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GVROC Council Meeting

Friday 29th November 2024

In person meeting and video

hosted by Shire of Laverton

9:00am – 1:00pm

held at the Shire of Laverton

Council Chambers

Unconfirmed Minutes

CONTENTS

1.	OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS	3
2.	DECLARATION OF INTEREST	3
3.	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE	3
	3.1 Attendance	3
	3.2 Apologies	4
	3.3 Guest Speakers and Presenters.....	4
	3.4 WALGA Representatives	4
	3.5 DLGSC Representatives	4
	3.6 GEDC Representatives	4
	3.7 RDAGE Representatives	4
	3.8 Observers	4
4.	GUEST SPEAKERS	5
	4.1 Ali Kent MLA	5
5.	PRESENTATIONS.....	5
	5.1 nbn Local	5
	5.2 Shire of Laverton.....	5
6.	AGENCY REPORTS	6
	6.1 WALGA	6
	6.2 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.....	6
	6.3 Goldfields Esperance Development Commission	6
	6.4 Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance	6
7.	MINUTES OF MEETINGS	7
	7.1 Minutes of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC) meetings held 26 July 2024 and 18 October 2024	7
	7.2 Action Sheet Report.....	7
	7.3 Matters for Noting	7
	7.4 Correspondence for Noting.....	8
8.	GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS FINANCE	10
	8.1 Financial Statement to 30 November 2024	10
9.	GVROC REGIONAL CLIMATE ALLIANCE PROGRAM.....	12
	9.1 GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Program Update	12
10.	GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS BUSINESS	16
	10.1 GVROC Housing and Land Update.....	16
	10.2 Safer Goldfields Regional Action Plan (SGRAP) - Update.....	19
	10.3 BHP WA Nickel closures and Community Fund - Update	22
	10.4 Mine Waste Rock usage for Road Construction Program Update	24
	10.5 Upcoming 2025 Federal and State Elections – Development of a GVROC Investment Prospectus	26
	10.6 Reportable Conduct Scheme.....	28
	10.7 GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator Contract (Confidential Members only)	31
11.	LATE ITEMS as notified, introduced by decision of the Meeting.....	33
12.	FUTURE GVROC COUNCIL MEETINGS/FUNCTIONS	34
13.	CLOSURE OF MEETING	34

GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS (GVROC)

A in person and video conference meeting of the GVROC Council was held Friday 29 November 2024 commencing at 9:00 am at the Shire of Laverton's Council Chambers.

AGENDA

1. OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss business related to the activities of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

Nil.

3. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3.1 Attendance

Cr Mal Cullen (Chair)	President, Shire of Coolgardie	
Cr Sherryl Botting	Councillor, Shire of Coolgardie (Proxy for Cr Rathbone)	(via Zoom)
Mr Aaron Cook	A/CEO, Shire of Coolgardie	(via Zoom)
Cr Glenn Wilson	Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder	(via Zoom)
Cr Laurene Bonza	President, Shire of Dundas	
Mr Peter Fitchat	CEO, Shire of Dundas	
Cr Sharon Warner	Councillor, Shire of Dundas	
Cr Ron Chambers	President Shire of Esperance	
Cr Wes Graham	Councillor, Shire of Esperance	
Mr Shane Burge	CEO, Shire of Esperance	
Cr Patrick Hill	President, Shire of Laverton	
Mr Phil Marshall	CEO, Shire of Laverton	
Cr Peter Craig	President, Shire of Leonora	
Mr Ty Matson	CEO, Shire of Leonora	
Cr Paul Warner	President, Shire of Menzies	
Cr Sudhir Sudhir	Councillor, Shire of Menzies	
Mr Peter Bentley	A/CEO, Shire of Menzies	
Mr Rob Stewart	A/CEO, Shire of Wiluna	
Mr David Mosel	CEO, Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku	(via Zoom)
Mr Andrew Mann	Executive Officer, GVROC	
Ms Niki Curtis	GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator	(via Zoom)

3.2 Apologies

Mr James Trail	CEO, Shire of Coolgardie
Cr Wayne Johnson	Councillor, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Mr Andrew Brien	CEO, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Cr Tracey Rathbone	Councillor, Shire of Coolgardie
Cr Shaneane Weldon	Councillor, Shire of Laverton
Cr Peter Grundy	President, Shire of Wiluna
Cr Tim Carmody	Deputy President, Shire of Wiluna
Cr Damian McLean	President, Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku

3.3 Guest Speakers and Presenters

Guest Speakers

Ali Kent MLA Member for Kalgoorlie

Presenters

Bethany Findlay Regional Development and Engagement Manager WA SE, nbn Local
(via Zoom)

3.4 WALGA Representatives

Chris Hossen Policy Manager Planning and Building (via Zoom)

3.5 DLGSC Representatives

Kelly Waterhouse Regional Manager – Goldfields (via Zoom)

3.6 GEDC Representatives

Kris Starcevich CEO

3.7 RDAGE Representatives

Sharon Henderson Director (via Zoom)

3.8 Observers

Cr Paul Ovens Councillor, Shire of Laverton
Alex Baxter Manager Community Services, Shire of Leonora

4. GUEST SPEAKERS

4.1 Ali Kent MLA

Ali Kent MLA, Member for Kalgoorlie, discussed matters of interest from her perspective on the region and the upcoming election followed by a short Q&A session.

5. PRESENTATIONS

5.1 nbn Local

Bethany Findlay, is the new Regional Development and Engagement Manager WA SE for nbn Local based in Albany and focused on engaging with regional stakeholders and communities to enhance digital capability and keep them informed of the latest developments related to the nbn network.

Bethany provided a briefing on some key network upgrades and initiatives in the region.

5.2 Shire of Laverton

Patrick Hill – President for Shire of Laverton provided an update on current and planned activities within the Shire of Laverton.

6. AGENCY REPORTS

6.1 WALGA

WALGA verbal update report by Chris Hossen, Policy Manager Planning and Building

6.2 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

DLGSC verbal update report by Kelly Waterhouse.

6.3 Goldfields Esperance Development Commission

GEDC verbal update report by Kris Starcevich.

6.4 Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance

RDAGE verbal update report by Sharon Henderson.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC note the Agency Reports as provided.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton
Seconded: Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies

Carried

7. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

7.1 Minutes of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC) meetings held 26 July 2024 and 18 October 2024

Minutes of the GVROC Council Meeting held Friday 26 July 2024 (**Attachment 1**) and the GVROC Council Special Meeting held on 18 October 2024 (**Attachment 2**) are presented for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the GVROC Council Meeting held Friday 26 July 2024 and GVROC Council Special Meeting on 18 October 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas**
Seconded: Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora

Carried

7.2 Action Sheet Report

An update on the actions based on the resolutions from the meeting held on 26 July 2024 and 18 October 2024 meeting are presented for noting (**Attachment 3**).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Action Sheet Report as listed for noting be received.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas**
Seconded: Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies

Carried

7.3 Matters for Noting

The following matters were presented for noting.

1. **WA Government Ministerial Media Statements** of relevance to the Goldfields Esperance Zone since the last GVROC meeting is contained at Attachment 4.
2. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 22 August 2024 - [Simpler temporary accommodation \(caravan and camping\) approvals](#)
3. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 16 September 2024 - [New long service leave regulations kick in](#)
4. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 24 October 2024 – regarding alert from DEMIRS with Important Building and Energy and WorkSafe reminder for local governments - [Stay clear, stay safe – Cutting trees near powerlines can be deadly and dangerous | Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety](#).
5. **Nbn Local Update** – Issue 15 dated 31 October 2024 - [nbn Local Update - Issue 15](#)
6. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 4 November 2024 - [Off-road vehicle site clean-up complete](#)
7. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 18 November 2024 - [Finding your 'pawfect' pet match at the heart of 'Adopt, Don't Shop'](#)
8. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 19 November 2024 - [Local government financial index data verification](#)
9. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 22 November 2024 - [Model Financial Statements 2023-24 update](#)
10. **DLGSC Local Government Alert** dated 25 November 2024 - [Livestreaming and Recording of Council Meetings](#)
11. **Australian Water Association WA branch** – Goldfields Regional Tour 12-13 March 2025
The following tour sites and activities are currently being organised and DWER are taking expressions of interest to attend the tour via this link: [WA Regional Tour 2025](#):
 - City of Kalgoorlie water and wastewater recycling assets
 - Water Corporation assets including the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme and Kalgoorlie terminal storage

- Technical water presentations at Curtin University/School of Mines on Goldfields water challenges and solutions (mine visit TBD)
- Aboriginal cultural experience, networking dinner (March 12) and tour sundowner (March 13)

12. **WALGA Online Event** - Lessons from local biodiversity planning in the regions.

Local Governments are invited to join a free event showcasing WALGA's resources supporting local biodiversity planning and Local Government projects delivered with support via WALGA's Local Biodiversity and Native Vegetation Management Project.

During this event, representatives from participating Local Governments will share their strategies for biodiversity planning and effective native vegetation management. They will present their project outcomes and discuss the benefits and challenges they've encountered along the way.

These projects are delivered with support via WALGA's Local Biodiversity and Native Vegetation Management Project and funding contribution from the Western Australian Government's State NRM Program.

Event Details:

- **When:** Monday, December 2, 2024
- **Time:** 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
- **Where:** Online via Zoom (limited in-person attendance available at WALGA)

To confirm your in-person attendance, please email environment@walga.asn.au.

RSVP: Please respond by **Monday, December 2, at 10:00 AM.**

Register here: [Zoom Registration](#)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the matters for noting as listed be received.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: *Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas*
Seconded: *Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton*

Carried

7.4 Correspondence for Noting

The following correspondence was sent and received since the last GVROC meeting and are all contained in **Attachment 5**.

Correspondence received:

1. Email dated 10 September 2024 from Chelsea Hunter, Principal Community Nickel West to GVROC Chair in response to the GVROC letter sent on 30 August 2024 regarding the suspension of Nickel West operations in the Goldfields region and the local community impact and stakeholder forum planned for 13 September 2024.
2. Letter dated 12 September 2024 from Nick Sloan, CEO WALGA regarding approval given to Shire of Ravensthorpe to transfer Zones.
3. Email dated 12 September 2024 from Dr Jeffrey Tobias, Founder and Managing Director at The Strategy Group regarding how Councils can shape your AI Policy in Line with National Guidelines.
4. Email dated 18 September 2024 from Dan Ferguson, Manager Water Supply Planning at DWER advising the GVROC that the Australian Water Association WA branch is organising a tour of Kalgoorlie for March 12-13, 2025 and is looking for innovative water projects to tour.
5. Email dated 19 September 2024 from Karen Ho, Director General – Department of Training and Workforce Development regarding their 2023-24 Annual Report.
6. Email dated 30 September 2024 from Chelsea Hunter, Principal Community Nickel West containing the External Workshop report from the WA Nickel Community Fund – Workshop session held on 13 September 2024.

7. Email dated 22 October 2024 from Sharon Henderson, Director RDAGE regarding the Federal Government opening a Project Noticeboard for Round 3 of the Mobile Network Hardening Program to allow local governments and local parliamentarians to submit potential mobile network resilience upgrade projects or locations for consideration by potential applicants when preparing their applications for funding – see [Mobile Network Hardening Program Round 3— Project Noticeboard | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#)
8. Email dated 1 November 2024 from DLGSC with LG Alert regarding the Repeal of Covid-19 Provisions.
9. Email dated 7 November 2024 from Chelsea Hunter, Principal Community Nickel West announcing that the BHP WA Nickel Community Fund is now open for Expressions of interest.
10. Email dated 8 November 2024 from Demi O'Brien, Pathways Specialist – Paralympics Australia regarding the Regional Athlete Support Program: Supporting Future Paralympians.
11. Email dated 11 November 2024 from Bella Broadway, Founder and Managing Director of Connection and Wellbeing Australia (CAWA) regarding 2025 Learning & Development and Co-Design Opportunities.
12. Email dated 12 November 2024 from Leah Murphy, Project Officer for Heritage and Property Services at the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage regarding the Aboriginal Heritage Survey Program.

Correspondence sent:

1. Letter dated 30 August 2024 from GVROC Chair, Mal Cullen, to Chelsea Hunter and Aimee Jones at BHP – Nickel regarding the suspension of Nickel West operations in the Goldfields region and the local community impact and stakeholder forum planned for 13 September 2024.
2. Letter of support dated 11 October 2024 to Sharon Henderson, Director - Regional Development Australia Goldfields Esperance towards its application for 2024 (Cohort 5) Regional University Study Hubs (RUSHs) Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the correspondence that was sent or received since the last GVROC meeting be noted.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas
Seconded: Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora

Carried

8. GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS FINANCE

8.1 Financial Statement to 30 November 2024

Reporting Officer: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: No interest to disclose

Date: November 2024

Attachments: GVROC Financial Statements and accounts payable and receivable to 30 November 2024, Full Transaction Account history to 30 November 2024 and GVROC Bank Statement Snapshot, plus Account history full transaction to date for 2024/25 financial year (**Attachment 6**).

Background:

Presenting the financial statement position and the accounts approved for payment for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 November 2024.

Financial Statement:

The Officer provides the following comment:

Since the last GVROC meeting for the period of 8 October 2024 to 30 November 2024 new transactions included in the financial statements are:

- Payments to Mann Advisory for the Executive Officer services
- Payments to Niki Curtis for RCA Coordinator services.
- Payment to the Shire of Coolgardie for reimbursement of GVROC Dinner at the WALGA LG Convention and AGM plus finance Xero monthly subscription.
- Payment to Up-to-Date Accounting for preparation of Quarterly BAS Statement and lodgement with ATO
- Payment to Esperance Native Nursery as a deposit on tree seedlings for the GVROC Goldfields Esperance Urban Tree Canopy Program
- Interest earned on Bankwest Saver account

Accounts Paid and Received:

Expenses October 2024 to November 2024			
Date	Payee	Description	Amount inc GST
31 Oct 2024	Shire of Coolgardie	Reimbursement for GVROC Dinner - WALGA AGM & Xero Monthly Subscription	3,370.30
31 Oct 2024	Mann Advisory	October - GVROC Executive Officer Fees	12,705.00
31 Oct 2024	Nicole Curtis	Oct - GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator Fees and reimbursment travel	8,580.00
31 Oct 2024	Up-to-Date Accounting	Preparation and Lodgement of GVROC Quarterly BAS	171.60
07 Nov 2024	Esperance Native Nursery	Deposit for tree seedlings - GVROC Urban Tree Canopy Program	5,500.00
		Total Expenses paid	30,326.90
Revenue October 2024 to November 2024			
Date	Payee	Description	Amount inc GST
01 Nov 2024	BankWest	Interest received	11.69
		Total Revenue received	11.69

Officer Comment:

Since the special meeting of the GVROC held on 18 October 2024 to endorse the change of GVROC Banking facilities, the GVROC Executive Officer is continuing to work with the Shire of Coolgardie to implement this transfer from Bankwest to the Commonwealth Bank.

The financial position of the GVROC is tracking according to budget and in a healthy position.

Consultation: GVROC Chair, Shire of Coolgardie CEO

Financial Implications: Funds for the expenditure is included in the 2024/2025 Budget

Strategic Implications: GVROC Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Objective 3

RECOMMENDATION:

That GVROC:

1. Note that the Statement of Financial Position for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 November 2024 and the accounts approved for payment for the period 8 October 2024 to 30 November 2024 totalling \$30,326.90 and revenue received of \$11.69.
2. Endorse the actions taken by the GVROC Executive Officer to pay for GVROC expenses and receipt of GVROC Revenue.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
Seconded: Cr Ron Chambers, Shire of Esperance

Carried

9. GVROC REGIONAL CLIMATE ALLIANCE PROGRAM

9.1 GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Program Update

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Niki Curtis, GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: November 2024

Attachments: GVROC RCA Working Group - Minutes 2.8.24 and 17.10.24 (**Attachment 7**)
GVROC RCA Goldfields Urban Greening Program 2025-27 (**Attachment 8**)
GEWSG Minutes 9.9.24 and 14.10.24 (**Attachment 9**)

Background:

Since the last GVROC Council meeting, the Regional Climate Alliance (RCA) Working Group has met twice on 2 August 2024 and 17 October 2024 (see **Attachment 7**).

Officer Comment:

Two project applications have been submitted recently. The Urban Greening program, planned for 2025–2027, has a \$570,000 grant request with Lotterywest.

Another application was submitted for the Shire of Menzies under the Community Water Supply Partnership Program. Feedback on both is expected by year-end.

Adapting Community Assets for Climate Change Impacts: Feasibility Study

This project, funded by the National Disaster Risk Reduction Fund, is approaching the completion of Stage 2. The consultants have received the initial two payment instalments and have reported delays due to LGAs not providing data as promptly as anticipated.

The consultants are still awaiting data from four LGAs (City of Kalgoorlie Boulder and the Shires of Coolgardie, Esperance, Laverton), which they hope to have received by the time of this meeting.

Below is information the consultants require before they can commence the next Stage of asset analysis:

City Kalgoorlie-Boulder

- Risk Management matrix essential, Risk Management Strategy if possible
- Asset register (alternative is asset valuations with the asset classes clearly listed)

Shire of Coolgardie

- Asset register (alternative is asset valuations with the asset classes clearly listed)
- Book for evacuation centre meeting or respond to questions.

Shire of Esperance

- Evacuation centre meeting / analysis outstanding - but rebooked 22/11
- Asset register (alternative is asset valuations with the asset classes clearly listed)

Shire of Laverton

- Risk management matrix (or we will use a standard one)
- Asset register (alternative is asset valuations with the asset classes clearly listed)

It is imperative that this data is supplied urgently by all the Local Governments to enable the consultants to complete the required work to meet our milestones to receive the second half of the grant under the agreement with DFES for the National Disaster Risk Reduction Fund.

Payment Details			
Upon completion of stages, to the satisfaction of the Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator, the contractor shall submit a tax invoice based on the agreed contract value/details as per schedule below.			
Stage	% of total fee	Due Dates	Payment Amount (inc GST)
Start up	25%	July 24	\$51,480 PAID
Stage 1 (Desktop Review & Situation Analysis) Completion	20%	Jul - Aug 24	\$41,184 PAID
Stage 2 (Engagement & Data Gathering) Completion	20%	Aug-Nov 24	\$41,184
Stage 3 (Economic Assessment & Framework Development) Completion	20%	Nov-Feb 25	\$41,184
Stage 4 (Project Recommendations & Communication) Completion	15%	Feb-Mar 25	\$30,888
Total Project Fee	100%		\$205,920

- **Urban Greening Program for the Goldfields Esperance Region**

An application for funding from Lotterywest has been submitted for the 2025-2027 program, which aims to plant approximately 30,000 trees and shrubs in the Goldfields Esperance (GE) region over the next three years. Esperance Native Nursery has received a \$5000 deposit for the initial order of 13,000 trees and shrubs as an interim measure. Lotterywest is anticipated to provide a response by the end of December.

If the grant application is approved, additional trees and shrubs will be procured through the Kalgoorlie Boulder Urban Landcare Group and other native plant nurseries within the region. A background paper on the Urban Greening Program is in **Attachment 8**.

- **EV Charging Stations to go ahead at Leonora and Menzies**

Applications through the [Chargeup Grants](#) for charging station grants for Menzies and Leonora have been successful, pending a Horizon Power quote for the upgrade of power to the Leonora Recreation Centre, where the two plug DC fast charger will be located. If successful. The stations will be installed at the same time by EV Charging Systems who are a WALGA Preferred Supplier. This will reduce the preliminary costs of installation and on-going maintenance and servicing.

- **Community Water Supply Partnership Program (CWSPP)**

An application for the [Community Water Supply Partnership Program](#) \$83,800 has been submitted to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) on behalf of the Shire of Menzies. The Shire of Menzies currently relies on potable and non-potable water trucked from Kalgoorlie, which is itself piped from Perth at significant expense to the State Government. Anecdotal evidence suggests that bores in the area have seen a decline in quality and supply, attributed to lower rainfall and increased mining activity accessing groundwater resources in the region.

A town dam, transferred to the Shire from Water Corporation and constructed almost 100 years ago, ceased functioning some time ago due to the disintegration of its asphalt lining. This large dam features an engineered catchment area, and a concrete tank fed by bores, owned by Water Corporation, with infrastructure capable of supplying bore water if necessary.

By re-lining the dam with bentonite, sourced from Watheroo, the dam can be re-sealed in time to capture February rainfall, which often results from cyclonic events in the region. The dam is designed to collect rainwater run-off and water pumped from an existing concrete dam owned by Water Corporation, which is also filled by run-off. The degraded asphalt, which no longer retains water for more than a few days, will require clearing of perimeter regrowth, as well as the removal and replacement of a chain wire fence to facilitate the works. A clearing permit will be obtained prior to this. The Shire will provide complimentary accommodation, fuel, and some plant and operators to support this project, amounting to approximately \$22,000.

As this water is fresh, it will enable the Shire to significantly reduce the use of potable water for irrigation purposes. All potable water is currently transported to Menzies at a subsidised rate by Water Corporation. Large steel tanks will be installed at the Shire Depot to capture rainfall and store water transferred from the dam, preparing for fires and supporting the Shire's town greening strategy. This strategy aims to plant thousands of trees and shrubs to provide shade for the community and visitors. The Shire will prepare the ground for the installation of the tanks and oversee the project to ensure timely and budget-compliant execution.

An additional application will be submitted early next year for another dam in the Shire intended for roadworks and firefighting use. This dam receives water from a bore and contains more saline water. A standpipe is planned to be installed, and the Shire intends to charge for the water. The Shire is currently working on applications for the land transfer from Water Corporation with DPLH.

The next round of grants for this program will open in early 2025.

- **Goldfields Esperance Water Security Group (GEWSG)**

Two meetings have been held by the GEWSG since the last GVROC Council meeting on the 9 September and 14 October 2024 and the minutes from these meetings are in **Attachment 9**.

Consultants are now managing the Regional Drought Planning Program (RDRP). GEDC has developed initial definitions for drought, vulnerability, and resilience to guide the drought vulnerability assessment and final plan outcomes.

The Water Security Summit has been postponed until early 2025 pending Ministerial availability but the RDRP Sub Regional Workshops are proceeding with the first being held on 28 November 2024 in Leonora to test and prioritise the actions that have been identified during earlier consultations with the LGAs with the GEDC and to look at the draft RDRP prepared by the consultants.

Strategic Implications:

- Mitigating drought impacts and improving water security
- Sustainably managing the increased risk of bushfire threats
- Improving uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions
- Managing waste sustainably at a regional scale
- Reducing carbon emissions across the GE region to support our vision of a thriving, clean, green and economically resilient region

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC notes that:

1. Blue Salt Consultants are nearing the end of Stage 2 of the *Adapting Community Assets for Climate Change Impacts: Feasibility Study*, pending some further LGA data being supplied.
2. The Charge Up grants for EV Charging stations in Menzies and Leonora have been approved and are being advanced by the Shires.
3. Trees have been ordered for the Urban Greening program and a deposit of \$5000 has been paid to Esperance Native Nursery. A \$570,000 application has been submitted to Lotterywest for a large tree planting program across the Goldfields Esperance region, awaiting a response.
4. An \$83,800 application for the Shire of Menzies has been submitted through the Community Water Supply Partnership Program, awaiting an outcome. The next grant round will open in early 2025.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies
Seconded: Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora

Carried

GVROC Chair called motion to adjourn the meeting for morning tea break at 10:20am.

Moved: *Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton*

Seconded: *Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas*

GVROC Chair called motion to resume the meeting at 10:45am.

Moved: *Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas*

Seconded: *Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies*

10. GOLDFIELDS VOLUNTARY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS BUSINESS

10.1 GVROC Housing and Land Update

Reporting Officers:	Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Date:	November 2024
Attachments:	25 Oct 2024 Letter from WA Premier to LGAs regarding housing supply and improving affordability (Attachment 10) Department of Communities Goldfields Esperance Housing Workshop Overview (Attachment 10.1)

Background:

At the GVROC meeting held on 26 July 2024 the GVROC resolved the following:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the update on the GVROC LGAs meetings with the Department of Communities regarding the actions arising from the Ministerial Roundtable on 15 March 2024.
2. Note the research and investigations undertaken by the GVROC Executive Officer on the ability for LGAs to develop a consortium that would form a CHO to provide access to existing Government funding, to enable construction and management of social and affordable housing in relevant LGA areas of the Goldfields.
3. Request the GVROC Executive Officer engage with the Community Housing Registration Office to gauge the likelihood of such a LGA Consortium being approved for registration and report back further at the next meeting.
4. Note the information on the Federal Government's Housing Support Program – Community Enabling Infrastructure Stream, which is currently accepting applications in its Stream 2 up to 16 August 2024.
5. Request the GVROC Executive Officer to have discussions with the existing CHO's operating in the Goldfields Esperance Region to see if there is any interest in a partnership arrangement.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies
Seconded: Cr Sherryl Botting, Shire of Menzies

Carried

Officer Comment:

- **Update on the GVROC Executive Officer engage with the Community Housing Registration Office to gauge the likelihood of such a LGA Consortium being approved for registration and report back further at the next meeting.**

The GVROC Executive Officer contacted the Community Housing Registration Office in October to regarding this matter and this has resulted in a meeting being organised on 26 November 2024 to further discuss the likelihood of a LGA Consortium being approved for registration as a Community Housing Provider, should the GVROC decide it would like to proceed. The GVROC Executive Officer will provide an update on the outcomes from this discussion at the meeting.

- **Update on the GVROC Executive Officer discussions with the existing CHO's operating in the Goldfields Esperance Region to see if there is any interest in a partnership arrangement.**

The GVROC is continuing to engage with existing CHOs but those operating are still advising that they are not looking to expand operations past their current operations. There may be an interest though in partnering with the LGA Consortium should it proceed post the outcomes from the above discussions being had on that issue.

- **Letter from WA Premier to LGAs regarding housing supply and improving affordability**

On the 25 October 2024 the WA Premier wrote to all Local Governments regarding the State and Federal Governments shared goal of increasing housing supply and improving affordability given the increasing demand for housing (see **Attachment 10**).

To assist this the State Government is seeking the cooperation of Local Government, industry, and WALGA to accelerate approvals. Specifically, they would like to collaborate on the following:

- Enhancing resourcing in the local government approvals process - and ultimately reduce clearance timeframes. The proposal that has been suggested, is through a “fee for service” model funded by industry.
- Developing a model that will alleviate approvals processing pressures on local governments, particularly in high growth areas.
- Exploring other avenues to accelerate the delivery of housing and land in the short and medium term.

To progress these matters, the WA Premier has asked the Minister for Lands, John Carey, and Minister for Local Government, Hannah Beazley, to liaise with WALGA to determine the best form of assistance.

- **Department of Communities - Goldfields Esperance Regional Housing Workshops - 3 and 5 December 2024**

The Department of Communities is hosting two upcoming Regional Housing Workshops for the Goldfields-Esperance Region. These in-person workshops will be held in Esperance on **Tuesday, 3 December 2024** and Kalgoorlie on **Thursday, 5 December 2024**. A summary outlining what you can expect during the workshop sessions can be found at **Attachment 10.1**.

As part of the implementation of Recommendation 71 from Infrastructure WA’s *State Infrastructure Strategy: Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*, the Department of Communities is developing place-based Regional Housing Plans. These plans will guide housing priorities across Western Australia with a 10-year outlook, ensuring strategic, evidence-based outcomes for each region.

Why Your Participation Matters:

Your insights and perspectives are crucial to understanding the unique housing challenges and opportunities in the Goldfields-Esperance region. The workshop will focus on the following key themes:

- Current housing challenges and opportunities in the Goldfields-Esperance
- Key drivers of change affecting housing in the region
- Collaboration opportunities between government and stakeholders

These workshops are part of a broader series happening across WA from October 2024 to April 2025, gathering input from key stakeholders to shape the Regional Housing Plans.

It is important that all GVROC LGAs have representation at one of these workshops to ensure that these plans have our input and align to our the GVROC Housing Strategy and Action Plan plus the discussions and actions held with the Minister at the Housing Roundtable in March this year.

Consultation: All GVROC LGA
GEDC
DPLH
DoC

Financial Implications: TBD

Strategic Implications: Improved Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the updates from the GVROC Executive Officer on the likelihood of a GVROC LGA Consortium being approved for registration as a Community Housing Provider and interest from existing Community Housing Providers operating in the region.
2. Note the letter from the WA Premier to LGAs regarding increasing housing supply and improving housing affordability and the areas being looked at by the State Government with WALGA to determine the best form of assistance for local governments to work on this.
3. Request that all GVROC LGAs ensure they have representation at one of the two Goldfields Esperance Regional Housing Workshops being held by the Department of Communities on the 3 or 5 December 2024.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: *Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas*
Seconded: *Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies*

Carried

10.2 Safer Goldfields Regional Action Plan (SGRAP) - Update

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: November 24

Attachments: Nil

Background:

The GVROC identified the need for a coordinated response to address increasing issues of community safety throughout the region and on 3 February 2023 at its meeting agreed to engage a consultant to develop the Safer Goldfields Regional Action Plan (SGRAP) as a regional instrument to guide partnerships, document method and encourage the delivery of regional solutions. On 17 April 2023, Michelle Blackhurst Consultancy was engaged to develop the SGRAP.

Further at the GVROC meeting held on 28 July 2023, the SGRAP as presented was endorsed and adopted by the GVROC.

Subsequently the Safer Goldfields Management Group and the Safer Goldfields Working Group have been established to work towards implementing the SGRAP.

Officer Comment:

The Safer Goldfields Management Group (SGMG) last met in September 2024 and is waiting until the Safer Goldfields Working Group (SGWG) meets to then discuss the direction and requirements coming from the SGWG. The SGWG is planning to meet in early January 2025 and the SWMG will meet after that.

The SGWG have had two successful meetings to date with good attendance/genuine commitment, and two being postponed/rescheduled due to a potential lack of quorum. However, it appears that in order for the SGWG to effectively address, action and meet beneficial outcomes of the SGRAP, a review of these actions was required.

In principle this is due to;

- Actions populating the SGRAP (drawn from previous agency documents) may not be current anymore due to a number of varying factors.
- Capacity of Agencies to meet these former actions (staffing availability updated/current agency documents)
- Identified decision makers from agencies represented (ability to endorse at group level actions of the plan – if not who?)
- Local Government – endorsement of the SGRAP at a local level to support the SGMG activation of actions where relevant to – budget allocations, facilitation, collaborations etc.

After consultation with the GVROC Chair, GVROC Executive, SGMG, Chair and Vice Chair of the SGWG and Cr Bonza, to discuss the future progress of the actions outlined in the SGRAP, the SGWG scheduled a workshop with all SGWG members, SGMG Chair Marie Pointon, and GVROC Executive Andrew Mann which was held on 24 October 2024 with the aim to review/ clarify/identify/prioritize actions for the SGRAP.

Whilst attendance was low at the workshop, a robust conversation identified the following matters as relevant for further consideration:

- Some actions that are totally reliant on the agencies in the SGRAP. How does this look for our local governments? LGAs are not meant to doing all the work but facilitating outcomes.
- Resource challenges; staffing to deliver actions.
- Integrating technology to increase consistency of support services/mechanisms.
- Consideration of monthly agency reporting to SGWG and reported to SGMG,
- Advocacy based actions; LGAs on behalf of communities to service providers.

- Develop, populate and disperse a Service Provider Calendar – collated through SGMG, disseminated to LGAs – engage use of Google calendar to populate Agency activity, availability and schedule in LGA areas.
- Investigate/identify what current agency actions meet/complement the individual needs of each LGA.
- Allocation of actions is not always the entire responsibility of one Agency.
- What support is provided to agency representatives from their Agency Executive to support, assist, and activate actions? Without agency executive representation, there is a risk that sufficient impetus is placed on requests from SGWG members resulting in potential delays in implemented outcomes.
- Potential to consider reaching out to Executive Agency Representatives and or refer this matter back to GVROC and the LGAs to facilitate and reiterate the need for such support – SGWG request a letter of support from Member Councils?
- Would it be more practical to have a local Safer Working Group for each LGA, that then feeds up to the regional level?
- Priority issues across the Plan is AOD (FDV), youth, antisocial behaviours.
- Need to take this information to push this via GVROC to engage with agencies.
- Build stronger relationships between LGA and service providers.
- Collate trends and barriers from LGA level to the regional level, and utilize this to advocate/secure funding for improved agency support/services etc.

It was also noted that from an agency perspective, there is an increasing issue within the sector re competition for funding, which is creating barriers, that is:

- Leading to mistrust in sharing agency information with other agencies, LGAs and organisations.
- Concern around that information being used 'against them' for future tenders etc.
- What funding is available, and who's best placed to be successful of receipt and delivery.

As a result of this:

- It would make sense to align actions between agencies, groups etc and the SGRAP.
- To activate anything in the action plan, the need of the SGWG and SGMG to get the where/why/buy in from agencies.
- Having groups lead by LGAs, which offers greater confidence and security for agencies to collaborate without concern for the above mentioned, whilst being mindful of not creating any reliance on LGA to control agency functions and objectives.
- Acquire copies of ToR etc from local groups (FDV, suicide prevention, youth etc) to gain understanding of agency remit and directives: assist with aligning effective service provision.
- SGWG can update the plan by populating trends, issues, etc that are current and emerging, then refer back to GVROC to query, support and/or fund, and refer back relevant action required by LGAs to be activated by GVROC. IAM feeds into HoAM feeds into DLG, which should then feedback down also.

The resultant actions from the SGWG Workshop on 24 October 2024 were as follows:

1. SGMG advise SGWG of a request to attain confirmation/commitment from LGAs that they will provide agencies with their support, local commitment and knowledge to aid and meet the goals of the SGRAP.
2. Develop a sound foundation at LGA level between Councils, LGAs and agencies/organisations through invitations to present at LGA, to enable an understanding of what the agencies do locally, and what their local capacity/capability is. Acquired evidence can then be utilised by GVROC in their advocacy positions.
3. Develop the calendar re: agency services and availability in LGA areas.
4. Develop a 'mission statement' to provide to all SGWG member organisations explaining/clarifying the "why", to establish the buy in and commitment of employee, and assessment thereof, for "best fit" from each organisation as a representative for the SGWG.

5. Incorporate a fundamental MoU reaffirming member agency commitment to the SGWG
 - Highlight commitment to SGRAP.
 - Importance of highlighting the most appropriate people, networking.
6. Consider displaying a regional agency contact list on the GVROC website.

As we now approach the festive season, it has become difficult to align a date for the SGWG to meet and discuss the workshop content prior to the end of December. After consultation with The Deputy Chair, Cr Bonza, SGMG Chair, Marie Pointon, and GVROC Executive Officer, Andrew Mann, it has been agreed that SGWG members will receive a save the date for the 9th of January 2025 for its next meeting.

Consultation: GVROC Chair
SGMG Chair and Secretary
SGWG Chair and Secretary

Financial Implications: TBC.

Strategic Implications: Improved liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the update provided by the Chair of the SGMG and SGWG.
2. Note the details from the SGWG Workshop on 24 October 2024 and the resultant actions.
3. Request that each GVROC LGA reaffirm their commitment to the SGRAP and remind their staff of the importance of attending scheduled meetings of the SGMG and SGWG to ensure that meetings can proceed, and outcomes achieved against the SGRAP.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
Seconded: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas

Carried

10.3 BHP WA Nickel closures and Community Fund - Update

Reporting Officers:	Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Date:	November 2024
Attachments:	BHP WA Nickel Workshop Report from 15 September 2024 on Community Fund Program (Attachment 11) BHP WA Nickel Community Fund Guidelines (Attachment 12) BHP WA Nickel Community Fund EOI Form (Attachment 13)

Background:

On the 11th July 2024 BHP announced that the Nickel West operations and the West Musgrave project (**Western Australia Nickel**) will be temporarily suspended from October 2024. BHP intends to review the decision to temporarily suspend Western Australia Nickel by February 2027.

During the temporary suspension, BHP will continue to support its workforce and local communities. BHP will invest approximately \$450 million per annum following completion of a transition period to support a potential re-start of Western Australian Nickel.

The transition period will commence from July 2024. Operations will be suspended in October 2024 and handover activities for temporary suspension will be completed by December 2024.

During the temporary suspension, BHP will:

- Suspend mining and processing operations at the Kwinana nickel refinery, Kalgoorlie nickel smelter and Mt Keith and Leinster operations and the development of the West Musgrave project;
- Implement a care a maintenance program of work to ensure the ongoing safety and integrity of its mines and related infrastructure;
- Continue to invest in exploration to extend the resource life of Western Australia Nickel and preserve optionality; and
- Offer Western Australia Nickel frontline employees another role within BHP or the choice of a redundancy and establish an AU\$20 million Community Fund to support local communities during the temporary suspension.
- honour contracts for supply of reagents in Kalgoorlie from its operation.

At the GVROC meeting held on 26 July 2024 the GVROC resolved the following regarding the announcement and meeting held with BHP:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the directly affected LGAs that are impacted by the BHP and Mineral Resources announcements have formed a working group and met on 15 July 2024.
2. Note the discussion notes resulting from this meeting and subsequent LGA meetings held with BHP.
3. Endorse the actions that the working group has agreed.
4. Agree to representatives from the working group to formulate and negotiate with BHP a regional LGA approach on how the \$20 million Community Fund should be allocated and spent.
5. Have the GVROC Chair write to BHP advising them of the GVROC Working Group members and requesting a meeting with its representatives to negotiate a LGA plan for the \$20 million Community Fund.
6. GVROC Executive Officer to organise a Working Group meeting for the end of next week to further discuss the matter.
7. Each LGA CEO to gather information on the likely economic impacts facing their LGA as a result of the nickel industry closure and provide back to the GVROC Executive Officer prior to the meeting next week.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Sherryl Botting, Shire of Coolgardie**
Seconded: Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies

Carried

Officer Comment:

Since the last meeting the GVROC Chair wrote to BHP WA Nickel as requested (see Correspondence Sent – **Attachment 5**) with some suggested guidelines on how the Community Fund could progress.

BHP Nickel then held a workshop on 15 September 2024 in Kalgoorlie to discuss with the key stakeholders the development of the Community Fund. The outcomes from this workshop are provided in the report at **Attachment 11**.

Utilising the information gathered and discussed with the key stakeholders, BHP WA Nickel then announced on 7 November 2024 that the Guidelines have been finalised and WA Nickel Community Fund is now open to receive applications.

Attachment 12 shows the Community Fund Guidelines and **Attachment 13** provides the Expression of Interest form that affected LGAs will be required to complete to commence the application process.

Consultation: GVROC Chair
CoKB and Shires of Coolgardie, Dundas, Esperance, Leonora and Wiluna

Financial Implications: TBC

Strategic Implications: Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the update on the BHP WA Nickel Closures and the release of the Community Fund guidelines and EOI Form, which are now open for applications.
2. Request those affected LGAs to apply to the Community Fund for projects that are aligned with the guidelines and offer support in this process as required.

RESOLUTION: **Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton**
Seconded: Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora

Carried

10.4 Mine Waste Rock usage for Road Construction Program Update

Reporting Officers:	Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Date:	November 2024
Attachment:	Road works programs and potential volumes of mine waste usage by Goldfields LGAs (Attachment 14)

Background:

Original briefing on utilising Mine Waste Rock for road construction was held with the Ministers for Mines and Local Government on 5 June 2024.

This resulted in a working group formed to progress the matter that included:

Department of Transport, Steve Beyer - Director Transport Sustainability and Strategic Projects; (leading the State Government side of the investigations)
 Department Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety's (DEMIRS), Richard Borozdin, Elliot Samson and James Harmer;
 And the GVROC Executive Officer, Andrew Mann

At the last GVROC meeting held on 26 July 2024 the GVROC resolved:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the update on progress made with the Mine Waste Rock usage for Road Construction Project.
2. Request the City of Kalgoorlie Boulder and the Shires of Coolgardie, Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, Ngaanyatjarraku and Wiluna, to urgently provide the GVROC Executive Officer the required information on their road works projects (kms of road and volume of resheeting) before the end of July 2024 so that it can be provided back to the DoT and DEMIRS to finalise their calculations and information for briefing the Ministers.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas
Seconded: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Carried

Officer Comment:

The following is an update on progress of discussions with the Department of Transport, Main Roads, DEMIRS and Department of Treasury.

Several meetings have been held by the working group over the last three and half months, and Main Roads WA have also briefed the Minister during this time on the suitability of using Mine Waste for road construction. The discussions at these meetings have looked at various different royalty rebate mechanisms, industry consultation, potential demand profiles from GVROC LGAs and issues and opportunities from Main Roads point of view.

The briefing note provided by Main Roads WA to the Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport and Minister for Mines provides a solid case for the use of mine site rock and waste, with some qualifications on some materials. It notes the significant wider benefits (ie beyond cost savings) and that the relatively small royalty paid is not the significant hurdle or saving in the process. But it could be argued that it is just one of the factors that would expedite this.

On the basis that a royalty rebate model was pursued, Steve Beyer has discussed the option of Main Roads' Regional Directors and the RRG being the certifiers for volumes used by local government. The Department of Transport Director General supports that process which is already in place for other approvals. So, consideration of a process where mining companies still pay the royalty as needed back to government and charge LGAs that royalty amount to source the mine waste, and Main Roads Regional Directors submit a quarterly certification of use and volume to support a rebate/reimbursement back to the LGAs through the RRG funding.

The GVROC report at **Attachment 14** highlights the potential demand assessment per year for the Goldfields Esperance Region and this was provided to the working group after consulting with each of the GVROC LGAs.

The Working Groups proposal at this stage has been to look at the RRG being the body to manage and administer the rebates to LGAs when they have sourced and paid the royalties to the mining companies. This avoids setting up a royalty rebate process with the mining companies or changing the mining royalty's legislation as it stands and would remove DEMIRS involvement in the process. Essentially if LGAs source the material and the mining companies collect the royalty fee for it from the LGA and pass this on to the Government, then the LGAs would report this payment and figures, tonnes etc used on a quarterly basis to their Main Roads RRG Regional Director and then they would arrange for a reimbursement for the royalty amount paid by the LGA to the mining company. The State Government through Treasury would need to increase the RRG funding to cover for these annual reimbursement rebates to LGAs based on the predicted potential demand usages for the region. The only cost to government for this should be the costs involved in administering and managing this process through the RRGs as essentially the royalties collected by the mining companies and then paid back through RRG cancel each other out.

The Department of Treasury (TSY) has now considered this proposal looking at volumes of mine waste and potential impacts on 'revenue foregone' or costs to government to administer the rebate program. At this stage, TSY have advised they do not support increasing funding to the Department of Transport to implement the proposal.

So, the Department of Transport is now looking at whether there is a possibly to take an alternative path of utilising some existing funding through the State Funds for Local Government sourced through the license fees and road trauma trust account for a two-year pilot trial of this proposal (potentially costed at \$730,000 based on GVROC LGA volumes provided) in the Goldfields to show its merit. Discussions are also being held with Ian Duncan at WALGA around this proposal.

The Department of Transport will present this approach to the State Advisory Committee requesting they approve to the proposal for the mining royalties to be recouped from the State Funds for Local Government.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Note the update on progress made with the Mine Waste Rock usage for Road Construction Project.
2. Support the concept of a two-year pilot trial in the Goldfields Esperance Region.
3. Do not support the funding for the two-year pilot trial to come from the existing Goldfields Esperance Regional Road Funding Allocation as proposed by the Department of Transport and request that WALGA advise the SAC this be funded from additional increased funding to the allocation taken from surplus funding held in the State Regional Road Group Program.
4. Request WALGA to advocate to State Government to amend the legislation regarding royalty payments to exclude Local Governments from having to pay royalties when sourcing mine waste material for local road construction, as the best alternative going forward.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton
Seconded: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas

Carried

10.5 Upcoming 2025 Federal and State Elections – Development of a GVROC Investment Prospectus

Reporting Officers: Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer

Disclosure of Interest: Nil

Date: November 2024

Attachments: [KRG Investment Prospectus 2024-SINGLES-WEB1.pdf](#)
[RCAWA-Investment-Project-Prospectus-2024-FINAL-SPREADS-WEB.pdf](#)
[WALGA-2025-State-Election-Priorities.pdf](#)

Background:

The next WA State Government election is scheduled for the 8th of March 2025 and the next Federal election is likely to be held before or after the State 2025 election. Both elections provide the opportunity for the GVROC and its Local Government members to put forward policy and funding proposals to shape pre-election commitments by political parties and candidates.

Examples of how this has been done by similar bodies are provided in the Attachments links above, with Investment Project Prospectus by the Kimberley Regional Group of Local Governments and the Regional Capitals Alliance of WA and on a policy perspective the WALGA 2025 State Election Priorities.

Officer Comment:

Given the closeness of both elections, it is recommended that from a policy perspective that the WALGA 2025 election priorities already cover and represent issues and policies faced by Local Government.

However, it is recommended that development of a GVROC investment prospectus of each of the Local Governments highest project priorities (maximum of 3 per LGA) be undertaken similar to that done for the Kimberley Regional Group of Local Governments and the Regional Capitals Alliance of WA, noting that both the City of Kalgoorlie Boulder and the Shire of Esperance are already included in the Regional Capitals Alliance of WA Investment Prospectus.

When completed this can then be sent out to all Ministers and local Members of Parliament leading up to the election, and then to any new Ministers post the outcomes of the elections.

If the GVROC is agreeable to this suggestion, then the GVROC Executive Officer will create a template for project priorities with details to be kept to one page that will be provided to the GVROC LGA CEOs to fill in with the project details and costings. It is also recommended that Projects chosen should be shovel ready, preferably with a completed business case available upon request to fit with an election commitment announcement.

All project templates should be back with the GVROC Executive Officer by mid January 2025 and these will then be pulled together into one document that can be presented back to the GVROC at its first meeting for 2025 on 31 January in Kalgoorlie.

Should the GVROC want to produce a professionally graphic designed document with images then this will incur the hiring of a graphic designer. It is recommended that this be designed to a PDF format that can be printable either by the GVROC or individually by each LGA and also placed on our website.

Consultation: GVROC Chair

Financial Implications: TBC – cost of graphic design plus printing costs

Strategic Implications: Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Notes the opportunity and examples of policy and funding proposals that can shape pre-election commitments by political parties and candidates.
2. Support the development of a GVROC investment prospectus of each of the Local Governments highest project priorities (maximum of 3 per LGA) be undertaken similar to those examples provided, which can be sent out to all Ministers and local Members of Parliament leading up to the election, and then to any new Ministers post the outcomes of the elections.
3. If supported above request the GVROC Executive Officer to prepare and send out the project investment templates to all LGA CEOs and for LGA CEOs to complete these and return to the GVROC Executive Officer by the first week of December 2024.
4. The GVROC Executive Officer to then compile these and circulate for consideration by the GVROC out of session by 20 December 2025 to then email out to all relevant members of State of Federal Parliament.
5. A decision can then be made at the next meeting in January 2025 on whether a more formal GVROC Investment Prospectus should be developed and professionally designed.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Paul Warner, Shire of Menzies

Seconded: Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora

Carried

10.6 Reportable Conduct Scheme

Reporting Officers:	Peter Fitchat, CEO Shire of Dundas Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Date:	November 2024
Attachments:	Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS) – an overview of the RCS by the Ombudsman WA. (Attachment 15)

Background:

The Reportable Conduct Scheme for Western Australia (the Scheme) commenced on 1 January 2023.

The Scheme, contained in Division 3B of the *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971*, implements key recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* and provides that child abuse in organisations will always be:

- Notified to an impartial and independent body;
- Investigated fully; and
- Dealt with to ensure children are protected from abuse within institutions.

The Scheme makes Western Australian children safer. The Scheme compels heads of organisations, including Local Governments, that exercise care, supervision or authority over children to notify allegations of, or convictions for, child abuse by their employees to the Ombudsman and then investigate these allegations.

The Office of the Ombudsman Western Australia recently conducted a webinar on 28 October 2024 to provide an overview on the RCS for Local Governments (see webinar slides at **Attachment 15**).

The Ombudsman's presentation on the Reportable Conduct Scheme highlights several challenges that Western Australian local governments may face if tasked with child protection reporting responsibilities:

Officer Comment:

The Shire of Dundas CEO, Peter Fitchat, attended the webinar on 28 October 2024 and is concerned about the impact and associated cost to the Shire of Dundas and other regional Local Governments in the Goldfields if the request for Local Governments to meet the RCS requirements is not fully funded to provide systems, training and staff to deal with these matters. To safeguard your staff and community it will need full assistance to get this right and protect the most vulnerable in our community.

The Shire of Dundas CEO also believes this is another cost-shifting exercise by the State and Federal Governments on to Local Governments and there is a need for a WALGA Policy Position on this to ensure it is fully funded to cover 100% of the associated cost burdens being placed on Local Governments.

The Ombudsman's presentation underscores that child protection is best managed by state and federal authorities equipped with the necessary resources and expertise. Local governments, especially in regional areas, are at risk if required to shoulder these responsibilities without substantial support and systemic changes. Before LGAs can commit to this, they will need to do a full assessment of the associated requirements to fulfil this request.

The requirement for local government to handle reportable conduct responsibilities could also have significant financial, operational burdens for Local Governments and community implications as follows:

1. **LGIS Insurance:** Expanding responsibilities to include child protection would likely increase local government liability, potentially raising LGIS insurance premiums, as handling sensitive cases elevates risk and legal accountability. LGIS may need to assess this additional exposure and adjust premiums or consider specialized coverage for LGAs.

2. Input from Key Stakeholders: In addition to WALGA, WA Police, Department of Communities, it's essential that Native Title Groups, alongside the Goldfields Esperance District Leadership Group, have the opportunity to comment on this requirement. Their input can provide culturally relevant perspectives, highlight potential community impacts, and guide resource allocation and support needed to fulfil these responsibilities in a way that respects local communities and their unique needs.
3. Indicative Costs: Implementing this requirement would entail various costs, including:
 - a. Training Costs: Specialized, ongoing training for local government staff in child protection protocols.
 - b. Staffing Requirements: Additional roles or dedicated personnel are needed to handle child protection matters, considering the emotional and workload demands.
 - c. System Implementation: Investment in secure data systems for managing confidential case information.
 - d. Legal and Administrative Costs: Additional administrative and legal support to ensure compliance with rigorous reporting and investigation standards.By engaging LGIS, WALGA, WA Police, the Department of Communities, Native Title Groups, and the Goldfields Esperance District Leadership Group, LGAs can more accurately gauge both the practical and financial impacts of taking on these responsibilities and ensure a collaborative, well-supported approach.
4. Resource Demands: Local governments, especially in remote areas, lack the specialized resources and training required to handle child protection investigations, which include assessment, notification, and management of sensitive allegations.
5. Complex Reporting Obligations: The scheme requires detailed reporting, investigation, and risk management processes that are typically beyond the capacity of smaller councils. Complying with these obligations without dedicated support could overwhelm local government staff.
6. High-Risk Liability: Handling child protection reports brings legal and ethical liability, increasing risks for councils ill-equipped to manage such sensitive cases, potentially affecting community trust and legal standing.
7. Procedural Complexity: The need for procedural fairness, detailed documentation, and risk management associated with ongoing investigations adds operational strain on local governments already stretched thin by basic service responsibilities.

It is also the view of the Shire of Dundas CEO that all child protection matters should be referred to the Police and established social services with the right process and means to manage incidents, rather than be dealt and handled by Local Governments.

Here is a list of the key state and federal government agencies in Australia that handle child protection, family welfare, and community safety issues:

State Government Agencies (Western Australia)

1. Department of Communities (WA) - Manages child protection services, including investigations, family support, and foster care placements. Provides programs to support at-risk children, families, and communities.
2. Western Australia Police Force - Investigates criminal aspects of child abuse, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and works alongside child protection agencies in serious cases. Operates specialized units for child abuse investigation and collaborates with community services.
3. Ombudsman Western Australia - Manages the Reportable Conduct Scheme, overseeing allegations of child abuse within organizations. Receives and investigates complaints related to public authorities, including local government responsibilities in child protection reporting.
4. Department of Justice (WA) - Provides legal services and support for the court system's family and child protection matters. - Manages family law cases involving custody and care matters and any court-ordered protection for children.

5. Department of Health (WA) - Provides child health services, including mental health support and counselling, particularly for children impacted by abuse or family violence. Collaborates with child protection agencies in cases requiring medical intervention.

Federal Government Agencies

1. Australian Federal Police (AFP) - Investigates and manages national and international cases of child exploitation, including online abuse and trafficking. Collaborates with state police on cross-jurisdictional child protection matters.
2. Department of Social Services (DSS) - Administers programs to support vulnerable families, including financial assistance, housing support, and services for those affected by family violence. Oversees initiatives to improve child welfare and safety across Australia, including funding and policy support.
3. National Office for Child Safety - Established following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, focusing on national policies to prevent and address child abuse. Works with state and federal agencies to improve practices, support survivors, and develop national strategies for child safety.
4. Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) - Oversees the National Children's Commissioner, who advocates for children's rights, welfare, and protection at a national level. Conducts investigations and provides policy recommendations on issues affecting children's rights, including child protection.
5. Department of Health and Aged Care - Manages programs related to children's health and welfare, including mental health services for families affected by abuse and violence. Provides funding for community health initiatives and collaborates with state health departments.

These agencies collectively address child protection and family welfare, each playing a distinct role in prevention, investigation, intervention, and policy-making.

Based on the above, it is recommended that each GVROC LGA take this information to their Councils in the first instance so that they are aware of the current requirements and potential impact for the Local Governments and Community as per the presentation from the Ombudsman's Office. It is also recommended that the GVROC advocate to WALGA requesting that WALGA establish a regional policy position on this matter for Local Governments.

Consultation: GVROC Chair and Executive Officer
Shire of Dundas

Financial Implications: TBC

Strategic Implications: Liveability, social and community wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Notes the information provided on the Reportable Conduct Scheme for Western Australia by the Office of the Ombudsman Western Australia at its webinar on 28 October 2024 and the requirements and impacts it places on all local governments.
2. Recommend that each GVROC LGA take this information to their Councils in the first instance so that they are aware of the requirements and potential impact for the Local Governments and Community.
3. That the GVROC Chair and Executive Officer advocate to review the existing WALGA Policy Position on this matter and for WALGA to establish a more detailed regional policy position on this matter for regional Local Governments.

RESOLUTION: Moved: *Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas*
Seconded: *Mayor Glenn Wilson, City of Kalgoorlie Boulder*

Carried

10.7 **GVROC Regional Climate Alliance Coordinator Contract (Confidential Members only)**

Reporting Officer:	Andrew Mann, GVROC Executive Officer
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Date:	November 2024
Attachments:	GVROC RCA Coordinator Contract (Attachment 16) GVROC RCA Coordinator Position Description Document (Attachment 17) GVROC RCA Coordinator Achievements for last 12 months and KPIs for next 12 months (Attachment 18)

Background:

The GVROC resolved at its meeting held on 24 November 2023 the following:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. **Endorsed and notes the executed GVROC RCA Coordinator contract and Position Description Form with Niki Curtis, commencing on 28 August 2023 and ending on 31 January 2025.**
2. **Request that the GVROC Chair and the GVROC Executive Officer to initiate discussions relevant to contract review/renewal 3 months prior (October 2024) to the contract end date of 31 January 2025.**

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Patrick Hill, Shire of Laverton

Seconded: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas

Carried

Based on the above resolution, the GVROC Chair and the GVROC Executive Officer have undertaken discussions relevant to contract review/renewal in October 2024 with Niki Curtis to evaluate the existing contract and the possibility of an extension subject to GVROC approval.

Officers Comments:

The GVROC Chair and Executive Officer have concluded discussions with Niki Curtis and agreed on the terms and role for the RCA Coordinator contract in line with the GVROC resolution on 24 November 2023.

The draft contract to be offered is for a 12-month extension to 31 January 2026 and is contained at **Attachment 16**. Also included is the agreed Position Description form (**Attachment 17**).

As part of the discussions around the extension of contract, the RCA Coordinators achievements for 2024 were reviewed and KPIs established for the contract extension, and these are contained in **Attachment 18**.

Financial Implications:

Based on the current remuneration rates charged and expected number of hours per year (up to 80 hours a month), the RCA Coordinator budget is expected to be up to \$115,000 per annum. Some of this budget though will be supplemented with grant funding received to undertake GVROC Regional Climate Alliance projects, meaning that the GVROC budget allocation may be in line with the current budget allocation of \$80,000 per annum.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the GVROC:

1. Notes the draft extension contract and Position Description Form to be offered, commencing on 1 February 2025 and ending on 31 January 2026.
2. Endorses the extension of contract for the GVROC RCA Coordinator to Niki Curtis to the 31 January 2026.
3. Requests the GVROC Chair and Executive Officer execute the draft extension contract with Niki Curtis, with a starting date of 1 February 2025 and ending on 31 January 2026.
4. Request that the GVROC Chair and the GVROC Executive Officer to initiate discussions relevant to contract review/renewal 3 months prior (October 2025) to the contract end date of 31 January 2026.

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Laurene Bonza, Shire of Dundas

Seconded: Cr Peter Craig, Shire of Leonora

Carried

11. LATE ITEMS as notified, introduced by decision of the Meeting

Nil

12. FUTURE GVROC COUNCIL MEETINGS/FUNCTIONS

Next Meetings

The following suggested dates in 2025 have been set for the GVROC meetings.

- **31 January 2025** in Kalgoorlie (to be hosted by City of Kalgoorlie Boulder)
- **28 March 2025** in Esperance (to be hosted by Shire of Esperance)
- **30 May 2025** in Norseman (to be hosted by Shire of Dundas)
- **25 July 2025** in Kambalda (to be hosted by Shire of Coolgardie)
- **October 2025** (Date and Dinner TBC aligned with WALGA Convention and AGM in Perth)
- **28 November 2025** in Leonora (to be hosted by Shire of Leonora)

The following are the WALGA State Council meeting dates in 2025 with suggested GVROC Zoom video conference meeting dates prior to these to inform the GVROC's representatives attending the meetings with relevant input for State Council Agenda Items:

- 5 March 2025 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **21 February 2025**
- 7 May 2025 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **24 April 2025**
- 2 July 2025 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **20 June 2025**
- 4-5 September 2025 WALGA State Council Regional Meeting (to be hosted by the Shire of Dundas in Norseman) - GVROC meeting on **22 August 2025**
- 3 December 2025 WALGA State Council Meeting - GVROC meeting on **14 November 2025**

13. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11:45am