round of Zone and State Council meetings.</p>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Tony Brown</b> <b>Executive Director, Member Services</b> <b>9213 2051</b> <b>tbrown@walga.asn.au</b>
<b>Central C</b>	14 April 2023 Zone Agenda Item <b>9.1 Financial Burden</b>	That WALGA forms a policy position and advocates that:	WALGA's Governance Policy Team has considered this matter and has requested WALGA staff to	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Tony Brown</b>

	<b>to Local Governments of Optional Preferential Voting</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any Western Australian Electoral Commission fee increases for the 2023 Local Government elections are capped at 10% when compared with the 2021 rates; and</li> <li>the CountWA software from Western Australian Electoral Commission is provided to Local Governments free of charge for the 2023 and subsequent Local Government elections.</li> </ol>	<p>conduct a review of Local Government elections 2015 – 2023 and provide a summary of findings in a future report, together with proposals for an alternative engagement strategy that provides for an independent assessment of WALGA’s election advocacy.</p> <p>This work will inform advocacy to the State Government on the cost and processes involved in the WAEC conducting the elections including cost.</p> <p>Report expected to be prepared in time for the May 2024 Governance Policy Team meeting and referred to Zones in June 2024.</p>		<b>Executive Director, Member Services</b> <b>9213 2051</b> <b>tbrown@walga.asn.au</b>
<b>Central C</b>	2021 19 November Zone Agenda Item <b>12.1 Sector ICT solution</b>	That the Zone request WALGA to research providers and the viability of an in-house IT system.	<p>The idea of an all-of-sector model ICT solution is not viable for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different size Local Governments – no one size fits all;</li> <li>Local Government’s being at different levels of need and maturity in the ICT requirements;</li> <li>We are unlikely to get the requisite LG buy-in to warrant the investment; and</li> <li>The inherent complexity of a custom-built system is time and cost-prohibitive.</li> </ul> <p>A more workable suggestion is for a group of similar size/maturity level Local Governments to engage a consultant to define a model set that meets their needs. Any recommendations could be reviewed by a representative of the LG ICT Managers Network to ensure it is appropriate.</p> <p>It would be expected that the following range of recommendations are achievable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable hardware requirements (including remote options where appropriate)</li> <li>Suggested lightweight accounting software</li> <li>Baseline model directory structure</li> <li>Security options</li> <li>Backup software and procedures</li> </ul>	<b>April 2023</b>	<b>Tony Brown</b> <b>Executive Director, Member Services</b> <b>9213 2051</b> <b>tbrown@walga.asn.au</b>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suitable internet options</li> </ul> <p>WALGA is looking to assist in facilitating discussions on a shared service model to research this with a group of Local Governments further. Work is scheduled this year.</p>		
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**Zone Comment**

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

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Moved: President Cr Jackie McBurney**

**Seconded: President Cr Phil Blight**

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

**CARRIED**

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## 11.3 WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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The WALGA President's Report was attached

### **RESOLVED:**

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

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## 11.4 REVIEW OF WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – MATTERS FOR DECISION

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### 11.4.1 State Council Agenda Items – 6 May 2024

#### **Background**

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

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

The full State Council Agenda can be found via link: [State Council Agenda - 1 May](#)

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

### **MATTERS FOR DECISION**

#### **7.1 Waste Levy Advocacy Position**

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The Waste Levy and Strategic Waste Funding Policy Statement was first endorsed in 2008 and was amended in 2018.
- The Statement outlines the Local Government position on levies charged on the weight or volume of waste received at licensed premises and the application of those funds to waste management activities.
- In 2023, the WA Government published the findings of a Review of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (WARR) Levy. The consultation summary report and supporting consultant report can be accessed on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) website.
- Key outcomes of the Levy Review included a five-year schedule of increases and a commitment to investigate extending the levy boundary to regional areas.
- The new Waste Levy Advocacy Position uses contemporary language emphasises:
  - Full hypothecation of the Levy;
  - The key areas of expenditure for the Levy;
  - Opposition to the expansion of the Levy's geographic application;
  - Opposition to the application of the Levy to resource recovery activities; and
  - The need for a clear evidence-based rationale for setting and expending the Levy.

- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Advocacy Position in February 2024.

## **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

### **That State Council:**

1. **Rescind the existing WALGA *Waste Levy Policy Statement* and *Advocacy Position 7.4 Waste Management Funding*.**

#### **Local Government considers that:**

1. **Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy funds should be hypothecated to strategic waste management activities in line with the State Waste Strategy and strongly opposes the application of the Levy to non-waste management related activities, such as funding State Government core activities; and**
2. **The Levy should not be applied to licensed landfills outside the metropolitan area.**

2. **Endorse a new Waste Levy Advocacy Position as follows:**

The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy (the Levy) was established in WA to fund programs relating to the management, reduction, reuse, recycling, monitoring or measurement of waste and administering the fund. The current Levy is applied to waste generated, or landfilled, in the Perth metropolitan area.

Currently, only 25% of the collected funds are retained for strategic waste management activities, 75% are allocated to the ongoing operations of the Department responsible for administration of the Levy.

#### **Local Government considers that:**

1. **The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy funds must be fully hypothecated to strategic waste management activities in line with the State Waste Strategy and not be used for non-waste management related activities, such as funding State Government core activities.**
2. **Strategic waste management activities funded by the State Government should:**
  - a. **Provide adequate funding and support for Regional Councils, non-metropolitan and metropolitan Local Governments;**
  - b. **Reflect the targets and priorities within the Waste Strategy;**
  - c. **Fully fund and acknowledge the life cycle costs of infrastructure and services; and**
  - d. **Facilitate the development, implementation and ongoing operation of Product Stewardship Schemes.**
3. **The Levy should not be applied to waste generated in the non-metropolitan area as it is not feasible, or appropriate, to implement the Levy in areas with a limited rate base, access to markets for recycled materials, economic growth and resources to manage such a change.**
4. **The Levy should not be applied to waste received at premises undertaking licensed activities whose primary purpose is resource recovery.**
5. **The Levy must be supported by a clear, evidence-based rationale to demonstrate the suitability of how charges are set, how and where funds are allocated, and the extent to which it is delivering on its objectives.**

## **POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 8.1 Environment Policy Team Report
- 8.2 Governance Policy Team Report
- 8.3 Infrastructure Policy Team Report
- 8.4 People and Place Policy Team Report
- 8.5 Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Report

#### **MATTERS FOR NOTING / INFORMATION**

- 9.1 WALGA 2023 Emergency Management Survey
- 9.2 Tree Retention Model Local Planning Policy
- 9.3 Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Plan Implementation
- 9.4 Planning and Building Performance Monitoring Project
- 9.5 2024 WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Leigh Ballard**

**Seconded: Deputy President Karen Harrington**

**That the Central Country Zone:**

1. **Supports all Matters for Decision as listed above in the May 2024 State Council Agenda; and**
2. **Notes all Matters for Noting, Policy Team and Committee Reports and Organisational Reports as listed in the May 2024 State Council Agenda.**

**CARRIED**

#### **12. Emerging Issues**

##### **POWER WA**

The Zone discussed the relevance of inviting Power WA to a Central Country Zone meeting.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: President Leigh Ballard**

**Seconded: President Katrina Crute**

**That the Central Country Zone extend an invite to Power WA to present at the June meeting in Quairading.**

#### **13. Date, Time, and Place of Next Meetings**

The next Central Country Zone meeting will be held on Friday 14 June 2024 commencing at 9.30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Quairading.

#### **14. Closure**

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.30pm