



Great Eastern Country Zone

Minutes

Held at Kellerberrin Recreation and Leisure Centre

Commenced at 9:30am
Monday 22 February 2021

Table of Contents

1.	OPENING AND WELCOME	4
2.	ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES.....	4
3.	ANNOUNCEMENTS	6
4.	GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS.....	6
4.1	Richard Burnell – Department of Fire and Emergency	6
5.	MINUTES	7
5.1	Confirmation of Minutes from the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held Thursday 26 November 2020 (Attachment 1)	7
5.2	Business Arising from the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting Thursday 26 November 2020	7
5.3	Confirmation of Minutes from the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting of the Executive Committee held Thursday 11 February 2021 (Attachment 2).....	7
5.4	Business Arising from the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee Meeting Tuesday 11 February 2021	8
5.4.1	Exec Item 5.5.3 – Covid-19.....	8
5.4.2	Exec Item 5.3 - Future Drought Funding.....	8
6.	ZONE BUSINESS	9
6.1	Independent Review of Emergency Services Levy	9
6.2	Grass Roots Community Grants' program	10
6.3	Wheatbelt Bushfire Volunteer Support	10
6.4	Proposed Review of the Road Asset Preservation Model (APM)	11
7.	ZONE REPORTS	16
7.1	Zone President Report.....	16
7.2	Local Government Agricultural Freight Group	16
7.3	Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee	16
7.4	Wheatbelt Health MOU Group	17
7.5	WALGA Roadwise	17
8.	WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WALGA) BUSINESS.....	17
8.1	State Councillor Report.....	17
8.2	WALGA Status Report.....	18
8.3	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Decision.....	23
8.4	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Noting / Information	24
8.5	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Organisational Reports.....	24
8.6	Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Policy Forum Reports	25
8.7	WALGA President's Report	25
9.	MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.....	25
10.	AGENCY REPORTS.....	25
10.1	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	25
10.2	Wheatbelt Development Commission	26
10.3	Main Roads Western Australia	26
10.4	Wheatbelt RDA.....	26
11.	EMERGING ISSUES.....	26
11.1	CEO Recruitment Standards	26

11.2	Federal Government National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme	26
11.3	WALGA Transport and Roads Forum	26
11.4	Rural Water Council Meeting	27
12.	URGENT BUSINESS.....	27
13.	DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS	27
14.	CLOSURE.....	27

Great Eastern Country Zone

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Commenced at 9.30am, Monday 22 February 2021

Minutes

1. OPENING AND WELCOME

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Shire of Bruce Rock	President Cr Stephen Strange Cr Ramesh Rajagopalan Mr Darren Mollenoyux Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Cunderdin	Mr Stuart Hobley Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Kellerberrin	President Cr Rodney Forsyth Lenin Pervan Deputy Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Kondinin	Ms Mia Maxfield Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Koorda	President Cr Jannah Stratford Mr Darren Simmons Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Merredin	President Cr Julie Flockart Mr Mark Dacombe Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Mount Marshall	President Cr Tony Sachse – Deputy Chair Mr John Nuttall Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Narembeen	Cr Kellie Mortimore Tamara Clarkson Executive Manager Corporate Services Mr David Blurton Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Nungarin	President Cr Pippa DeLacey Mr Leonard Long Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Tammin	Mr Neville Hale Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Trayning	Cr Geoff Waters Ms Leanne Parola Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Westonia	President Cr Karin Day Mr Jamie Criddle Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Wyalkatchem	President Cr Quentin Davies Mr Peter Klein Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Yilgarn	President Cr Wayne Della Bosca Cr Bryan Close

Mr Peter Clarke Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate

WALGA

Tony Brown, Executive Manager Governance & Organisational Services

Narelle Cant, Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning, Strategy, Policy and Planning

Cliff Simpson – Road Safety Advisor (Wheatbelt North), Infrastructure

Naoimh Donaghy, Governance and Organisational Services Officer

GUESTS

Richard Burnell, Executive Director Corporate Services – Department of Fire and Emergency Management

Jennifer Collins – Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Rob Cossart, Wheatbelt Development Commission, CEO

Grant Arthur, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Director Regional Services

Mandy Walker, RDA Wheatbelt, Director Regional Development

Craig Manton, Main Roads, Regional Manager

Hon Mia Davies, MLA

Apologies

Shire of Narembeen

President Rhonda Cole – Zone Chair

Shire of Dowerin

President Darrel Hudson

Cr Adam Metcalf

Rebecca McCall, Chief Executive Officer

Shire of Cunderdin

Cr Alison Harris

Cr Dennis Whisson – Shire President

Shire of Kellerberrin

Cr Scott O'Neill

Mr Raymond Griffiths Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate

Shire of Kondinin

President Cr Sue Meeking

Cr Bev Gangell

Shire of Koorda

Cr Pamela McWha

Shire of Merredin

Mal Willis

Shire of Mount Marshall

Cr Nick Gillett

Shire of Mukinbudin

President Gary Shadbolt

	Cr Rod Comerford
	Mr Dirk Sellenger Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Nungarin	Cr Gary Coumbe
Shire of Tammin	Cr Glenice Batchelor
	Cr Tania Daniels
Shire of Trayning	President Cr Melanie Brown
Shire of Westonia	Cr Bill Huxtable
Shire of Wyalkatchem	Cr Owen Garner
	Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Agricultural Region
	Hon Laurie Graham MLC, Agricultural Region
	Darren West MLC, Agricultural Region

Attachments

The following are provided as attachments to the agenda:

1. Minutes Great Eastern Country Zone 26 November 2020
2. Minutes GECZ Executive Committee Meeting 11 February 2021
3. COVID-19 Welfare Centre Guide version V1.02_231220
4. Wheatbelt OASG Minutes, 27 January 2021
5. Wheatbelt Human Services Managers Forum
6. The Wheatbelt Education Engagement Plan Action Plans
7. WALGA Presidents Report March 2021
8. RDA Wheatbelt zone update February 2021

State Council Agenda – via link: [State Council Agenda, March 2021](#)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cr Tony Sachse, Shire of Mt Marshall, declared an interest in regards to Item 8.3, “WALGA Applicant for the DFES Local Government Grant Scheme State Emergency Service Capital grants Committee”, and “WALGA Applicant for the DFES Local Government Grants Scheme Bush Fire Services Capital Grants Committee” – both applications are pending Ministerial Approval.

Declaration of interest was acknowledged by the Zone.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS

4.1 Richard Burnell – Department of Fire and Emergency

Richard Burnell, Executive Director Corporate Services – Department of Fire and Emergency Management

The Zone extended an invitation to Richard Burnell, Executive Director Corporate Services – Department of Fire and Emergency Management to provide an update regard to the Telstra battery backup item referred to at the last zone meeting (18, 6.3), November 2020.

Richard presented to the Zone and his presentation is attached.

Comment

Rob Cossart, CEO of the Wheatbelt Development Commission, suggested the Great Eastern Country Zone extend an invite to a Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development representative to expand on funding opportunities in respect to the issue.

NOTED

5. MINUTES

5.1 Confirmation of Minutes from the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held Thursday 26 November 2020 (Attachment 1)

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held on Thursday 26 November 2020 have previously been circulated to Member Councils.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Rodney Forsyth

Seconded: Cr Wayne Della Bosca

That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held Thursday 26 November 2020 are confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

5.2 Business Arising from the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting Thursday 26 November 2020

NIL

5.3 Confirmation of Minutes from the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting of the Executive Committee held Thursday 11 February 2021 (Attachment 2)

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11 February are for endorsement.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Quentin Davies

Seconded: Cr Julie Flockart

That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held Thursday 11 February 2021 be endorsed.

CARRIED

5.4 Business Arising from the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee Meeting Tuesday 11 February 2021

5.4.1 Exec Item 5.5.3 – Covid-19

The Shire of Wyalkatchem raised concerns with the lack of direction provided to Wheatbelt communities during the recent COVID-19 lockdown of the Perth, Peel and South West regions.

Many Wheatbelt residents had spent time in the Perth, Peel and South West regions and then returned to the Wheatbelt and there was very little information provided as to how Wheatbelt communities should handle the situation.

Zone Discussion

Cr Davies voiced concerns at the lack of direction and associated risks issued to Wheatbelt communities in relation to the recent Covid-19 lockdown. It was noted events had taken place in the Wheatbelt during the two week lockdown period which may have put communities at risk due to lack of guidelines from the State government.

Hon Mia Davies MLA shared with the Zone that these concerns have been raised with the Commissioner. The underlying response from the Commissioner being that the lockdown areas were decided on population density and individuals should 'use common sense' in their decision making.

Cr Sachse commended WALGA for issuing timely information echoing State decisions. Going forward, Cr Sachse suggested the State need to offer guidance for future lockdowns directly related to regional communities.

NOTED

5.4.2 Exec Item 5.3 - Future Drought Funding

Background:

Future Drought Funding: - Discussion ensued on obtaining further information on this issue.

Cr Sachse advised of the Federal Government National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme, where it would be good for the State Government to provide additional funding to support this program. However State Government Minister Dave Kelly (DWER) has said that it needs to wait until the new 21/22 State budget. Also, the recent State Government announcement of \$7.3 million infrastructure plan to upgrade and refurbish 70 community dams in the State's Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions and securing funding for 511 water efficiency rebates for WA dry region farmers was discussed.

In addition, the State Government has made a recent announcement on desalination <https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2021/02/Watersmart-Farms-funding-to-drive-on-farm-desalination.aspx> by Minister Alannah MacTiernan, which is a great initiative and is the sort of investment in technology that is needed.

The meeting was advised that information from the Wheatbelt Development Commission is that the funding may be targeted at the Wheatbelt South and Great Southern regions due to their recent water related issues.

The Executive Committee also suggested Rob Cossart, CEO of Wheatbelt Development Committee be invited to the next meeting to discuss this State Government funding initiative

The Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee resolved:

1. That the Hon Minister for Water, Dave Kelly be invited to discuss the National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme and potential State Government funding
2. That Rob Cossart, CEO, Wheatbelt Development Commission be invited to present on the State Government's new \$1.5 million Watersmart Farms project to research sustainable water supply options and optimise on-farm desalination technology to help build drought resilient WA farms

Due to the State Government entering caretaker mode the above speakers are unavailable for this meeting

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: Cr Julie Flockart

That the Zone defer this item to the next meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone on 27 April 2021

CARRIED

6. ZONE BUSINESS

6.1 Independent Review of Emergency Services Levy

Background

At the Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils (WEROC) Inc. Board Meeting held on Thursday 26 November 2020, a presentation was given by Mr. Darren Brown the Executive Officer of Bushfire Volunteers WA.

In his presentation, Mr. Brown highlighted the lack of transparency on behalf of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) with regard to how the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) is expended.

Rebekah Burges, EO WEROC emailed the following;

The WEROC Inc. Board felt that the issues outlined by Mr. Brown (EO of Bushfire Volunteers WA) should be addressed at the Zone level as it impacts all Local Governments not just those that belong to WEROC. The Board resolved to ask that an independent review of the Emergency Services Levy be requested by WALGA on behalf of the Great Eastern Country Zone.

Comment

The committee were advised that a full review of the ESL was undertaken by the Economic Regulation Authority in 2017. It would be appropriate to ask DFES for some further information about their progress with actioning the reviews' recommendations.

DFES Commissioner Klemm will be attending the State Council Strategic Forum on 3 March which will provide an opportunity for State Council to discuss Emergency Management matters, including the ESL, with him.

The Zone could invite a representative from DFES to attend the April 2021 Zone meeting to present on the ESL, which will assist to gain a broader understanding of the current issues.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ramesh Rajagopalan
Seconded: Cr Rodney Forsyth

That the Great Eastern Country Zone invite a representative from DFES to present on the ESL and provide a broader understanding of the issues.

CARRIED

6.2 Grass Roots Community Grants' program

Background

The CBH Group is Australia's largest co-operative and a leader in the Australian grain industry, with operations extending along the value chain from grain storage, handling, transport, marketing and processing.

CBH offer a grants program which provides financial assistance to grain growing communities for projects which contribute to the health and vitality of their communities.

CBH's '[Grass Roots Community Grants](#)' program is now open for applications, closing on Sunday 28 February.

Some key points on this round of the program:

- Closes 28 February. Next round opens 1 August
- Grants available for community-related events up (funding limit up to \$5,000) and small scale infrastructure projects (funding limit up to \$20,000)
- One application per round per organisation
- Applications take approx. 6 weeks to assess from closing date and are assessed by a committee made up of growers (Growers' Advisory Council (GAC) members), regional and HO employees.
- We have a total of \$150,000 this round to allocate to events/projects

Is your proposal right for CBH ?

Applications are assessed on the following criteria:

- Located within a core grain growing community in WA
- Fit with CBH's purpose, values and behaviour (please review our website for what we do not fund)
- Contribute to the vitality, development, well being and/or safety of grain growing regions
- Promote a positive image of agricultural industry and as an employer
- Have value, relevance and credibility to our growers, customers, CBH and/or its employees
- Promote the development of future community and industry leaders

Any questions from community groups can be directed to: corporateaffairs@cbh.com.au

NOTED

6.3 Wheatbelt Bushfire Volunteer Support

The Great Eastern Country Zone, Executive committee noted that many Wheatbelt volunteer fire fighters assisted in the recent fires.

Large numbers of volunteer fire fighters from the Wheatbelt have attended the Beverley, York, Wundowie, Red Gully and Woorloo fires this summer. Also volunteers were called out to help fight a fire northwest of the Flying Fox Mine on the Kondinin /Dundas boundary area.

This excellent response has undoubtedly helped minimize the spread of these fires, and the associated risk to personal injury and property damage.

NOTED

6.4 Proposed Review of the Road Asset Preservation Model (APM)

By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure WALGA

Recommendation

That the Zone:

- Provide feedback to the WALGA Infrastructure Policy Team regarding a preferred advocacy approach to any review of the Road Asset Preservation Model (APM).

Executive Summary

- A Zone Council recommendation to review the Road Asset Preservation Model (APM) was referred to the Infrastructure Policy Team in December 2020. The Policy Team resolved to seek views from Zones before recommending the development of a formal State Council agenda paper.
- This paper sets out options to guide the development of a Zone resolution.
- The Asset Preservation Model was developed as a Commonwealth requirement for the distribution of Commonwealth Government road grants among Local Governments in an efficient and equitable manner, taking account of local asset preservation needs and costs. It is currently used to distribute a range of Federal and State Government grant funding allocations.
- Despite being used to allocate large sums of public funding, operation of the APM is not well understood within the Local Government sector.
- The APM is not readily accessible to Local Governments. Limited documentation and complexity means that more open access alone would not be helpful in achieving strong understanding of the processes that underpin the output.
- Complexity of the APM makes it difficult to predict the effects on funding allocations of changes to the model or input parameters.
- This paper proposes five options that could be considered to address this issue, for WALGA to advocate to the Grants Commission.
- The options are not mutually exclusive, and some could be combined as a staged approach.
- The five options are:
 1. Re-format and re-label the model, to improve its legibility for all users and make it available to the Local Government sector in a form that would enable stakeholders to understand it.
 2. Review the parameters within the model, in order to increase the accuracy of road maintenance costs within the model.
 3. Advocate to the Grants Commission to undertake a review of the cost regions and minimum standards to ensure that these appropriately reflect the costs faced by Local Government and the current development of the road network
 4. Advocate to the Grants Commission to undertake an appropriately-resourced process to review and rebuild the road Asset Preservation Model. This new model should be as simple as possible while still delivering an equitable distribution of funding among Local

Governments. Its variables and assumptions should be easily indefinable to model users, being clearly labelled and documented.

5. Accept the status quo with no further action

Background

A Zone Council recommendation to review the APM was referred to the Infrastructure Policy Team in December 2020. The Team resolved to seek feedback from the Zones as the matter had not been widely identified as an issue of concern.

The Asset Preservation Model was developed by Main Roads WA and Local Government representatives, to distribute the untied roads component of the Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants between Local Governments.

The WA Local Government Grants Commission took over responsibility for distributing the identified Commonwealth road funds and undertook a comprehensive review of the Asset Preservation Model and modified and refined it. Application of the APM has since been broadened and it is now used to determine the distribution between Local Governments of a range of state and federal funding.

To assist Local Governments make decisions regarding preferred approaches to the use and development of the Asset Preservation Model a manual has been developed by WALGA describing the APM and how it functions. The manual can be viewed [here](#).

Problem Statement

The Road Asset Preservation Model is used to allocate large sums of funding. Despite the importance of the model, it is not widely understood, due to its complexity and limited documentation. This results in a lack of transparency, risk of corporate memory loss, the risk of unfair or otherwise inappropriate allocations of funding, and the reputational risk due to funds distribution not being fully explainable and region allocations being subject to question.

Options

There are five options identified in the text below, and the table on the final page of this paper. Note that the options are not mutually exclusive and all or some of them could be recommended to be implemented in phased approach.

1. Advocate to the Grants Commission to re-format and re-label the APM, to improve its legibility for all users. A detailed record should also be made of the model's parameters, and the process that was used for determining their values.
2. Advocate to the Grants Commission for a review of the various parameters contained within the APM, such as the array of annual maintenance costs for different asset types, road reconstruction frequencies and the components of reconstruction costs. This option would increase the accuracy of road maintenance costs within the model, although would not address the underlying problems of excessive complexity and a lack of transparency and predictability.
3. Advocate to the Grants Commission to undertake a review of the cost regions and minimum standards to ensure that these appropriately reflect the costs faced by Local Government and the current development of the road network.
4. Advocate to the Grants Commission to undertake an appropriately-resourced process to review and rebuild the APM. This new model should be as simple as possible while still delivering an equitable distribution of funding among Local Governments. Its variables and assumptions should be easily indefinable to model users, being clearly labelled and documented.
5. Retain Status quo.

It should be noted that these are all advocacy positions. The Road Asset Preservation Model is controlled by the WA Local Government Grants Commission and any decisions regarding development of the model or use of a different approach would be made by the Commission. It must be noted that if Options 2, 3 or 4 are implemented, there is a risk of some Local Governments receiving a lower grant allocation. This risk may be mitigated by advocating for increased funding from the State or Federal Governments, although there is no guarantee that such funding would be forthcoming.

The current membership of the WA Local Government Grants Commission is:

- Chairperson — Hon Cr Fred Riebeling AM JP
- Deputy Chairperson — Mr Luke Stevens, Legal Counsel, DLGSC
- Metropolitan Member — Cr Deb Hamblin, Deputy Mayor, City of Rockingham
- Country Urban Member — Dr Wendy Giles, Councillor, City of Bunbury
- Country Rural Member — Cr Ian West, Shire of Irwin
- Deputy to the Deputy Chairperson — Ms Darrelle Merritt, A/Director - Strategic Initiatives, DLGSC
- Deputy Metropolitan Member — Vacant
- Deputy Country Urban Member — Cr Deborah Botica, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Deputy Country Rural Member — Cr Moira Girando, President, Shire of Coorow

Analysis of the Options

The options have varying levels of cost, effort and risk attached to them.

Changes to the APM would affect the funding allocation between Local Governments in ways that are difficult to predict, due to the complexity of the model. The total available funding is fixed, so an increase in one Local Government's funding would necessarily reduce the level of funding available to others, unless additional funding can be secured.

There are also risks associated with no change being made to the APM. The model's complexity and incomplete documentation and labelling creates a risk of corporate memory loss. There is also a reputational risk associated with large sums of money being allocated based on a model that is not well understood by the Local Government sector.

Comparatively simple and lower-cost changes can be made to the APM, under Options 1, 2 and 3. These options would address some of the concerns raised here, but do not address the underlying problems noted above.

Next Steps

Resolutions made by the Zones will guide the development of an agenda item for the next meeting of State Council, to provide WALGA with direction on the sector's preference for its advocacy position regarding the Road Asset Preservation Model.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
	Reformat and label	Review model cost parameters	Review cost regions/min. standards	Full model review and rebuild	Status quo
Advantages	Improves operation of existing model. Helps retain corporate memory. Improves transparency. Low risk and cost, in the short term.	Improves link between funding allocation and road maintenance costs.	Addresses concerns about inappropriate groupings of Local Governments.	Opportunity to review the model objectives. Improvement in transparency. Opportunity to incorporate contemporary modelling and user functionality.	Avoids conflict between Local Governments over funds distribution. Lowest short-term risk. No direct cost.
Disadvantages	Does not address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> questionable parameter values. complexity and transparency. 	May require some additional resourcing. Does not address complexity and transparency. Possible reduction in funding for some LGs.	May require some additional resourcing. Does not address complexity and transparency. Likely reduction in funding for some LGs.	If no material impact on funds distribution, the rationale for the exercise may be questionable. Would require additional resourcing.	Does not address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> questionable parameter values. complexity and transparency corporate memory issues.
Risks / Dependencies	Reputational risk, due to funds distribution not being fully explainable.	Reputational risk, due to funds distribution not being fully explainable.	Reputational risk, due to funds distribution not being fully explainable. Continued risk of corporate memory loss.	Difficult to predict the distribution of funds. A review may trigger disagreement between Local Governments over the distribution of funds.	Reputational risk, due to funds distribution not being fully explainable and regional allocations being subject to question.

				The Grants Commission may not agree to implement.	Continued risk of corporate memory loss.
Effort / Cost	Low-medium	High	Medium	Very high	None
Notes		Assumes Option 1 also undertaken: reformat and labelling.		Mutually exclusive of the other options or as an aspirational addition.	Mutually exclusive of the other five options.

ZONE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Rodney Forsyth
Seconded: Cr Wayne Della Bosca

That the Great Eastern Country Zone retain Status Quo (Option 5) and request further information to explain the current model at a future meeting.

CARRIED

7. ZONE REPORTS

7.1 Zone President Report

Zone President Rhonda Cole is an apology for this meeting.

NIL

NOTED

7.2 Local Government Agricultural Freight Group

Cr Julie Flockart

There has not been a meeting of the Wheatbelt Freight group, so there was no report for the February meeting.

NOTED

7.3 Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee

By Cr Tony Sachse (Delegate)

The last Wheatbelt DEMC Meeting was on Wednesday, 21st October, the minutes of which were attached to the GECZ meeting 26/11/2020 report. The next Wheatbelt DEMC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 10th March 2021.

Although you will probably have seen the Department of Communities COVID-19 Welfare Centre Guide version V1.02_231220 (released 23rd December 2020) through your LEMC's, I've attached it to this report for information purposes – Attachment 3

The Wheatbelt OASG met on 27th January, 2021 (Attachment 4) and there was also a special meeting on 1/02/2021 to discuss the Emergency State of WA Actions on the recent COVID-19 outbreak. The next meeting is scheduled for 23rd February 2021.

The Wheatbelt Human Services Managers Forum (WHSMF) Meeting met on Thursday, 19th November 2020 (Attachment 5). The Wheatbelt Education Engagement Plan (WEEP) Actions were discussed at length during the meeting (Attachment 6). The next WHSMF is on Thursday, 18th February, 2021.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geoff Waters

Seconded: Cr Julie Flockart

That the Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee Report and attachments be received.

CARRIED

Comment

Cr Flockart commended Cr Sachse on his contribution to the Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee and thanked him for his time and efforts in bringing reports to the Great Eastern Country Zone.

7.4 Wheatbelt Health MOU Group

By Cr Glenice Batchelor

Cr Batchelor was an apology for this meeting.

NOTED

7.5 WALGA Roadwise

Cliff Simpson, WALGA Road Safety Advisor (Wheatbelt North), Infrastructure, informed the zone there was no report at this time, however he will provide a report to the next meeting.

NOTED

8. WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WALGA) BUSINESS

8.1 State Councillor Report

Cr Stephen Strange

Cr Stephen Strange presented his State councillor report.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ramesh Rajagopalan

Seconded: Cr Geoff Waters

That the State Councillor Report be received

Comment

Cr Strange advised that there has been some comment in the sector relating to delays in finalising the 19/20 financial audit. The meeting noted that a number of Local Governments in the Zone expressed delays with the signing off on the audit. One Local Government was happy with the audit process.

RESOLVED

That WALGA note the Zone comments that some Local Governments have experienced delays with the finalization of the 19/20 financial year audits and enquire from the sector on their satisfaction or otherwise to the audit process.

8.2 WALGA Status Report

By Tony Brown, Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

Presenting the Status Report for February 2021 which contains WALGA's responses to the resolutions of previous Zone Meetings.

GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE STATUS REPORT February 2021

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Great Eastern C	2019 June 27 Zone Agenda Item 12.1 Government Regional Officer Housing	That the Zone request WALGA to advocate on the impact of Government Regional Officer Housing on retaining public sector professionals (Doctors, nurses, teachers) in the Great Eastern Country Zone.	<p>In May 2019, the McGowan Government deferred a planned increase to GROH rents in 2019-20. The next increase of \$30pw was due to come into effect 1 July 2019.</p> <p>https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/05/McGowan-Government-temporarily-defers-increase-to-GROH-rents.aspx</p> <p>WALGA notes and includes the Zones Recommendation in its advocacy for GROH and greater service support for regional and remote Western Australian Local Governments, acknowledging the importance of this topic in the coming months.</p> <p>WALGA has been advised by WAPOL and the relevant State Government agency who confirm the rental freeze to GROH properties will remain until the completion of the review of the GROH Tenant Rent Setting Framework. Further work has been done in strengthening the partnerships between WAPOL officers and key Local Government officers in specified areas of concerns.</p> <p>Department of Communities modelling and draft ERC proposal has been elevated within the Department. The Director General has called for a working group to be established to include representatives from GROH, of which the TSRF review will be included.</p>	Ongoing	Narelle Cant Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning ncant@walga.asn.au 9213 2078

			<p>In July 2020 WALGA wrote to the Director General at the Department of Communities seeking a response to WALGA State Council July resolution:</p> <p>That WALGA contact the Director General of the Department of Housing to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek action and acknowledge the extra challenges in attracting and retaining public sector staff in remote and rural areas of the state 2. Immediately review and address the issue of insufficient GROH housing (and the high cost of subsidised rental) for public sector staff and actively seek and enter into Joint Venture arrangements with Councils to address the shortfall in accommodation 3. Request that the agencies be requested to engage with WALGA to seek a solution to the current short supply of GROH housing within all regions. <p>In August 2020, WALGA received a response from the Director General, Communities, which stated that the Department of Communities has diverted much of its resources towards the social and economic recovery of the State. Therefore work on the planned GROH review is placed on hold until the conclusion of the COVID-19 emergency period. It was acknowledged that GROH plays an important role in attracting and retaining staff in regional and remote communities. WALGA met with relevant staff from the Department of Communities on 21 August 2020 to further discuss the issue.</p> <p>WALGA is meeting with the Department of Communities on 18 February to receive an update on GROH.</p>		
Great Eastern C	2020 February 26 Zone Agenda Item 7.1 Federal Government Drought Communities	That the Great Eastern Country Zone requests WALGA, in consultation with ALGA, to liaise with the WA State Government Ministers for Water, Agriculture and Environment to provide a coordinated holistic response in respect to the ongoing drying climate issues and access to the Drought Communities Funding Program.	<p>State Council Resolution</p> <p>That State Council endorse the recommendation from the Great Eastern Country Zone relating to the Federal Government Drought Communities Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Great Eastern Country Zone requests WALGA, in consultation with ALGA, to liaise with the WA State Government Ministers for Water, Agriculture and Environment to provide a coordinated holistic response in respect to the ongoing drying climate 	Ongoing	Narelle Cant Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning ncant@walga.asn.au 9213 2078

			<p>issues and access to the Drought Communities Funding Program.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 37.1/2020</p> <p>WALGA has met with the WA Minister for Water Chief of Staff and is lobbying through both the State and ALGA for a third round of funding, bespoke to Western Australia.</p> <p>WALGA has written to the Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Water and the Minister for Local Government on the issue, seeking their support to review the drought funding mechanisms for Western Australia. At the WALGA webinar on May 8th, the Minister for Agriculture committed to advocating to the Commonwealth in conjunction with WALGA.</p> <p>On August 7 the WALGA Deputy President met with Senator Dean Smith as part of the advocacy approach, and WALGA is now writing to all Western Australian Federal Government members to also request additional funding for the National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme.</p> <p>WALGA has also met with Senator Brockman, and is also in discussion with Minister MacTiernans Chief of Staff on the issue.</p> <p>Correspondance from Minister Littleproud received in October highlighted that the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program details are still being worked through with the State Government, who are yet to commit to co-funding the program. WALGA is currently seeking an assurance from Minister MacTiernan that it will.</p>		
Great Eastern C	2018 November 29 Zone Agenda Item 7.3 Container Deposit Scheme Locations	That the Great Eastern Country Zone requests that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All Local Governments be guaranteed, as a minimum, one flexible refund point in their area. 2. A flexible access point should be defined as a refund point which, as a minimum, is open 16 hours each two 	<p>The Container Deposit Scheme was launched in October 2020. To date the Scheme has delivered over 200 refund points across WA. This will increase to the required 229 by 1 October 2021.</p> <p>WALGA will continue to advocate for, as a minimum, one flexible refund point per Local Government area. WALGA has also raised with Government the definitions of flexible refund points and how this is applied. The Environment Minister has indicated the definitions will be reviewed in May</p>	November 2020	Narelle Cant Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning ncant@walga.asn.au 9213 2078

		<p>week period, including at least 8 hours at weekends</p> <p>The State Government provide appropriate funding for the refund points.</p>	<p>2021 and WALGA and other stakeholders will be consulted as part of the process.</p>		
Grt Eastern C	2020 25 June Zone Agenda Item Zone Comment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That WALGA advocate to the Federal Government to request additional funding for the National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme as the fund has been fully subscribed one year into a three year program. 2. That WALGA advocate to the State Government to reinstate the Farm Water Rebate Scheme. 	<p>On August 7 the WALGA Deputy President met with Senator Dean Smith as part of the advocacy approach, and WALGA is wrote to all Western Australian Federal Government members requesting additional funding for the National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme.</p> <p>Correspondance received from Minister Littleproud on October 20 highlighted his announcement with Minister Pitt on October 2 that a further \$50m would be made available for the this financial year for the Scheme.</p> <p>WALGA is continuing discussions with the State Government for the reinstating of the Farm Water Rebate Scheme.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Narelle Cant Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning ncant@walga.asn.au 9213 2078</p>
Grt Eastern C	2020 25 June Zone Agenda Item 7.3 Telecommunications – Minister Response	<p>That WALGA again raise the issue of lack of communication when power outages occur with the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) and the Federal/State Government politicians advising of the lack of response from Telstra on this issue and the extreme concern in an emergency situation that this causes.</p>	<p>WALGA has met with the Executive Manager of Corporate Services DFES to discuss a funding application to the Commonwealth for application to the Commonwealth resilience improvement funding package. It has several key pillars, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$7m for installing 2000 satellite dishes onto fire stations 2. \$18m for hardening the mobile phone network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stage 1 of \$10m will be providing battery back-up for towers and extending battery life – for those towers delivered in rounds 1 and 2 of the Mobile Black Spot Program. Also includes generators in some cases. - stage 2 will be a grants program for further hardening work 3. \$10m for the expansion of mobile satellite communications capability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$1.7m for NBN Co to expand its fleet of Sky Muster trucks and 12 portable satellite FlyAway kits - \$8.3m for competitive grants <p>WALGA is in discussion with DFES as to the priority elements that would constitute a WA funding bid to assist in resolving the telecommunications issue.</p>	<p>November 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Narelle Cant Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning ncant@walga.asn.au 9213 2078</p>

			This Item is the subject of an Item for Noting in the March 2021 State Council Agenda.		
Grt Eastern C	2 December 2020 State Council Agenda Item 5.1 Local Government Act Review Advocacy Paper – Key Issues from Recent Inquiries into Local Government	<p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing advocacy relating to the Review of the Local Government Act 1995 be noted; and, 2. The Advocacy Positions for a New Local Government Act: Key issues from recent Inquiries into Local Government – be endorsed. <p>ZONE COMMENT</p> <p>The Great Eastern Country Zone would like to highlight their opposition to a recommendation from the Local Government Act Review Panel in relation to Elected Members and Candidates having to declare any political affiliations. The Zone believe that politics should not be involved in Local Government.</p>	<p>The Zones position was not included in the State Council resolution, however the Zones position on removing political affiliations from Local Government will be pursued.</p> <p>State Council Resolution</p> <p>That WALGA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advise the Department of Mines Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) that the registration of Building Engineers in WA is supported. 2. Request that DMIRS also consider the registration of Electrical Engineers, Façade Engineers, Energy Assessors, Bush Fire Consultants, Access consultants, Swimming pool companies, Patio installers and Demolition contractors. 3. Request that DMIRS clarify that dilapidation reports may only be undertaken by Registered Engineers. 4. Provide this report to Department of Mines Industry Regulation and Safety as feedback on the Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement. <p>RESOLUTION 143.6/2020 CARRIED</p>	February 2021	<p>Tony Brown Executive Manager Governance and Organisational Services 9213 2051 tbrown@walga.asn.au</p>

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.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Wayne Della Bosca
Seconded: Cr Kellie Mortimore

That the Great Eastern Country Zone WALGA February 2021 Status Report be noted.

CARRIED

8.3 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Decision

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 full State Council Agenda can be found via link: [State Council Agenda - February 2021](#)

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

5.1 External Oversight and Intervention – Authorised Inquiries and Show Cause Notices

That WALGA:

1. Continues to advocate for the State Government to ensure that there is proper resourcing of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries to conduct timely inquiries and interventions when instigated under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1995; and
2. Requests the Minister for Local Government to:
 - a. Engage with affected Local Governments in order to attempt to resolve identified issues, improve performance and achieve good governance before considering an intervention under Part 8 of the Local Government Act 1995;
 - b. Provide written reasons prior to issuing any Show Cause Notices;
 - c. Require regular progress reports to be provided to any Local Government that is the subject of any Authorised Inquiry; and
 - d. Require that any Authorised Inquiry be conducted within a specified timeframe that may be extended with the approval of the Minister.

5.2 Cost of Revaluations

That WALGA advocate to the State Government for the equal distribution of valuation costs for properties where the Water Corporation, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Local Government require the valuation.

5.3 Eligibility of Slip On Fire Fighting Units for Local Government Grants Scheme Funding

That WALGA:

1. Supports the inclusion of capital costs of Slip On Fire Fighting Units including for Farmer Response Brigades (for use on private motor vehicles) on the Eligible List of the Local Governments Grants Scheme (LGGS).
2. Requests the Local Government Grants Scheme Working Group to include this matter on the Agenda of their next Meeting (expected March 2021).
3. Requests WALGA to work with the Local Government Grants Scheme Working Group to develop appropriate operational guidelines and procedures for the safe use of Slip On Fire Fighting Units funded in accordance with the LGGS.
4. Supports the update of the WALGA membership of the Local Government Grants Scheme Working Group to include one Local Government Elected Member and one Local Government Officer, with these appointments determined through the WALGA Selection Committee process.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange

Seconded: Cr Karin Day

That the Great Eastern Country Zone supports all Matters for Decision as listed above in the 3 March 2021 State Council Agenda.

CARRIED

8.4 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Noting / Information

- 6.1 **Local Government Car Parking Guideline – Western Australia**
- 6.2 **Submission – Draft Local Government Regulations Amendment (Employee Code of Conduct) Regulations 2020**
- 6.3 **Submission – Proposed Reportable Conduct Scheme for Western Australia**
- 6.4 **Submission – Draft State Planning Policy 4.2: Activity Centre**
- 6.5 **Submission – Registration of Builders (and Related Occupations) Reforms**
- 6.6 **Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)**

8.5 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Organisational Reports

- 7.1 **Key Activity Reports**
 - 7.1.1 **Report on Key Activities, Commercial and Communications**
 - 7.1.2 **Report on Key Activities, Governance and Organisational Services**
 - 7.1.3 **Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure**
 - 7.1.4 **Report on Key Activities, Strategy, Policy and Planning**

8.6 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Policy Forum Reports

7.2 Policy Forum Reports

- 7.2.1 Mayors/Presidents Policy Forum**
- 7.2.2 Mining Community Policy Forum**
- 7.2.3 Container Deposit Legislation Policy Forum**
- 7.2.4 Economic Development Forum**

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Julie Flockart
Seconded: Cr Geoff Waters

That the Great Eastern Country Zone notes the following reports contained in the WALGA February 2021 State Council Agenda.

- **Matters for Noting/Information;**
- **Organisational Reports; and**
- **Policy Forum Report**

CARRIED

8.7 WALGA President's Report

The WALGA President's Report is attached to the Agenda. (Attachment 7)

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Kellie Mortimore
Seconded: Cr Pippa DeLacey

That the Great Eastern Country Zone notes the WALGA President's Report

CARRIED

9. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Hon Mia Davies presented to the Zone and highlighted the importance of the upcoming State election for Wheatbelt communities.

10. AGENCY REPORTS

10.1 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

A representative was invited to the meeting to present on the recent regulations introduced:

- **Elected Member Code of Conduct**

- Standards for CEO Recruitment, Performance Review and Termination
- Employee Code of Conduct

The Department advised that the legislation staff were not available for this meeting, however they will organise webinars on the regulations in the future.

Jennifer Collins from the Wheatbelt office, provided a report for the meeting.

[DLGSC Zone Update Feb 2021](#)

NOTED

10.2 Wheatbelt Development Commission

Mr Rob Cossart, Wheatbelt Development Commission CEO, will provided an update for the zone.

NOTED

10.3 Main Roads Western Australia

Mr Craig Manton provided an update to the Zone.

NOTED

10.4 Wheatbelt RDA

Mandy Walker, RDA Wheatbelt presented to the Zone. Report was attached with the Agenda (Attachment 8)

NOTED

11. EMERGING ISSUES

11.1 CEO Recruitment Standards

Mia Maxfield shared concerns on the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries guidelines on CEO Recruitment Standards. The DLGSC have been advised and will be making corrections to the guidelines.

NOTED

11.2 Federal Government National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme

Rob Cossart, CEO Wheatbelt Development Commission, will present at the next meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone.

11.3 WALGA Transport and Roads Forum

The Zone was informed that the WALGA Transport and Roads Forum is now taking place on Friday 14 May, 2021 at Crown Perth.

11.4 Rural Water Council Meeting

The Zone was informed that the Rural Water Council Meeting is now taking place on Friday 19 March, 2021 at 10am in Merredin. Attendance is encouraged.

12. URGENT BUSINESS

13. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone will be held in Merredin on Tuesday 27 April 2021, commencing at 9.30am.

14. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.02pm.