

Gascoyne Country Zone Minutes

22 November 2024

**Hosted by the Shire of Carnarvon
5 Francis Street, Carnarvon
Commencing at 10am**

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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, on 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. Draft Minutes of previous meeting
2. November 2024 Update – Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries
3. Status Report
4. President's Report
5. Cooperation and Shared Services
6. Band 4 Local Governments meeting summary report
7. Native Vegetation Issues Paper

1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

The Chair opened the meeting at 10:04am.

1.2 ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS

1 Voting Delegates from each Member Council

Shire of Carnarvon

President Cr Eddie Smith
Amanda Dexter, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting delegate

Shire of Exmouth

President Cr Matthew Niikkula
Ben Lewis, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting delegate

Shire of Upper Gascoyne

President Cr Jimmy Caunt
John McCleary, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting delegate

Shire of Shark Bay

President Cr Cheryl Cowell

WALGA Secretariat

Mark Bondietti, Policy Manager Transport and Roads
Taysha Sullivan, Media and Communications Advisor

GUESTS

Regional Development Australia –
Mid West Gascoyne

Karin Grima, RDA Program Manager & Director Lyssna Consulting

Shire of Shark Bay

Brian Galvin – Works Manager

Shire of Exmouth

Tom Carroll

GUEST SPEAKER

ASK Waste Management Consulting

Giles Perryman, Director
Samuel Green

1.3 APOLOGIES

Regional Development Australia – Mid
West Gascoyne

Mark Holdsworth, Executive Officer

Roadwise

Department of Local Government
Sport and Cultural Industries

Craig Vinci, A/Regional Manager, Gascoyne

Shire of Shark Bay

Dale Chapman, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
delegate

Main Roads

Andrea Pitcher, A/Asset Management Officer
Gaff Murray, Operations Manager – Carnarvon

Gascoyne Development Commission

Tim Bray, Chief Executive Officer
Simmone Van Buerle, Director Regional Development

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the delegates of the Gascoyne Country Zone acknowledge the traditional owners of this land that we are meeting on today and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Elected Members must declare to the Chairman any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before the Zone as soon as they become aware of it. Councillors 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.

4 DEPUTATIONS

Nil.

5 AGENCY REPORTS

5.1 GASCOYNE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Representatives from the Gascoyne Development Commission were an apology for this meeting.

5.2 DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SPORT AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) Regional Officer, Craig Vinci was an apology for this meeting.

The November 2024 report from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) was provided as an attachment.

Noted

5.3 ROADWISE REPORT

Roadwise was an apology for this meeting.

Noted

Mark Bondiotti informed the Zone that the Gascoyne RoadWise Officer position is vacant and will be advertised soon.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

Seconded: President Cr Jim Caunt

That the Gascoyne Country Zone request the Secretariat to remove the RoadWise Report standing item from future Zone Agendas.

CARRIED

5.4 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA

Executive Officer, RDA Mid-West Gascoyne, Mark Holdsworth, was an apology for this meeting.

Karin Grima provided a brief introduction for Giles Perryman, Director of ASK Waste Management Consulting, who had been invited to attend the Zone meeting. Giles provided a presentation on the Regional Waste Management project.

Noted

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula
Seconded: President Cr Cheryl Cowell

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Gascoyne Country Zone held on 23 August 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

7 BUSINESS ARISING

7.1 STATUS REPORT

A Status Report outlining the actions taken on the Zone's resolutions is enclosed as an attachment.

Noted

8 ZONE BUSINESS

8.1 SOCIAL ISSUES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ADVOCACY

By Shire of Carnarvon

BACKGROUND

To address the complex and persistent social challenges faced by communities, particularly those affected by State Government-imposed liquor restrictions, by focusing on comprehensive, wraparound services and necessary legislative and policy reforms. Despite restrictions, many of these communities continue to experience escalating social issues that require a coordinated whole of Government approach.

Establish a dedicated Ministerial Council to drive cross-sector collaboration and accelerate the removal of policy and legislative barriers impeding progress. The Council will focus on developing integrated solutions that address the root causes of these social challenges, ensuring sustainable outcomes for affected communities.

Proposed Membership

Chaired by an Independent Representative

Minister for Housing and Homelessness
Minister for Indigenous Affairs
Minister for Communities and Early Years
Deputy Premier
Minister for Police and Corrective Services
Minister for Health
WALGA Representative

This Council will prioritise cohesive, cross-portfolio efforts to address the complex interplay of factors contributing to ongoing social issues, ensuring targeted solutions that are responsive to community needs.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

Seconded: President Cr Jim Caunt

That the Gascoyne Country Zone request State Council to advocate to the State Government to establish a dedicated Social Issues Ministerial Council.

CARRIED

8.2 2025 PROPOSED MEETING DATES

By Chantelle O'Brien, Zone Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

A schedule of the proposed meeting dates for the Gascoyne Country Zone 2025 has been prepared and is set out below. The dates have been set to coincide with the WALGA State Council meetings, which are provided in the table below for information.

The proposed meeting dates for the Gascoyne Country Zone for 2025 require adoption by delegates.

Following the same format as previous years, two MS Teams meetings and three in-person meetings have been included. Two in-person meetings per year are hosted by Carnarvon with the third rotating between Exmouth, Shark Bay and Upper Gascoyne.

The meetings have been rotated as follows:

- 2019 – Upper Gascoyne (Mt Augustus)
- 2019 – Regional State Council Meeting – Shark Bay
- 2020 – Exmouth
- 2021 – Upper Gascoyne (Gascoyne Junction)
- 2022 – Shark Bay
- 2023 – Exmouth
- 2024 - Upper Gascoyne (Gascoyne Junction)

Note, the April meeting would have fallen on Anzac Day, 25 April, being a Public Holiday. It has been proposed that the Zone meet the Friday earlier on this occasion.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS GASCOYNE COUNTRY ZONE MEETING 2025

Zone Meeting Dates Friday	Time	HOST COUNCIL	State Council Meeting Dates 2025
21 February	Friday 10:00 am	Shire of Carnarvon	Wednesday 5 March 2025

18 April	Friday 10:00 am	MS Teams	Regional Meeting Wednesday 7 May 2025
20 June	Friday 10:00 am	Shire of Shark Bay	Wednesday 2 July 2025
22 August	Friday 10:00 am	MS Teams	Regional Meeting 4-5 September 2025
21 November	Friday 10:00 am	Shire of Carnarvon	Wednesday 3 December 2025

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Cheryl Cowell

Seconded: President Cr Jim Caunt

That the 2025 proposed schedule of meetings for the Gascoyne Country Zone be adopted.

CARRIED

8.3 SUBMISSIONS TO THE 2025 SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES TRIBUNAL REMUNERATION INQUIRY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND ELECTED MEMBERS

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

BACKGROUND

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (SAT) conduct an annual inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Member remuneration.

SAT generally advertises its intention to receive submissions in December for its inquiry and Determination in relation to the following financial year. The Tribunal will invite individual Local Governments, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, WALGA, Local Government Professionals WA and other interested individuals to provide information or submissions.

SAT will likely publish its Determination for 2025-2026 in April 2025.

COMMENT

In preparation for the inquiry to be undertaken early next year, a draft submission from WALGA has been prepared making recommendations to SAT on behalf of the sector in relation to Elected Member fees and allowances, Chief Executive Officer remuneration, the Regional/Isolation Allowance and Independent Audit Member fees. The draft WALGA submission is contained in the December State Council Agenda for Zone and State Council consideration.

Local Governments can also put forward a submission, particularly in relation to their own circumstances, including requests to be classified in a different Band.

WALGA encourages all Local Governments to make a submission to SAT.

Noted

8.4 COOPERATION AND SHARED SERVICES

By Tony Brown, WALGA

BACKGROUND

Please find attached (Attachment 5) the latest version of the Cooperation and Shared Services document. This document was created to capture the collaborative work between Local Governments, showcasing ways to maximise resources to deliver outcomes that would be difficult to achieve alone. Local Governments have contributed to this resource and will be consulted again next year for further updates/modifications.

All CEO's have received this document and were encouraged to share with Councillors and staff to fully display all collaborative work happening within Local Government.

WALGA will be promoting this to Government agencies to display the collaborative work that happens in our sector.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Tony Brown – tbrown@walga.asn.au or Naoimh Donaghy – ndonaghy@walga.asn.au.

Noted

8.5 REQUEST TO PRESENT

By Chantelle O'Brien, Zone Executive Officer

The secretariat has been contacted by the Department of Planning, Lands and Cultural Heritage seeking interest from Country Zones to have a representative attend a future Zone meeting and provide further information on the Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage's 'Aboriginal Heritage Survey Program' (AHSP).

As Local Government authorities are eligible applicants under the AHSP, the Department believes that a discussion about the program would be an opportunity for Country Zone members to determine whether the AHSP would be right for their LGA.

A brief outline of the AHSP follows:

The State Government has committed to a 10-year fully funded Aboriginal heritage survey program across the State, to be managed by the Department. Its purpose is to:

1. Survey areas to:
 - Record Aboriginal heritage for inclusion on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System (ACHIS) and the Register of Places and Objects.
 - Ensure Aboriginal heritage information can be accessed easily and relied on as part of statutory approvals under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (Act) to use land where Aboriginal sites are located.
2. Accurately remap boundaries of Aboriginal sites and known Aboriginal heritage places where required.
3. Confirm locations where Aboriginal heritage has not been identified, meaning activities can be undertaken without the need for approval under the Act.

Further information relating to the AHSP can be found here: [Aboriginal-heritage-survey-program](#)

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula
Seconded: President Cr Cheryl Cowell

That the Gascoyne Country Zone supports a representative from the Department of Planning, Lands and Cultural Heritage to attend a future Zone meeting in 2025 to discuss the Aboriginal Heritage Survey Program.

CARRIED

8.6 DEPUTATIONS PLANNING FOR 2025

By Chantelle O'Brien, Zone Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

As we approach the new year, it's an excellent time to reflect on the opportunities ahead. One of the most impactful ways for Zones to focus their efforts and have meaningful discussions is by inviting knowledgeable speakers to future Zone meetings.

There is a standing item on all Zone Agendas for Deputations. Zones are asked to endorse all proposals for Deputations, allowing Delegates full control as to what kinds of guest presenters and topics they would like to have on each Zone Agenda.

There is potentially one Deputation organised for the Gascoyne Country Zone for 2025.

- Aboriginal Heritage Survey Program (If supported at item 8.4 above)

The Gascoyne Country Zone has preferred to have one Deputation per meeting.

COMMENT

To assist the Zone Executive Officer in organising Deputations for 2025 that are most relevant to the interests of the Zone, Delegates are invited to consider any potential guest presenters or topics for next year's meetings.

Below are some ideas to consider when thinking about potential Deputations:

- Current trends: consider inviting speakers who can discuss the latest trends and developments in the sector.
- Consider inviting a Minister: Ministers often have deep expertise in their respective fields, whether it's education, health, infrastructure, or another area. Their insights can provide valuable information and updates on policies, programs, and initiatives that directly impact the community. This creates an excellent networking opportunity for Delegates to connect with key decision-makers and build valuable relationships.
- University professors: experts in public administration, political science, or urban studies can provide evidence-based insights and research findings.
- Nonprofit Executives: leaders from influential nonprofits can discuss community needs, partnerships and collaborative projects.
- Urban planning and development: experts in urban planning can discuss sustainable development, zoning laws and infrastructure projects.

The Zone may wish to discuss their suggestions for potential speakers or topics for 2025.

For Discussion

- *The Zone agreed to go back to their respective Councils and return with a list of Ministers and groups they would like to invite to the 2025 meetings*
- *Minister for Local Government, Minister for Planning and Housing, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Environment and Minister for Police were suggested*
- *WALGA to advise on process to invite the Ministers to future meetings*

8.7 BAND 4 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MEETING

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services

BACKGROUND

On 3 September, the Minister for Local Government, Hon Hannah Beazley, hosted a roundtable meeting of all Band 4 Local Governments in WA.

To continue the discussion, WALGA hosted a further meeting of Band 4 Local Governments. The meeting was held on 11 October at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre. Chief Executive Officers and Presidents from all 60 Band 4 Local Governments in the State were invited to attend.

Ahead of the meeting, WALGA emailed all Band 4 Local Governments asking for their top three priorities. Responses were received from 33 Local Governments. The top issues (in order of priority) are listed below:

1. Housing
2. Medical services
3. Audit fees
4. Financial Assistance Grants
5. Waste management funding
6. Compliance requirements
7. Financial sustainability
8. ICT systems
9. Renewable energy

These top 9 issues were separated into operational challenges and strategic issues at the meeting and presented for further discussion and comment.

The aim of the meeting was to identify and agree on the top issues facing Band 4 Local Governments, to enable the group to consider and develop potential solutions to these issues, before presenting to the Minister.

ATTACHMENT

- Band 4 Local Governments meeting summary report

COMMENT

Overall, 72 representatives from 48 Local Governments attended the meeting on 11 October.

Attached is a summary report from the meeting.

Please note that this report provides a summary of the discussion and feedback received from participants at the meeting. The comments and views are those of participants, and do not necessarily reflect the endorsed position of WALGA or its Members.

As the main outcome of the meeting, WALGA will undertake work on the top four issues identified by the group:

1. Housing;
2. Audit fees;
3. Medical services; and
4. Financial Assistance Grants

WALGA will provide a progress update to all Band 4 Local Governments early next year.

Noted

8.8 NATIVE VEGETATION CLEARING ISSUES PAPER

By Sarah Coles, Environment Policy Officer

BACKGROUND

WALGA has developed an Issues Paper on Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations based on input from Local Government and analysis of Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), and Appeals Convenor, data. Drawing on this data and Local Government case studies, the Paper outlines challenges Local Governments have encountered in navigating the regulatory system and identifies opportunities for improvement.

WALGA's data analysis identifies that 60% of Local Government clearing permits applications relate to road construction or upgrade. Key challenges relate to the complexity of navigating the regulatory environment, costs associated with the process and the time taken (for assessment of permits and appeals). These challenges can delay road and infrastructure projects and impact on Local Government's ability to attract and retain grant funding.

Based on discussions with the sector, and recommendations of previous submissions, WALGA has identified a range of potential opportunities to improve the native vegetation process. These focus on DWER process improvements, Local Government capacity building and taking strategic approaches to data collection, clearing permits and offsets:

1. The implementation of a State Government coordinated and funded biodiversity survey program.
2. Funding for a trial using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for biodiversity mapping.
3. DWER to develop a Strategic Offsets framework for Local Government.
4. The introduction of statutory timeframes for determination of referrals, permits and appeals and timely compliance and enforcement.
5. Increased support and capacity building for Local Governments to navigate the native vegetation clearing requirements.
6. Extended default periods for purpose permits and removal of the time limit requirement for maintenance in existing transport corridors.

The Issues Paper has been updated following consideration by the Environment and Infrastructure Policy Teams and is attached for Zones' consideration and feedback. In particular, Zones are requested to provide feedback on the following:

- a. Does the Issues Paper capture the challenges experienced by Local Government in relation to native vegetation clearing regulations?
- b. The opportunities identified for improving the native vegetation clearing process for Local Government.
- c. Any additional opportunities.

Discussion at the Zone meeting is encouraged. Any written feedback should be provided by Friday, 13 December, to environment@walga.asn.au.

The Zone can provide feedback at the meeting as well as Local Governments can email WALGA direct by 13 December.

Following all Zones feedback an item will be prepared for the Zones and State Council in February/March 2025.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Cheryl Cowell
 Seconded: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

That the Gascoyne Country Zone:

1. Notes the Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Issues Paper;
2. Notes that Local Governments may submit their written feedback directly to WALGA for consideration; and
3. Provides the following feedback:
 - Road reserves to be exempt from all clearing permit requirements

CARRIED

9 STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – MATTERS FOR DECISION AND NOTING

Zone delegates to read and consider the September 2024 WALGA State Council Agenda, which has been provided as an attachment with this Agenda.

The Zone can provide comment or submit an alternative recommendation that will then be presented to the State Council for consideration.

9.1 STATE COUNCIL MATTERS FOR DECISION

9.1.1 2024 Annual General Meeting Resolutions (State Council Agenda item 8.1)

By Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. the item 7.1 Amendments to *Cat Act 2011*- Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property be endorsed.
2. the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General be referred to the Environment Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
 - 7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking
 - 7.4 Action on Asbestos for Western Australia

- 7.6 Advocacy for Accessibility.
3. the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
- 7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking
- 7.3 Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy).
4. the following resolution from the 2024 WALGA Annual General be referred to the People and Place Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
- 7.5 Addressing the Impracticality of Local Governments Funding Department of Communities and GROH Houses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA's 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 9 October.
- The meeting resolved for WALGA to act in relation to six Member Motions:
 - Amendments to the *Cat Act 2011*- Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property
 - Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-banking
 - Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy)
 - Action on Asbestos for Western Australia
 - Addressing the Impracticality of Local Governments Funding Department of Communities and Government Regional Officer Housing
 - Advocacy for Accessibility
- The action proposed to be taken in relation to each of the resolutions has been summarised for State Council's information.

9.1.2 Local Government Elections Advocacy Positions (State Council Agenda item 8.2)

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services and Jason Russell, Senior Governance Specialist

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA adopt the following Elections Advocacy Positions:

The Local Government sector supports:

1. *Voluntary participation in Local Government elections.*
2. *Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.*
3. *First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for Local Government elections. If Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) remains as the primary method of voting, the sector supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.*
2. *First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.*
3. *Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.*
4. *Current legislative provision of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Government Councils electing the President.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report presents the findings of sector-wide consultation on WALGA's Elections Advocacy Positions.
- Consultation addressed key areas elements of the current Advocacy Positions:
 1. Voluntary participation,
 2. Terms on Council and election cycles,
 3. Voting systems for public elections,
 4. Voting systems for internal elections,
 5. Methods for holding elections,
 6. Ability to choose how Mayors/Presidents are elected.

9.1.3 Aboriginal Communities Advocacy Positions (State Council Agenda item 8.3)

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Officer Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Replace Advocacy Position 3.1.2 Reconciliation with the following:

WALGA:

1. *Acknowledges the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community and embraces the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia.*
 2. *Supports the efforts of Local Governments to progress reconciliation at the local level.*
2. Remove Advocacy Position 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
 3. Replace Advocacy Position 3.1.4 *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* and South West Native Title Settlement with the following:
 - 3.1.4 *Aboriginal Heritage Protection*
 1. *WALGA supports the recognition, protection, conservation and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage and recognises the fundamental importance of Aboriginal cultural heritage to Aboriginal people and the State.*
 2. *The State Government must:*
 - a. *Ensure that legislative requirements balance the need to protect Aboriginal heritage with the need for Local Government to undertake activities in a timely and affordable manner.*
 - b. *Provide adequate resourcing to ensure all parties have the capacity, capability and resources to discharge their statutory obligations.*
 - c. *Provide support and guidance to Local Governments to ensure that they have the resources, capacity and capability to effectively and efficiently deliver essential services to community while protecting Aboriginal heritage.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Following a review of WALGA's Aboriginal Community advocacy positions it is proposed that Advocacy Positions 3.1.2 Reconciliation and 3.1.4 *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* and South West Native Title Settlement be updated and that Advocacy Position 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People be removed.
- The intent of the proposed revisions is to reflect contemporary approaches to key issues in Aboriginal Affairs policy and legislation as they relate to Local Government.
- The People and Place Policy Team considered and endorsed the proposed advocacy position changes at its meeting on 25 October.

9.1.4 Family and Domestic Violence Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda item 8.4)

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Officer Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.10.1 Family and Domestic Violence with the following:

3.10.1 Family and Domestic Violence

1. *Family and domestic violence is unacceptable and has devastating and long-term impacts on individuals, families and communities.*
2. *Preventing family and domestic violence requires commitment from all levels of government, different sectors, and members of the community.*
3. *WALGA calls on the State and Australian governments to provide adequate funding and support for family and domestic violence programs and services, in particular:*
 - a. *Funding for collaborative and connected family and domestic violence programs and services that are place-based and people-centred; and*
 - b. *Better integration of family and domestic violence initiatives, including capacity building across all tiers of government and community services.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.10.1 Family and Domestic Violence be updated.
- The revised position makes a clear statement on the Local Government sector's condemnation of family and domestic violence and the collective responsibility of governments and the community in prevention.
- The revised position provides a framework for WALGA advocacy to the Australian and State Government, without impinging on individual Local Government's approach to this issue, which will be dependent on their capacity, capability, local context and strategic direction.
- The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the revised Advocacy Position at its meeting on 25 October.

9.1.5 Container Deposit System Policy Statement and Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda item 8.5)

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace the existing Container Deposit Systems Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.6 Container Deposit Systems with the following:

7.6 Container Deposit Systems

1. *Local Government supports the WA Containers for Change Scheme and acknowledges its contribution to reducing litter, increasing material recovery and providing employment opportunities across the state.*
2. *To maximise the benefits of the WA Scheme, Local Government calls on the State Government to:*
 - a. *Maintain a resource recovery target of 85% for eligible containers and a focus on litter reduction.*
 - b. *Expand the range of containers accepted in the Scheme, by:*
 - i. *2027: to include wine bottles, spirit bottles and larger sizes of currently eligible containers,*
 - ii. *2030: to include plain milk and milk alternative containers and composite container types, and*
 - iii. *2035: other container types.*
 - c. *Ensure national alignment of the materials covered by the Scheme and consistent messaging.*
 - d. *Maintain a State-based and managed Scheme.*
 - e. *Review the deposit amount to appropriately incentivise community engagement.*
 - f. *Increase the number of refund and donation points to ensure community access, including in public places and at events.*
 - g. *Ensure refund points are financially sustainable.*
 - h. *Leverage the refund point collection network to provide drop off points for other materials covered by effective product stewardship schemes.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA's 2008 Container Deposit Systems (CDS) Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.6 Container Deposit Systems, formed the basis of WALGA's advocacy for the introduction and design of a WA CDS, Containers for Change, which commenced on 1 October 2020.
- The current Advocacy Position and many elements of the Policy Statement have been achieved. However, there are aspects of the Scheme that Local Government has identified as important to improve.
- The focus of the updated Advocacy Position is:
 - building on the environmental, social and economic benefits of the current Scheme;
 - expanding the range of containers covered by the Scheme;
 - increasing community access and incentives to use the Scheme; and
 - leveraging the refund point network to collect other materials covered by effective product stewardship schemes.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Policy Statement and Advocacy Position at its meeting on 23 October.

9.1.6 Bus Stop Infrastructure Agreement (State Council Agenda item 8.6)

By Negar Nili, Policy Officer Transport and Roads

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the proposed Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority 2024/25 to 2028/29.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA has negotiated a new Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement (Agreement) with the Public Transport Authority (PTA). If agreed this will be the third such Agreement, with validity through to 2028/29.
- The Agreement seeks to provide the foundation for an effective working relationship between the PTA and Local Governments.
- The purpose of the Agreement is to clarify the roles, responsibilities and discretion of PTA and Local Governments in the provision and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure in areas with regular public transport SmartRider ticketed services, including regional cities and towns.
- The Agreement defines the roles and responsibilities of the PTA and Local Governments in various scenarios including when bus routes are changed, bus stops are added or removed, and bus stop infrastructure is upgraded.
- The Agreement provides a funding contribution to Local Governments for the maintenance and installation of bus shelters.

9.1.7 2025 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members (State Council Agenda item 8.7)

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission to the 2025 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (SAT) conduct an inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Member remuneration annually.
- In preparation for the inquiry to be undertaken early next year, WALGA has prepared a draft submission to SAT that makes recommendations in relation to Elected Member fees and allowances, Chief Executive Officer remuneration, the Regional/Isolation Allowance and independent audit, risk and improvement committee member fees.
- The submission recommends:
 - an increase to Elected Member Fees and Allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) of 4%;
 - an increase to Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands of 4%;

- an increase to the Regional/Isolation Allowance payable for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres, and lacking in amenities;
- the publication of clear guidance to the Local Government sector outlining how the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings;
- the creation of a new fee category for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members without bands, and that the fee be set at a suitable level to recognise the skills and knowledge required for such a role; and
- that the new category provide a fee for the independent chair position as well as the independent member position.
- SAT will likely publish its determination for 2025-2026 in April 2025.
- The Governance Policy Team endorsed the submission at its meeting on 4 November.

9.1.8 Submission on the draft State Hazard Plan - Fire (State Council Agenda item 8.8)

By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager Emergency Management

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission on the draft State Hazard Plan - Fire.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The State Hazard Plan - Fire (SHP Fire) outlines the arrangements for the management of fire in Western Australia including fire prevention, preparedness, response and initial recovery.
- Local Governments have a critical role in bushfire management, including statutory responsibilities for mitigation, prevention and response under the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (BF Act) and responsibility for community-led recovery, as provided in the *Emergency Management Act 2005* (EM Act).
- The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has undertaken a comprehensive review of the SHP Fire and is seeking comments on the revised draft Plan by 9 December ([Engage WA Emergency Management](#)).
- WALGA's draft submission on the draft SHP Fire incorporates feedback from 33 Local Governments and LGIS.
- The submission focusses on the key issues that underpin Local Government's capacity to implement their roles and responsibilities for the hazard of fire including:
 - Emergency Services Funding;
 - The State Emergency Management Framework and Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation; and
 - Bush Fire Brigade management and Work Health and Safety (WHS).
- A detailed list of proposed specific changes to plan is also included.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

Seconded: President Cr Jim Caunt

That the Gascoyne Country Zone supports all WALGA recommendations in the Matters for Decision as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda and as listed above, subject to the addition of a new point d. in recommendation 8.3 as follows:

- d. *Local Governments are exempt from the financial burden of Traditional Owner engagement*

CARRIED

9.2 POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.2.1 Infrastructure Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.1)

By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager, Infrastructure

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the report from the Infrastructure Policy Team meeting for the 6 December 2024 meeting.

9.2.2 People and Place Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.2)

By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the report from the People and Place Policy Team to the 6 December 2024 meeting.

9.2.3 Governance Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.3)

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Note the report from the Governance Policy Team for the 6 December 2024 meeting.
2. Determine to:
 - a. retain the following Advocacy Positions with amendment:
 - i. Advocacy Position 2.8.1 Industry Award Coverage
 - ii. Advocacy Position 2.8.3 Registration of WALGA as an Employer Organisation
 - b. retire Advocacy Position 2.8.2 Local Government Long Service Leave Regulations.

9.2.4 Environment Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.4)

By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the report from the Environment Policy Team to the 6 December 2024 meeting.

9.2.5 Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Report (State Council Agenda item 9.5)

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the report from the Municipal Waste Advisory Council to the 6 December 2024 meeting.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

Seconded: President Cr Cheryl Cowell

That the Gascoyne Country Zone:

- 1. notes all Policy Team and Committee Reports as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda; and**
- 2. supports the WALGA recommendations in the Governance Policy Team Report as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda and as listed above.**

CARRIED

9.3 MATTERS FOR NOTING/INFORMATION

- WALGA Strategic Planning Update (State Council Agenda item 10.1)
- Submission on Reform of Packaging Regulation (State Council Agenda item 10.2)
- Submission on The Draft State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies (State Council Agenda item 10.3)
- Local Government Primary Healthcare Survey Report (State Council Agenda item 10.4)
- Renewable Energy Survey Highlights (State Council Agenda item 10.5)
- Flying Agenda: Submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process (State Council Agenda item 10.6)
- Flying Minute: Submission on the Draft Objectives and Priorities for the Upcoming State Public Health Plan (State Council Agenda item 10.7)
- Flying Minute: Submission On the Draft Regional Education Strategy (State Council Agenda item 10.8)
- Flying Minute: Submission on Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy (State Council Agenda item 10.9)
- Flying Minute: Submission on the State Hazard Plan - Human Biosecurity (State Council Agenda item 10.10)

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

Seconded: President Cr Jim Caunt

That the Gascoyne Country Zone notes all Matters for Noting/Information as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda.

CARRIED

9.4 KEY ACTIVITY REPORTS

- Report on Key Activities, Advocacy Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.1)
- Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.2)
- Report on Key Activities, Member Services Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.3)
- Report on Key Activities, Policy Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.4)

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

Seconded: President Cr Jim Caunt

That the Gascoyne Country Zone notes all Key Activity Reports as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda.

CARRIED

10 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

10.1 WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Noted

10.2 STATE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO THE ZONE

Noted

11 OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 NORTH WEST DEFENCE ALLIANCE

The North West Defence Alliance is planning a roadshow to Local Governments early next year with the support of Defence West. President Cr Matthew Niikkula is Chair of the Alliance. Cr Niikkula will send more information to the Zone about the Alliance.

12 NEXT MEETING

12.1 ZONE MEETING DATES - 2025

Zone Meeting	Type	Location
10:00am, Friday 21 February	In-Person	Carnarvon
10:00am, Thursday 17 April	<i>Teleconference</i>	
10:00am, Friday 20 June	In-Person	Shark Bay
10:00am, Friday 22 August	<i>Teleconference</i>	
10:00am, Friday 21 November	In-Person	Carnarvon

12.2 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Gascoyne Country Zone will be held on Friday, 21 February 2025 at the Shire of Carnarvon commencing at 10:00am.

13 CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12:10pm.