

North Metropolitan Zone Minutes

22 April 2026

**Hosted by the City of Joondalup
90 Boas Avenue, Joondalup**

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PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK

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.

Impact on Local Government Sector Impact on Local Government sector without intervention	High	Medium	Low
Reach Number of member Local Governments affected	Sector-wide	Significant (multiple regions, Zones, or bands)	Few
Influence Capacity to influence decision makers	High	Medium	Low
Principles Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence	Strong	Partial	Peripheral
Clarity Policy change needed is clear and well-defined	Clear	Partial	Unclear
Decision-maker support Level of support among decision-makers (political and administrative)	High	Medium	Low
Public support Level of support among the public or other stakeholders	High	Medium	Low
Positive consequences for WALGA Prospect of positive consequences for WALGA. E.g. enhanced standing among members or leverage for other issues.	High	Medium	Low
Negative consequences for WALGA Prospect of negative consequences for WALGA for not undertaking the advocacy effort. E.g. diminished standing among members or other stakeholders.	High	Medium	Low
Partnerships Potential for partnerships with other stakeholders	Yes (3+)	Possibly (1-2)	No (0)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Zone Delegates were requested to provide sufficient written notice, wherever possible, of amendments to recommendations within the State Council or Zone Agenda to the Zone Chair and Secretariat prior to the Zone meeting.

Agenda Papers were emailed 7 days prior to the meeting date.

Confirmation of Attendance An attendance sheet was circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. LGIRS Local Government Division Report
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Zone Status Report
4. President's Report
5. North Metropolitan Zone Standing Orders

1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

Zone Chair, Cr Lewis Hutton opened the meeting at 6:33 pm.

1.2 ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS	4 Voting Delegates from each Member Local Government
City of Joondalup	Cr Lewis Hutton (Chair) Cr Russ Fishwick JP Cr Rebecca Pizzey Cr John Raftis Mr Jamie Parry, Director Governance and Strategy – non-voting
City of Stirling	Cr Suzanne Migdale Cr Michael Dudek (Deputy) Cr Stephanie Proud JP – <i>arrived late</i>
City of Wanneroo	Cr James Rowe Cr Bronwyn Smith Cr Eman Seif JP Cr Alex Figg Ms Madonna Iliffe, Acting Manager Corporate Governance and Council Services – non-voting
WALGA Secretariat	Ms Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance Ms Jessica Varady, Policy Advisor Environment

1.3 APOLOGIES

MEMBERS

City of Joondalup Mr Nico Claassen, Acting Chief Executive Officer

City of Stirling Mayor Mark Irwin
Cr Rob Papatde
Mr Steven Rodic, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Brad Sillence, Manager Governance

City of Wanneroo Mr Bill Parker, Chief Executive Officer

Secretariat Ms Jade Mains, Senior Policy Advisor Environment

Guest Speaker

Reconciliation WA Ms Jody Nunn, Chief Executive Officer

Invited Members of Parliament Ms Emily Hamilton – Member for Joondalup
Ms Caitlin Collins MLA – Member for Hillarys
Hon Dan Caddy MLC

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the Zone members, acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community. We embrace the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia, including Boorloo (Perth), on the land of the Whadjuk Noongar People, where this meeting is being held and we acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present.

The WALGA Secretariat assumed the Chair for the Election of State Council Representative.

3 STATE COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE – EXTRAORDINARY ELECTION

Following the election of Mayor Mark Irwin from the City of Stirling as WALGA President, nominations were sought from Zone Delegates for the extraordinary vacancy for State Council representative for the North Metropolitan Zone.

3.1 ELECTION OF STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Important information for those nominating: *Following the election, the new State Councillor will be invited to attend a short induction to WALGA, and a briefing on the next State Council Agenda. The next State Council meeting will be held regionally in the Shire of Pingelly on Wednesday-Thursday, 6-7 May.*

The term of office for this position will commence immediately following this election and will conclude the day before the Ordinary Meeting of State Council in December 2027.

In accordance with the guidelines endorsed by State Council, candidates will be afforded the opportunity to make a two-minute election bid prior to the secret ballot being taken.

A call for nominations was distributed to Zone Delegates via email on 9 April 2026.

Nominations received prior to the Agenda distribution is as follows:

Cr Suzanne Migdale City of Stirling

Further nominations were called from the floor. No further nominations were received.

DECLARATION

That Cr Suzanne Migdale be elected as State Council Representative of the North Metropolitan Zone for the remaining term until December 2027.

3.2 ELECTION OF DEPUTY STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE (IF REQUIRED)

As newly elected State Councillor, Cr Suzanne Migdale was an incumbent Deputy State Councillor, a vacancy has arisen.

Nominations were called from the floor for the position of Deputy State Council Representative of the North Metropolitan Zone. No nominations were received.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Lewis Hutton
Seconded: Cr Suzanne Migdale

That the North Metropolitan Zone defer the consideration of this item to the end of the meeting.

CARRIED

Zone Chair, Cr Lewis Hutton reassumed the Chair.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Zone Delegates must declare to the Chair any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before the Zone as soon as they become aware of it. Zone Delegates and Deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Zone and State Council. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

Nil.

5 DEPUTATIONS

5.1 RECONCILIATION WA – KOLBANG YANGINY

Ms Jody Nunn, Chief Executive Officer of Reconciliation WA was scheduled to present on the [Kolbang Yanginy website](#), a collaborative project between Reconciliation WA, WALGA, and State Agencies with support from Lotterywest. Unfortunately, Jody was a late apology due to illness.

The Zone considered whether to support rescheduling Jody's presentation to the June Zone meeting.

The Zone AGREED to support Reconciliation WA attending the June Zone meeting.

6 AGENCY REPORTS

6.1 LGIRS LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION REPORT

The April 2026 report from LGIRS Local Government Division was enclosed as an attachment.

LGIRS has also requested to attend the June Zone meeting, and provide a short ten-minute presentation to the Zone on a topic of choice, as per below:

- Regulatory Reforms
- Local Government Commitments
- Off Road Vehicles
- Local Government Grants Commission
- Animal Management Initiatives
- Audit, Risk & Improvement Committees
- Statutory Approvals and Local laws
- Financial Support and Advice

To assist with the coordination of this presentation, the Zone was requested to nominate one topic of choice from the above list.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr James Rowe

Seconded: Cr Lewis Hutton

That the North Metropolitan Zone submit the following topic of interest to LGIRS for their presentation to the Zone at the June meeting: Regulatory Reforms.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The previous meeting Minutes of the North Metropolitan Zone were circulated to Zone Delegates and was provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Bronwyn Smith
Seconded: Cr Eman Seif

That the Minutes of the meeting of the North Metropolitan Zone held on 18 February 2026 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

8 BUSINESS ARISING

8.1 STATUS REPORT

A Status Report outlining any recent updates and/or actions taken on the Zone's previous meetings resolutions for both State Council and Zone items was enclosed as an attachment. These item updates will remain on the Status Report until completed or no further action is required by WALGA.

Noted

8.2 ELECTED MEMBER PROTECTIONS LETTER

At the February 2026 Zone meeting, members resolved that the North Metropolitan Zone:

...” requests the Minister for Local Government and LGIRS to commission a review into the use and/or influence of social media pages positioned as community or resident groups, and potential proxy pages, during the 2025 Western Australian Local Government Elections, to identify any breaches of existing codes or misuse of position, and to inform the development of stronger legislative and regulatory frameworks for future elections.”

A copy of the letter and the response received from Minister Beazley were attached with the Agenda.

Noted

9 ZONE BUSINESS

9.1 ADVOCACY FOR INCREASED STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR THE TARGETED UNDERGROUND POWER PROGRAM (TUPP)

By City Of Wanneroo

BACKGROUND

At its meeting in February 2026, City of Wanneroo's Council considered a Motion on Notice (MN01-02/26) for stronger and better coordinated advocacy for undergrounding of power in the City of Wanneroo and resolved:

That Council REQUESTS the Chief Executive Officer to prepare a report for the next available meeting of the WALGA North Metro Zone:

- 1. detailing the impact of regular power outages in established suburbs with above ground power infrastructure; and*
- 2. requesting that the Zone, and subsequently State Council, to advocate for increased State Government funding for the TUPP initiative.*

There are many suburbs that continue to be serviced by overhead power supply. Western Power's current projections for the undergrounding of power to many of the outer metro area suburbs is likely to be 20 to 25 years and beyond. Refer to Western Power's Network Renewal Map link here [Network Renewal Map](#).

Established suburbs with overhead power lines continue to experience more frequent disruptions and power outages. Power outages are especially frustrating during extreme weather periods, as pole top fires, wind and rainstorms impact the frequency and significance of power outages.

During cost-of-living pressures, the effect of regular power outages should not be understated.

There is significant interest in the State Government's TUPP initiative, which requires equal contribution from Local & State governments, as well as residences for the cost of undergrounding power infrastructure. It appears the State Government's prioritisation order initially targets inner metropolitan suburbs, likely due to the age of the overhead power infrastructure. Under the current funding arrangement, the program is unlikely to reach outer metropolitan areas until the 2030s and beyond.

Further, it does not appear that the State Government has expanded the scope and capacity of the TUPP initiative. In the absence of increased funding from the State Government, each round of the program will continue to underground power for a limited number of projects within five and ten suburbs.

At this stage, the advocacy position provides general support for undergrounding of power and the autonomy of local governments to retrospectively consider undergrounding power in established suburbs. However, it does not refer to the TUPP initiative or the capacity for this program to be expanded through government funding, thereby allowing an increased number of suburbs to benefit from underground power, and the greater reliability this infrastructure provides to residents.

Other local government authorities, specifically those in the outer metropolitan areas, would be experiencing similar frustrations. Therefore, advocacy through WALGA would be the most appropriate avenue for a coordinated approach.

For the City of Wanneroo, overhead power sites are scattered throughout the older areas of the City within suburbs such as Two Rocks, Yanchep, Quinns Rocks, Wanneroo, Koondoola, Girrawheen and Marangaroo. All of which sit within Western Power's Long Term Underground Power Region based on their overhead renewal status.

The costs to underground overhead power have increased significantly over the years and the extent of funding available limits the number of projects that can be approved and delivered in any one year. Advocating for increased State Government funding is therefore critical to fast track the delivery of the undergrounding program.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The WALGA Advocacy Position in relation to Underground Power (5.7) was developed in 2020 in the context of the successful State Underground Power Program (SUPP) that had operated since 1996. It recognises the limited scope to continue and extend that Program across all urban areas of Western Australia based on the then funding model requiring Local Governments (property owners) to contribute 50% of the project costs.

The advocacy position identifies that the Local Government sector supports:

1. continuation of cooperative arrangements between the State Government, Western Power and Local Government to progressively replace the overhead electricity distribution network in residential areas with underground power.
2. development of a new approach to identifying and prioritizing areas for investment in underground power, initiated by the need to invest in the overhead network to meet safety, reliability and capability requirements.
3. development of a new approach to allocating State Government resources to facilitate projects proceeding in areas with a high electricity network need and lower economic capacity of ratepayers while retaining a commitment to funding an average of 25% of program costs.
4. opportunity for Local Governments to initiate projects to convert areas to underground power be retained with Western Power to continue to contribute the amount recoverable as an efficient investment as calculated by the New Facilities Investment Test (NFIT).
5. establishment of a targeted funding mechanism through the State Government to assist property owners in underground power program project areas that would suffer disadvantage as a result of needing to contribute to the cost of underground power.

The new Targeted Underground Power Program (TUPP) that was launched in November 2022 is an outcome from this advocacy. The program design is based on scoping projects in a way that maximises the contribution Western Power can make to project costs within the regulatory framework it operates under. The initial TUPP projects anticipates that Western Power will contribute an average of 57% of total project costs, double its average contribution of 29% across the final 16 projects in the previous SUPP.

While the State Government has provided some contributions targeted toward lower socio-economic project areas, it has unfortunately reduced its direct program funding to an estimated 10% of all project costs (from the previous 25%), with no contribution in areas where the median house price is greater than 150% of the Perth median house price.

Recent tenders received by Western Power are reflecting significant increases in project costs. While the investment by Western Power may be prudent, the organisation is funded through the State Government and so has capital investment limitations. Investment reviews have slowed progress.

Contractor bids are reflecting costs of \$3,500 - \$4,500 per property just to connect from the boundary to the meter box (which is owned and fully funded by the property owner). A property owner contribution to the infrastructure in the street is in addition to this.

Most Local Governments finance 4- or 5-year terms for property owners to pay for underground power. Increasing the rate of program delivery increases the financial commitment for each participating Local Government which can be limiting in some situations.

WALGA is represented on the TUPP Steering Committee, with Western Power, WA Treasury, and Energy Policy WA (part of Department of Energy and Economic Diversification). This provides some opportunity to influence program design, but limited opportunity to influence the scale or timing of State Government investment.

There is opportunity to influence the provision of underground power through the next Western Power Access Arrangement (AA6), which will ultimately be determined by the independent Economic Regulation Authority (ERA). WALGA recently provided a submission to the ERA on the framework and approach to AA6, based on feedback from Local Governments, including the following:

AA6 could also consider approaches to ease the primary constraints to the underground power program: cost inflation and shortage of human resources (both internal to Western Power and external contractors and subcontractors). The access arrangement may also be a vehicle to rethink the approach to underground power programs to provide equity for underprivileged areas.

Additional advocacy on the TUPP program would support Local Governments' comments on the AA6 framework and approach.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr James Rowe

Seconded: Cr Alex Figg

That the North Metropolitan Zone support, and subsequently WALGA State Council, strengthen and expand the advocacy position on underground power to advocate for increased State Government funding for the TUPP initiative and even spread of the initiative throughout the Perth Metropolitan area.

CARRIED

9.2 BUILDING SURVEYOR QUALIFICATIONS

By City of Stirling

BACKGROUND

Western Australia is facing a significant and growing shortage of qualified building surveyors at a time when demand for certification services is rapidly increasing. In WA, a registered building surveyor is legally responsible for verifying the compliance and safety of all buildings, and construction cannot proceed, nor can most commercial buildings be occupied, without their certification.

Local Governments play a significant role in the building approvals process i.e. Permit Authority etc – need to explain why the City needs Building Surveyors.

Building surveyors are embedded in Western Australia's building control framework through the *Building Act 2011*, *Building Regulations 2012* and *Building Services (Registration) Act 2011*. They perform statutory functions that are central to the operation of local governments as permit authorities, including assessing compliance with the National Construction Code and issuing statutory certificates. These certifications underpin the lawful issuing of building, demolition and occupancy permits and provide the technical basis for enforcement decisions. Building surveyors therefore act as independent, legislatively mandated specialists who ensure building standards are met.

The absence of building surveyors would have significant operational and legal consequences for local governments. Councils would be unable to validly issue building permits at scale, struggle to meet statutory decision timeframes, and face increased exposure to legal challenge due to the lack of competent technical certification. Enforcement and compliance action, particularly in complex or retrospective matters, would be weakened or rendered untenable without expert evidence on building standard compliance. More broadly, public safety outcomes would be compromised, and local governments would be forced to either duplicate specialist expertise internally or curtail statutory functions, undermining the effectiveness of the building regulatory system.

The scale of future demand is substantial. Under the National Housing Accord, Western Australia is required to deliver approximately 130,000 new homes by June 2029, which equates to around 26,000 homes per year. Current supply is already falling behind, with the state more than 4,500 homes short of its annualised target as of early 2026. This growing gap highlights the urgent need for a capable workforce to support the state's housing pipeline - including qualified Building Surveyors who are critical to approval and compliance processes. Without sufficient Building Surveyors, a major bottleneck could occur at the certification stage of construction, not because of regulatory "red tape" but due to workforce capacity constraints.

Both the West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) and the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS) have been actively advocating on this issue through their industry networks, direct engagement with Ministers, and dialogue with key sector stakeholders. Their efforts aim to highlight the systemic risks posed by the shortage and to push for structural solutions that ensure a sustainable future pipeline of Building Surveyors.

Recent cross-industry discussions have highlighted several concerns regarding the future of the building surveying profession in Western Australia. There is a constrained workforce supply chain, with industry struggling to attract and train a sustainable pipeline of future

building surveyors with local government, struggling to attract and retain these critical employees. Awareness of the profession remains low, and access to local training is limited, creating barriers for prospective entrants. This has reinforced the urgent need for WA-based training options and more active promotion of the field, particularly to younger people who may not be aware of the career pathways available.

The current training environment further compounds these challenges. Western Australia does not offer an Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying, nor does it provide a university pathway in the discipline. As a result, the existing workforce is reliant on interstate training providers, whose course content is often contextualised to other states' legislative frameworks rather than WA requirements. Across stakeholders, there is strong agreement that establishing local delivery of the Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying should be the immediate priority to support workforce development.

Whilst we had initially seen some progress, with North Metropolitan TAFE (NMTAFE) advising that it intended to place the Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying on scope for delivery in Semester 2, 2026, NMTAFE has since confirmed that the qualification will not be available in 2026. Additional consultation is required before they can determine whether delivery may be feasible in 2027, leaving the design and delivery of the course uncertain at this stage.

Industry stakeholders remain supportive of collaborating on the development and implementation of a course, recognising the need for a coordinated and collective approach to addressing the state's building surveying skills shortage. This collaboration will directly support local government permit authorities in maintaining their statutory duties and functions by strengthening the availability of suitably qualified building surveyors to undertake critical certification, compliance and enforcement roles. Addressing workforce capacity in this manner is essential to ensuring building permits can be lawfully issued, complex compliance matters effectively managed, and public safety outcomes upheld. Ultimately, this initiative is critical to the ongoing effectiveness, resilience and integrity of Western Australia's regulatory building control system.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA acknowledges that building surveyors are amongst the hardest positions for Western Australian Local Governments to fill. Building surveyors play an important role in housing delivery and promoting building confidence, ensuring homes and buildings are constructed safely and according to specification.

In late 2025, WALGA conducted a survey of WA Local Government building surveyors in order to assess the current sustainability of the profession. A total of 106 responses to the 2025 survey were received, which WALGA estimates to represent approximately 75% of the building surveyors employed in Local Government. The results of the 2025 survey reveal that:

- There is an increasing number of experienced Local Government building surveyors reaching retirement age.
- Building surveyors in the younger age groups are seeking opportunities in the private sector, primarily due to better pay and perceived associated lower risk profile.
- There is an impending skills shortage due to the lack of relevant training opportunities in WA.

These results further reinforce the need to address what is a critical area of workforce shortage for Local Governments.

WALGA is advocating in discussions with State Government agencies and Ministers for support for measures to promote retention and increase recruitment into the building surveyor profession, including funding to support education and professional development and the establishment of the Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying TAFE course.

WALGA shares the zone's concerns regarding the delays and uncertainty with progressing the Advanced Diploma of Building Surveying.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Suzanne Migdale

Seconded: Cr Michael Dudek

That WALGA engage with the relevant Ministers to ensure future qualification pathways are established to support individuals to train and obtain registration, at minimum, as a Level 2 Building Surveyor with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries in Western Australia.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.3 REQUEST TO PRESENT

By Chantelle O'Brien, WALGA

Local Government Inspector

The Office of the Local Government Inspector has been in contact with WALGA and has request the opportunity to attend Zone meetings during 2026.

WA's inaugural Local Government Inspector Tony Brown will provide an update on the functions of the Office of the Inspector, his priorities for 2026 and his expectations of the sector. The Local Government Inspector is a statutory officer and provides oversight of the local government sector through complaint handling, inquiries, compliance review, and education.

Mr Brown has been in the role since October 2025 with his powers under the Local Government Act 1995 commencing on 1 January this year.

Mr Brown would like the opportunity to attend the 19 August 2026 North Metropolitan Zone meeting.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Stephanie Proud

Seconded: Cr Eman Seif

That the North Metropolitan Zone supports a presentation from the Local Government Inspector, Mr Tony Brown at the August Zone meeting.

CARRIED

9.4 CONSULTATION ON DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCACY POSITION

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA is undertaking sector consultation on a revised draft Climate Change Advocacy Position.
- This draft position was developed following initial consultation, consideration by State Council in March 2025 and feedback from the Environment Policy Team of State Council.
- WALGA is seeking **Council endorsed feedback by 1 May 2026**.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's 2018 Climate Change [Policy Statement](#) and Advocacy Position state:

Local Government acknowledges:

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

Local Government is committed to addressing climate change.

Local Government is calling for:

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

The draft Advocacy Position in the Consultation Paper is:

1. *Local Government acknowledges the risks associated with, and is committed to, addressing climate change.*
2. *WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to provide:*
 - a. *the necessary climate leadership, coordination and action to ensure an orderly transition to achieve emission reduction targets and address the impacts of climate change*
 - b. *dedicated funding, guidance and practical support to assist Local Governments to undertake emissions reduction and adaptation actions.*

ATTACHMENT

The WALGA Climate Change Advocacy Position Consultation Paper is available [online](#).

BACKGROUND

Climate change, and related legislation, policy and action, have implications for many aspects of Local Governments' operations and services. More frequent and severe droughts, heatwaves, bushfires, extreme rainfall events and warming, rising sea levels are increasing the costs and complexity of delivering critical services, infrastructure and ensuring community wellbeing.

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

- The national *Climate Change Act 2022* and the Western Australian Climate Change Bill 2023.
- The *Local Government Amendment Act 2023*, which expanded Western Australian Local Governments' general function under Part 3 s3.1(1A) of the *Local Government Act 1995* to:
 - a. to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the district; and
 - b. **to plan for, and to plan for mitigating, risks associated with climate change;** and
 - c. in making decisions, to consider potential long-term consequences and impacts on future generations.
- The release of the Australian Government's [National Climate Risk Assessment](#) and [National Adaptation Plan](#) in 2025.
- Escalation of the transition to renewable energy, uptake of electric vehicles and energy efficiency standards under the National Construction Code.
- Climate science and projections ([international](#), [national](#) and [WA specific](#)) have also become clearer regarding the risks posed by climate change and the need for action to address the consequential impacts.

COMMENT

Following initial consultation, consideration by State Council in March 2025 and feedback from the Environment Policy Team, WALGA has developed a revised, draft Climate Change Advocacy Position for Local Government feedback which is currently out for consultation with feedback due by 1 May 2026. WALGA has received feedback from some Councils and understands a number of Councils will be considering this matter in April. Zone delegates are encouraged to take this item to their Councils.

The Central Country Zone passed a motion at its February 2026 meeting which included writing to all other zones highlighting its alternative Advocacy Position (proposed in March 2025). WALGA worked to incorporate the Central Country Zone feedback prior to the release of the Consultation Paper.

WALGA is seeking **Council endorsed feedback** on the draft Climate Change Advocacy Position by **COB Friday, 1 May 2026** to environment@walga.asn.au.

Following consideration of this feedback a final draft Advocacy Position will be developed and provided to zones and State Council for consideration.

Noted

10 WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA

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

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

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

10.1 PROTECTING COUNCIL MEMBER AND EMPLOYEE PRIVACY ADVOCACY POSITION

By Meghan Dwyer, Governance Specialist

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The South East Metropolitan Zone resolved to request WALGA advocate to amend s.5.95(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* to specify that the right to inspect Primary and Annual Returns (Returns) contained in the Register of Financial Interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the residential address of the relevant person.
- Returns may include residential addresses, which are then made publicly accessible, creating privacy and safety risks.
- Council Members and employees are increasingly reluctant to disclose residential addresses due to safety and security risks, demonstrating that current legislation no longer aligns with contemporary expectations of privacy.
- Recent parliamentary scrutiny of similar requirements for Members of Parliament led to recommendations to remove full residential address disclosures, which the Government supported.
- In addition to Returns, Council Members must also provide a residential address when making their declaration of office.
- It would be appropriate for a review of all public disclosure requirements under the *Local Government Act 1995* to occur to ensure that they remain contemporary, effective, and aligned with modern standards of accountability and personal security.
- The Governance Policy Team endorsed the proposed advocacy position at its meeting on 23 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- Jurisdictional Comparison – Address Information in Council Member Returns and Declarations of Office (included below).

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The proposed advocacy position aligns to the WALGA 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, in particular:

- Influence – Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
- Support – Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is for State Council to endorse a new [Advocacy Position](#).

Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy

That WALGA advocates to the State Government to:

- 1. Undertake a review of disclosure requirements for Local Government Council Members and employees under the Local Government Act 1995.*
- 2. Undertake the necessary legislative amendments to strike an appropriate balance between transparency, personal safety, and contemporary community expectations of privacy, including:*
 - a. Amend section 5.95(1) to prescribe that the right to inspect primary and annual returns contained in the register of financial interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the full residential address of the relevant person, and is instead limited to the suburb or locality.*
 - b. Amend Form 7 of the Local Government (Constitutional) Regulations 1998 to remove the requirement to disclose a full residential address when making the declaration of office.*

BACKGROUND

At the 3 December 2025 meeting, State Council adopted new Advocacy Position 2.5.20 Electoral Material - Authorisation Statement Address Requirements in response to significant privacy and safety concerns arising from the obligation to publish a candidate's physical address on electoral materials.

When considering this item at the preceding round of Zone meetings, the South East Metropolitan Zone (SEMZ) resolved to request WALGA advocate to amend s.5.95(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) to specify that the right to inspect Primary and Annual Returns (Returns) contained in the Register of Financial Interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the residential address of the relevant person.

State Council resolved to refer the SEMZ comments to the Governance Policy Team.

The Governance Policy Team endorsed the proposed advocacy position at its meeting on 23 March 2026.

COMMENT

Public disclosure regimes must strike an appropriate balance between public transparency and personal safety. The inclusion of personal identifying information in publicly accessible documents has become increasingly problematic. As digital publication and internet search capabilities have expanded, material that once had limited circulation can be copied and distributed with ease. This environment has reinforced the need to carefully consider how much personal information is necessary to make publicly available, and the risks that may arise when doing so.

Local Government Act

The Act establishes a range of public disclosure obligations designed to promote transparency and accountability. However, digital publication, increased data availability, and heightened personal safety concerns have created new risks that were not contemplated when these provisions were first drafted.

Returns require relevant persons to disclose personal financial information. Information disclosed includes the address of each parcel of real property, located in the district or in

an adjoining district, in which the person had an interest and the nature of the interest in each parcel of real property (s.5.79). In practice, this often results in the disclosure of a Council Member or employee's residential address.

Returns are required to be included in the register of financial interests. Section 5.94(b) of the Act requires any register of financial interest to be made available to the public, and s.5.96 requires the Local Government to provide copies upon request.

Although s.5.93 of the Act establishes penalties for the improper use of information, information can now be copied and distributed almost instantly. In many cases, the harm may occur well before any investigation or action can be commenced.

In addition to the requirement for Council Members to disclose interests in real property as part of their returns, s.2.29 of the Act, together with Form 7 of the *Local Government (Constitution) Regulations 1998*, requires each Council Member to provide their full residential address when making their statutory declaration of office. Although this declaration is not required to be made publicly available under s. 5.94(b) of the Act, some Local Governments livestream or publish recordings of the proceedings. As a result, full residential address details become publicly accessible.

Emerging risks and issues

Local Governments have observed increasing reluctance from Council Members and employees to provide their residential address. Reasons include:

- being registered as a silent elector under the *Electoral Act 1907*,
- experiences or risks of family or domestic violence,
- concerns that leave of absence approvals may signal when a residence may be unoccupied,
- role-related risks, such as potential targeted harassment by dissatisfied community members.

Disclosure of personal residential addresses can also expose individuals to cybersecurity and identity-theft risks, as this information can be combined with other data to build detailed personal profiles. Publicly accessible addresses may make individuals more vulnerable to targeted scams, social engineering, and unwanted contact, increasing both digital and physical security risks.

Parliamentary disclosure obligations

The disclosure of the residential addresses of Members of Parliament in their Primary and Annual Returns has recently been considered by the [Legislative Assembly Procedures and Privileges Committee in Report No.1: Protecting privacy and other reasons to update the Members of Parliament \(Financial Interests\) Act 1992](#).

The Committee recommended that the Government review the relevant legislation, "with a view to addressing the requirement for the disclosure of full residential addresses and to consider broader legislative updates necessary to ensure the Act remains contemporary, effective, and aligned with modern standards of accountability and personal security."

The [Government response](#) supported this recommendation.

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing

The objectives of the new *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024* (PRIS Act) include promoting responsible and transparent practices in the handling of personal

information and balancing the public interests of protecting the privacy of personal information with the free flow of information by agencies.

Most privacy provisions in the PRIS Act come into effect on 1 July 2026.

The following sections of the PRIS Act intersect with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*:

- The information privacy principles do not apply to information that is already publicly accessible. This includes information in documents that are either generally available to the public or made available for public inspection under another written law (s.22).
- An individual may request a public entity to remove their personal information from a public register if making the information publicly available would substantially affect any individual's safety or wellbeing. If the public entity is satisfied that the grounds exist, the public entity must comply with the request unless the public entity is satisfied that the public interest in maintaining public access to the information outweighs any individual interest in the information not being made publicly available (s.77).

While this appears to provide a mechanism for individuals to address specific safety and privacy concerns, it would be preferable to ensure that the legislative requirements avoid unnecessary risks to all Council Members and employees.

WALGA will seek to engage with the Information Commissioner and Deputy Privacy Commissioner to clarify the way in which these and other PRIS Act provisions will apply to Council Members.

Review and amendments to the Local Government Act

As Local Government Council Members and employees share the same safety concerns as Members of Parliament it would be appropriate to echo the Procedures and Privilege Committee and advocate for a broad review of all public disclosure requirements under the *Local Government Act 1995* to ensure that they remain contemporary, effective, and aligned with modern standards of accountability and personal security. A review would allow a clearer, risk-aware framework to be established that protects individuals while preserving appropriate transparency.

Within this broader reform, several targeted amendments are necessary. It is proposed that s. 5.95(1) be amended so that the right to inspect information in the register of financial interests under s. 5.94(b) is limited to the suburb or locality of each property, rather than the full residential address of the relevant person. Additionally, the requirement for Council Members to provide their full residential address in the statutory declaration of office should be removed. These amendments are consistent with practices adopted in other Australian jurisdictions and reflect the approach now being reconsidered for Members of Parliament.

Importantly, these changes would not weaken transparency or accountability. Council Members and employees would still be required to disclose their full residential address in Returns, and would continue to declare direct financial, indirect financial, proximity, and impartiality interests when they arise in decision-making processes. This ensures that relevant interests remain publicly recorded when they matter, without unnecessarily exposing personal residential details. By limiting public access to only what is necessary,

the legislative framework can better protect individual safety while preserving the integrity of the disclosure regime.

ATTACHMENT: JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON – ADDRESS INFORMATION IN COUNCIL MEMBER RETURNS AND DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE

DISCLOSURES IN RETURNS	
<p>Victoria <u>Local Government Act 2020</u> <u>Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020</u></p>	<p>CEO must prepare summary of personal interests information disclosed in the last personal interest return.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes the town or suburb, but not the street address or number of the land that is the place of residence <p>Other matters to be included or excluded are prescribed.</p> <p>Includes that a specified person may request in writing information not be included if the CEO consider including the information would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be reasonably likely to place the personal safety of any person at risk, or unreasonably expose a business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage <p>Summary of personal interest returns available to members of the public.</p> <p>Detailed personal interests returns are only available to certain persons.</p>
<p>New South Wales <u>Governance Information (Public Access) Act 2009</u></p>	<p>From the <i>Information Access Guideline 1 - For Local Councils on the disclosure of information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Returns should be made publicly available on the council's website unless there is an overriding public interest against release or to do so would impose unreasonable additional costs on council. A consideration against disclosure is where release of the information may expose a person to a risk of harm or of serious harassment or serious intimidation. In the circumstances where council decides that there is an overriding public interest against disclosure, consideration should then be given to whether it is practicable to release an edited copy of the record (for example redacting the individual's signature or residential address) If it is practicable to do so, then the information should be deleted from a copy of the record and the remainder of the return made available on the council's website. Where information is deleted from a return, council should keep a record indicating, in general terms, the nature of the information redacted.
<p>Queensland <u>Local Government Regulation 2021</u></p>	<p>Suburb or locality of the land is required (not full address).</p>

South Australia Local Government Act 1999	Personal addresses are not to be published nor are any addresses where the CEO is satisfied that the inclusion in the Register of the address of a person would place at risk the personal safety of that person, a member of that person's family or any other person.
Tasmania	Currently does not require councillors to lodge a personal interests return. The Tasmanian government is implementing a new framework to strengthen the management of local government councillor conflicts of interest, with reforms expected before the 2026 elections.

INFORMATION IN COUNCIL MEMBER DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE	
Victoria Local Government Act 2020 Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020	Address not required.
New South Wales Local Government Act 1993	Address not required.
Queensland Local Government Regulation 2021	Address not required.
South Australia Local Government (General) Regulations 2013	Address not required.
Tasmania Local Government (General) Regulations 2025	Address not required.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy

That WALGA advocates to the State Government to:

- 1. Undertake a review of disclosure requirements for Local Government Council Members and employees under the Local Government Act 1995,*
- 2. Undertake the necessary legislative amendments to strike an appropriate balance between transparency, personal safety, and contemporary community expectations of privacy, including:*
 - a. Amend section 5.95(1) to prescribe that the right to inspect primary and annual returns contained in the register of financial interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the full residential address of the relevant person, and is instead limited to the suburb or locality.*
 - b. Amend Form 7 of the Local Government (Constitutional) Regulations 1998 to remove the requirement to disclose a full residential address when making the declaration of office.*

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr James Rowe

Seconded: Cr Alex Figg

That the North Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.1 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10.2 WATER MANAGEMENT ADVOCACY POSITION

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A new Water Management Advocacy Position and the retirement of position 6.14 Planning for Water is proposed.
- The new Position has been developed following consultation and feedback on WALGA's *Water Management in Western Australia Discussion Paper*.
- 28 Local Governments provided more than 200 comments on the paper, with the main issues being:
 - equitable access to consistent and reliable water;
 - water licensing and allocation;
 - integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning;
 - water for Public Open Space (POS);
 - funding
 - for critical infrastructure - drainage and irrigation, alternative water sources and sewerage infill and headworks.
 - for water efficiency and water sensitive urban design initiatives.
 - expanding and improving the Waterwise Council Program;
 - access to data and information to inform decision making; and
 - addressing the impacts of stormwater runoff.
- The outcomes sought in 6.14 Planning for Water have been realised in the recently released State Planning Policy 2.9.
- The Environment Policy Team endorsed retiring the position and the new position at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- [Water Management Discussion Paper](#)
- [Water Management Consultation Summary Report](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following WALGA Strategic Pillars:

- Influence
 - Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
 - Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.
- Support - Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the following new [Advocacy Position](#) be **endorsed**:

Water Management

1. *Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.*
2. *WALGA is calling on the State Government to:*
 - a. *Modernise water management legislation and regulation, including:*
 - i. *Undertaking a review of the water licensing and allocation system to ensure equitable access and prioritise high value community use including for public open space.*

- ii. *Developing a State-wide framework for integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning.*
- b. *Adequately, sustainably and equitably fund critical water infrastructure programs for Local Government, including:*
 - i. *Drainage and irrigation upgrades.*
 - ii. *Alternative water sources (recycled water, stormwater harvesting, desalination and groundwater replenishment) and disused water asset transfer.*
 - iii. *Small-scale sewerage infrastructure headworks and infill sewerage.*
- c. *Expand the Waterwise Council Program statewide and provide:*
 - i. *Increased support and resources to assist Local Government in delivering water efficiency measures.*
 - ii. *Incentives for Local Governments to undertake water efficiency initiatives.*
- d. *Improve water data access and capability for Local Governments to ensure evidence-based decision making.*
- e. *Provide effective leadership, guidance, education and enforcement to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.*

It is proposed that the following Advocacy Position be **retired**:

6.14 Planning for Water

As part of the Water Management Report endorsement process, formal support from the relevant Local Government should be required where:

1. *It is intended that the Local Government will become the infrastructure asset manager; or*
2. *The proposed location of water infrastructure assets will impact Local Government assets or facilities.*

The outcomes sought in Position 6.14 have been realised in the recently released [State Planning Policy 2.9](#).

BACKGROUND

WALGA identified the need to consolidate and expand on current Water related [Advocacy Positions](#) and has undertaken initial consultation, through targeted engagement and consideration of issues raised by the sector previously. To inform the development of a new Advocacy Position, WALGA developed a Discussion Paper to gain feedback from the sector on their current challenges and needs in relation to water management across the state.

WALGA released the Discussion Paper for comment in late November 2025, with an initial deadline of 15 January 2026 for comment, however based on feedback from the sector this deadline was extended to Thursday, 12 March.

28 Local Governments have provided feedback, 14 of those Council/CEO level feedback. The feedback provided by Local Governments was comprehensive, with over 200 individual comments received across the submissions. WALGA acknowledges the significant time and consideration given by Members in providing that level of feedback.

The main themes of the feedback reflect those explored in the Discussion Paper and are consistent across Local Government:

- Legislation which is inequitable and outdated, particularly for licensing and allocation.
- State legislation should align with the National Water Agreement, particularly strategic, long term integrated planning and equitable access to drinking water.
- Aging and insufficient water infrastructure.
- Support and resourcing needed to explore and mainstream alternative water sources.
- Reactive approaches to headworks and sewerage servicing constraining development, particularly in regional and high-growth areas.
- Public Open Space (POS) in relation to planning decisions not accounting for the water needed to sustain these areas.
- Statewide expansion of the Waterwise Council program and improvement in program support and design.
- High interest in improving and supporting water efficiency and water sensitive urban design outcomes.
- Water data gaps and poor data sharing limits sound decision making.
- Water quality as an emerging and under-recognised issue.

WALGA has consolidated the feedback into a Consultation Report which summarises the main themes and issues raised by the sector and how it has been addressed in the draft Advocacy Position.

COMMENT

The new Position has been informed by the information, issues and priorities identified in feedback received from Local Governments on the WALGA Discussion Paper.

A new Advocacy Position is timely given the release of [Made Possible by Water](#) by the State Government on 21 March 2026, a document outlining WA's water future. A comprehensive Advocacy Position on this issue will be essential to assist WALGA's advocacy and influence how the Government delivers the priorities identified. Some of the matters identified in the draft Advocacy Position are reflected in Made Possible by Water, including expansion of the WaterWise Program and delivery of new water sources.

The Environment Policy Team endorsed the new Advocacy Position and the retirement of Position 6.14 at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Water Management

1. *Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.*
2. *WALGA is calling on the State Government to:*
 - a. *Modernise water management legislation and regulation, including:*
 - i. *undertaking a review of the water licensing and allocation system to ensure equitable access and prioritise high value community use including for public open space*

- ii. *developing a state-wide framework for integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning.*
 - b. *Adequately, sustainably and equitably fund critical water infrastructure programs for Local Government, including:*
 - i. *drainage and irrigation upgrades*
 - ii. *alternative water sources (recycled water, stormwater harvesting, desalination and groundwater replenishment) and disused water asset transfer*
 - iii. *small-scale sewerage infrastructure headworks and infill sewerage.*
 - c. *Expand the Waterwise Council Program statewide and provide:*
 - i. *increased support and resources to assist Local Government in delivering water efficiency measures*
 - ii. *incentives for Local Governments to undertake water efficiency initiatives.*
 - d. *Improve water data access and capability for Local Governments to ensure evidence-based decision making.*
 - e. *Provide effective leadership, guidance, education and enforcement to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.*

2. Retires Advocacy Position *6.14 Planning for Water.*

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Suzanne Migdale

Seconded: Cr James Rowe

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10.3 OFF ROADS VEHICLES ADVOCACY POSITION

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles (ORV) be retired.
- The *Control of Vehicles (Off-road Vehicles) Act 1978* (the ORV Act) provides the legislative framework for the use of off-road vehicles within permitted areas in WA.
- Nine Local Governments own and maintain Off Road Vehicle (ORV) areas.
- Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles was adopted by State Council in 2018 in response to concerns from Members about the use of permitted ORV areas.
- Amendments to the ORV Act in 2025 address the core objectives of the ORV Advocacy Position, particularly as it relates to registration and enforcement.
- The retirement of the ORV Advocacy Position was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- [*Control of Vehicles \(Off-road Areas\) Amendment Act 2025*](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Retiring this Advocacy Position aligns with the following WALGA Strategic Pillars:

- Influence
 - Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
 - Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.
- Support
 - Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that Advocacy Position [3.12 Off Road Vehicles](#) be **retired**.

Legislation relating to off road vehicles should be reviewed to align registration and licensing of off-road vehicles with other vehicle types are users. In addition, educational resources should be developed in consultation with users, regulators, and vendors relating to safety, regulatory compliance and other associated matters.

BACKGROUND

The *Control of Vehicles (Off-road Vehicles) Act 1978* (the ORV Act) prohibits the use of Off Road Vehicles (ORVs) in areas outside of permitted areas and makes provisions for the use of ORVs in permitted areas. The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) is responsible for administering the legislation and providing [information and support](#) to users and Local Governments. The legislation defines ORVs as including, but not limited to, trail bikes, quad bikes, beach buggies and road licensed vehicles such as four-wheel drives when used in off-road locations.

The use of ORVs outside of permitted areas can have impacts on Local Governments and communities including community safety in public spaces, road safety and environmental impacts. These issues fall under the scope of other legislation.

Nine Local Governments currently maintain and operate permitted areas: the Cities of Greater Geraldton, Karratha, Kwinana and Swan and the Shires of Carnarvon, Dandaragan, Gingin, Port Hedland and York.

WALGA's Advocacy Position was adopted by State Council in 2018, in response to Member concerns regarding the use of permitted ORV areas.

The ORV Act was amended in 2025 to align penalties and enforcement expectations with other WA transport legislation. The *Amendment Act* includes provisions to introduce online and label registrations and increase penalties for existing offences. The majority of the ORV Amendment Act commenced with immediate effect in August 2025. Sections of the legislation relating to registration labels are dependent on system design changes to the online registration platform. The legislation regulations and commencement date are expected by the end of 2026.

In 2024, the [State Government announced \\$4.8 million](#) in grant funding for Local Governments to develop new and upgrade existing ORV areas. This funding recognises the key role Local Government plays in the upkeep and management of ORV areas.

COMMENT

The ORV Amendment Act addresses the core objectives of the WALGA ORV advocacy position, particularly as it relates to registration and enforcement. As the intended

outcomes of the advocacy position have been achieved, it is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles be retired. WALGA will work with LGIRS to provide advice and support on the commencement of the Act regulations for Members managing permitted areas.

WALGA has engaged with Members that currently manage ORV permitted areas. Six Local Governments have responded and provided their support for the retirement of the advocacy position.

WALGA will continue to monitor emerging issues associated with ORVs, with a particular focus on usage outside of permitted areas.

The proposed retirement of the ORV advocacy position was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council retire Advocacy Position 3.12 *Off Road Vehicles*.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Bronwyn Smith

Seconded: Cr Eman Seif

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10.4 HOMELESSNESS ADVOCACY POSITION

By Hannah Godsave, Manager Community Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed that the 2019 Advocacy Position 3.11 Homelessness be updated.
- While responding to homelessness is a State and Australian Government responsibility, the impacts of homelessness intersect with multiple areas of Local Government service delivery and requires them to manage community expectations.
- Western Australian Local Governments are reporting increased numbers of people experiencing homelessness, including Local Governments that have historically experienced minimal impact.
- WALGA undertook a survey of Members in early 2026 to better understand the impact on the sector and inform a review of the current Advocacy Position.
- The updated Position reflects the sector's view that the Australian and Western Australian Government should provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular specialist services, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.
- The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the revised position at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following WALGA Strategic Pillars:

- Influence
 - Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
 - Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.
- Support
 - Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the **existing** Advocacy Position [3.11 Homelessness](#):

WALGA recognises that Local Government through its planning, health, community development and regulatory powers can facilitate positive local and regional responses to end homelessness, however does not see that it has a lead role. Rather, Local Government's role is one of a stakeholder that requires early engagement in the understanding of collaborative approaches that improve the quality of life for people experiencing homelessness in all of its manifestations.

be **replaced** with a new Advocacy Position as follows:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to need, place-based and people-centred.*
- 2. Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*

BACKGROUND

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines homelessness as when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives and their current living arrangement:

- is in a dwelling that is inadequate;
- has no tenure, or tenure is short and not extendable; or
- does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.

The ABS Census of Population and Housing provides the authoritative data source on people experiencing homelessness. The 2021 Census reported 9,729 people experiencing homelessness in WA. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare provides more contemporary data based on interactions with specialist homelessness services. In 2024-25, almost 289,000 (1 in 115) people engaged with specialist homelessness services in WA, of which 47% were accessing homelessness support for the first time.

While responding to homelessness is a State and Australian Government responsibility, the impacts of homelessness intersect with multiple areas of Local Government service delivery, including the maintenance of public spaces, planning and zoning for appropriate services and revenue-related functions such as rates and grants administration. Local Governments must also manage community expectations about how they will respond to homelessness.

WALGA's current advocacy position was adopted by State Council in 2019 in the lead up to the release of [All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030](#) (the Strategy) released by the State Government. The Strategy sets out a vision for a whole of community response, led by the Department of

Communities, working towards ending homelessness in Western Australia. The Strategy identifies a predominantly supportive role for the Local Government sector in addressing homelessness, while also acknowledging that some Local Governments directly provide homelessness and accommodation services. Suggested sector contributions in the Strategy include facilitating local partnerships, identifying rough sleepers, sharing local area knowledge to inform State Government resourcing decisions, and connecting people to specialist services. This supportive role for the Local Government sector is reflected in the current Advocacy Position.

At the National level, the [National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness](#) provides a five-year funding and accountability framework between the Australian and State/Territory Governments to support social housing and homelessness services until June 2029. The bilateral schedule for Western Australia sets out a \$165.9 million homelessness funding contribution from both parties.

COMMENT

Local Governments have been reporting increased numbers of people experiencing homelessness, including Local Governments that have historically experienced minimal impact. Local Governments have shared that they are facing growing pressure to meet both their defined obligations and community expectations for comprehensive responses, including specialist homelessness services triage, investment in housing and support service provision.

To better understand the issues being raised by Members, WALGA conducted a sector survey on homelessness in early 2026. 68 responses (49%) were received, 26 metropolitan and 42 regional, with representation from all WALGA Zones. Key findings from the survey include:

- 74% of respondents report an increase in the significance of homelessness in their Local Government area in the last two years.
- 60% of respondents report an increase in enquires from community members regarding homelessness in the last two years.
 - Key issues raised in community enquiries are rough sleeping and persons living in vehicles.
- 23% of respondents consider there is no role beyond defined responsibilities for Local Government in response to homelessness.
- 61% of respondents consider preventative measures to reduce homelessness and facilitating connections to specialist service providers as an appropriate role for Local Government in response to homelessness.
- 83% of respondents rank State and Federal Government funding as the highest or second highest priority enabler to respond to homelessness.
- 51% of respondents report that current specialist homelessness services are not adequate within their Local Government area.
- Respondents rank affordable housing as the top priority for support/services to address homelessness, followed by wraparound services and specialist support services.

Informed by survey responses and acknowledging the support role of Local Government identified in the State Strategy, the updated position calls on the Australian and Western Australian Government to provide the necessary leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular specialist services, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.

The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the revised position at its meeting on 19 March 2026 meeting.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.11 Homelessness with the following:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to need, place-based and people-centred.*
- 2. Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Suzanne Migdale

Seconded: Cr James Rowe

That the North Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above, with the following changes:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to need, place-based and people-centred.***
- 2. Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services.***
- 3. Addressing the root causes of the housing crisis.***

WALGA encourages Local Government Members to ensure their responses to homelessness are guided by principles of consistency and fairness.

CARRIED

10.5 OTHER STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

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

11 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

11.1 WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President's Report was enclosed as an attachment to the Agenda.

Noted

11.2 STATE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO THE ZONE

North Metropolitan Zone State Councillor, Cr Lewis Hutton provided an update on the activities of State Council since the last Zone meeting.

Noted

12 OTHER BUSINESS

The WALGA Secretariat assumed the Chair for the Election of Deputy State Council Representative.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

This item was deferred by the Zone earlier in the meeting.

Nominations were called from the floor. No nominations were received.

Delegates from the City of Stirling advised that Cr Rob Papparde, who was an apology for this meeting, will nominate as Deputy State Councillor if the election were to be deferred to the June Zone meeting.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Lewis Hutton
Seconded: Cr Michael Dudek

That the North Metropolitan Zone defer the election of Deputy State Council Representative to the next Zone meeting on 17 June.

CARRIED

Zone Chair, Cr Lewis Hutton reassumed the Chair.

13 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the North Metropolitan Zone will be held on Wednesday, 17 June 2026 at the City of Stirling commencing at 6:30pm.

14 CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:01pm.