



Gascoyne Country Zone

Minutes

10:00am

Friday, 20 August 2021

Gascoyne Country Zone

Meeting to be hosted via MS Teams

Videoconference

Commenced at 10:00am, Friday, 20 August 2021

Minutes

ATTENDEES

Shire of Carnarvon	President Eddie Smith Andrea Selvey, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Exmouth	President Cr Matthew Niikkula Matthew Bird, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Upper Gascoyne	John McCleary, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Shark Bay	President Cr Cheryl Cowell, Chair

WALGA

Nick Sloan, Chief Executive Officer
Mark Bondiotti, Policy Manager Transport and Roads

GUESTS

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	Benita Perkins, Regional Officer Angele Gray, Regional Manager Mid-West Gascoyne
Gascoyne Development Commission	Tym Duncanson, Chief Executive Officer Simmone Van Buerle, Director Regional Development
Regional Development Australia – Mid West Gascoyne	Mark Holdsworth, Executive Officer Karen Grima, RDA Project Officer

GUEST SPEAKER

Lance Glare, Deputy CEO, Infrastructure Western
Australia
Mr Andrew Wilkinson, Director, Infrastructure Western
Australia

APOLOGIES

Shire of Upper Gascoyne	President Cr Don Hammarquist OAM
Shire of Shark Bay	Paul Anderson, Chief Executive Officer
Roadwise	Samantha Adams, Road Safety Officer – Mid-West

Attachments

The following were provided as attachments to the agenda:

1. Previous Meeting Minutes – 25 June 2021 Meeting
2. President's Report

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Pursuant to our Code of Conduct, Councillors 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.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil.

3. DEPUTATIONS

3.1 Infrastructure Western Australia

Mr Lance Glare, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure Western Australia, joined the meeting at 11.15am with Andrew Wilkinson and provided an update regarding Infrastructure WA.

Presentation is attached with the Minutes.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the 25 June 2021 Meeting of the Gascoyne Country Zone

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Matthew Niikkula
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Gascoyne Country Zone held on 25 June 2021 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

4.2 Business Arising

None

5. ZONE BUSINESS

5.1 Solar Eclipse 2023

Shire of Exmouth

Standing Item on the agenda relating to planning for the 2023 Solar Eclipse.

Matthew Bird reported as follows:

- The Inaugural meeting of the Cross Government Senior Officers Working Group happened on the 4th August to discuss and agree on the objectives for the State Government in relation to the Eclipse. Nine Government agencies were represented at the meeting alongside the Department of Defence and Gascoyne Development Commission.
- The Chairman of the Project has been appointed and he is keen to visit the region and meet with council and stakeholders to be across matters first hand.
- The next meeting of the working group will take place on the 15th September.

It was agreed to invite representatives to present at the next Zone meeting.

Noted

5.2 Regional Telecommunications Review

By Jo Burges, Senior Advisor Intergovernmental Relations and Risk, WALGA

BACKGROUND

A Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee (the Committee) is established every three years under Part 9B of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999* to conduct a review into telecommunications services in regional, rural and remote parts of Australia.

The Committee for the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review (the Review) was appointed on 1 June 2021.

The 2021 Committee is comprised of the Hon Luke Hartsuyker (Chair); Ms Kristy Sparrow; Professor Hugh Bradlow; Mr Michael Cosgrave; and Ms Sue Middleton.

The Committee is also conducting consultation sessions and as the dates for these are announced via their website Local Governments within the area being consulted are being advised via email of the upcoming process and encouraged to participate.

As part of the Review, the Committee will consider:

- the impact of Government policies and programs to improve regional connectivity and digital inclusion;
- insights from COVID-19 on the changing digital needs of regional, rural and remote areas;
- service reliability issues which impact regional communities and options for mitigating them;
- the role of emerging technologies in delivering telecommunications services in regional Australia;
- ways of encouraging further investment in regional telecommunications;
- the role of telecommunications in supporting broader regional development goals;
- ways to improve co-ordination between government and industry in telecommunications investment; and
- consumer awareness and education regarding telecommunications options in regional areas.

The full Terms of Reference for the Review are at Appendix B of the Issues Paper.

The Consultation Period runs from 6 July, 2021 09:00 to September 30, 2021 with WALGA receiving submissions until COB Thursday 16 September 2021.

WALGA Engagement Process

Local Governments were advised in mid-July, via Councillor Direct, of the appointment of the Committee and the release of the Issues Paper, and that WALGA would be developing a sector wide submission.

WALGA, in developing a submission to this important review is seeking the views of members to address the wide range of telecommunications issues outlined by the Committee in the Regional Telecommunications Review 2021 – Issues Paper (the Issues Paper).

<https://www.communications.gov.au>

Local Governments have been requested to provide their submissions or information to inform the sector wide submission to the Association to ensure all matters are addressed.

This agenda item provides a Zone level opportunity to provide feedback to the WALGA submission to assist in ensuring all Local Governments have had a chance for input.

COMMENT

Zones are requested, however not limited to, consider the items outlined at the dot points and /or the individual questions outlined at the end of each section or at Appendix A of the Issues Paper or provide input on any related matter for inclusion in the submission.

By way of example the WALGA Submission will include, in part, commentary on Question 12 that asks:

‘How can different levels of Government, the telecommunications industry and regional communities better co-ordinate their efforts to improve telecommunications in regional Australia?’

The Association response will include an example of the Regional Telecommunications Resilience Working Group established in May comprising key planning/technical staff from Telstra, Optus, Western Power, Horizon Power, WALGA, DFES and DPIRD. This working group will share data more openly to allow robust and coordinated planning which results in better overall service delivery and value for money for all concerned. The working group began its work in June 2021 and have scheduled monthly meetings that increase as Funding programs or issues emerge.

WALGA advocates on specific issues identified by its members at the Working Group, in particular to explore opportunities for sustainable solutions e.g. Stand Alone Power provision, utilising a combination of solar, batteries and generators.

The Association is keen to provide a comprehensive submission on this important matter and welcomes Zone input.

RESOLUTION

Moved

President Cr Cheryl Cowell

Seconded

President Cr Matthew Niikkula

That the Gascoyne Country Zone;

1. Note the Regional Telecommunication Review 2021; and

2. Provides the following input to the WALGA submission:

- **Lack of communication between utility companies**
- **Poor mobile phone coverage**

5.3 Social Housing Economic Recovery Package Grant Funding

By Kelly McManus, Principal Policy and Advocacy WALGA

BACKGROUND

The \$319 million [Social Housing Economic Recovery Package \(SHERP\)](#) is part of the State Government's COVID-19 Recovery Plan announced in June 2021.

The Program aims to provide safe and secure housing outcomes for vulnerable Western Australians by supporting the construction of new community housing properties and the refurbishment of existing properties to extend their useful life or increase their capacity. Grants are also available to fund maintenance works within remote Aboriginal communities.

Local Governments are eligible to apply for SHERP grants and partner with existing social housing providers and community groups within their communities.

The next round of SHERP funding opens on Monday 1 September 2021.

COMMENT

Further information on the eligibility requirements and application process for the SHERP grants will be provided by the Department of Communities at a webinar to be hosted by WALGA on **Monday 1 September** from 1.30pm – 2.30pm.

Local Government officers wishing to attend the register for the Webinar [here](#) or through the [WALGA events page](#).

The Livestream presentation from the 11th August is available to view on the Department of Communities website and provides valuable information about the grant process.

In preparation for the session, we encourage local governments to: Visit the Department of Communities website on the 1st September to familiarise yourself with the grant guidelines, application process and frequently asked questions.

Submit any questions you have in advance through the registration form. There will also be the opportunity to ask additional questions on the day.

Further information on the SHERP program is available on the [Department of Communities website](#) or by contacting Kelly McManus, Principal Policy and Advocacy, WALGA on 0429 483 273 or kmcmanus@walga.asn.au.

RESOLUTION

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

That the Zone notes:

- **Local Governments are eligible for grants to support the construction, refurbishment and maintenance of community housing properties as part of the State Government's Social Housing Economic Recovery Package (SHERP) Program.**

- The next round of SHERP grants open on Monday 1 September 2021.
- The Department of Communities will provide further information on the SHERP grants at a WALGA webinar to be held at 1:30pm on Monday 1 September.

CARRIED

5.4 2021 Local Government Elections – Zone Office Bearer Elections

By Chantelle O'Brien, Zone Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

With the bi annual Local Government elections being held Saturday, 16 October 2021, Zones will also be required to hold an election process for State Council representatives.

A chronological overview of the process is detailed below:

- Local Government elections occur on Saturday, 16 October 2021.
- Member Councils to elect/appoint their Zone Delegates and to advise the Zone Executive Officer, as soon as possible but preferably by 5 November 2021.
- For the purpose of electing their representatives and deputy representatives to the WALGA State Council, the zones are required to hold these elections at their November 2021 meeting.
- Zones to advise WALGA, in writing, of their elected State Council representative and deputy representative immediately following the 2021 November Zone meeting.
- State Councillor Induction Session – morning of **1 December 2021**.
- New State Council will take office at the Ordinary Meeting of State Council on **1 December 2021**.
- The position of President and Deputy President of WALGA, will be elected at the March 2022 State Council Meeting.

In relation to the nominations and election process to be followed by each Zone in electing a representative and deputy representative to the WALGA State Council, the below process has been instituted by State Council:

1. Zone Executive Officer to write to all Member Councils no later than 1 month prior to the Zone meeting at which the election is to be held calling for nominations from delegates to the Zone for the positions of representative and deputy representative to State Council. The correspondence is to state that all nominations are to be made in writing to the Zone Executive Officer, and only Elected Members who are a nominated Zone delegates are eligible to nominate. The time period for the receipt of nominations is to be **one week prior** to the Zone meeting at which the election will be held.
2. Zone Executive Officer to receive written nominations from Zone delegates for the positions of representative and deputy representative to State Council and then provide written confirmation to Member Councils of the nominations received.
3. Elections are to be held at the next Zone meeting as the first item of business. Where there is more than one nomination for each vacant position, an election will be conducted using a secret ballot, with the Zone Executive Officer to represent WALGA as the returning officer for the election. Prior to the ballot, nominees for each position are to be extended the opportunity to provide a 2 minute election bid to delegates.
4. All voting delegates to the Zone are entitled to cast one (1) vote in the ballot process. The candidate with the greater or greatest number of votes is elected to the office.
5. **Tied vote** – in the event of a tied vote, election will be determined by drawing names from a box. The Secretariat will put the names of the candidates concerned in a box and the first name drawn is the Elected Member.
6. Zone Executive Officer to advise WALGA in writing immediately following the Zone meeting of the outcome of their elections.

If you have any questions or require further information in relation to the above mentioned process, please contact Tony Brown, Executive Manager Governance and Organisational Services on 9213 2051 or email tbrown@walga.asn.au.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Cr Cheryl Cowell
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the Gascoyne Country Zone note the process for election of Zone Representative and Deputy Representative to the WALGA State Council.

CARRIED

5.5 Office of the Auditor General

The Office of the Auditor General has offered to present at a future Zone meeting, as follows:

The Office of the Auditor General is now responsible for all WA Local Government and regional council financial audits. If your zone has any questions about our financial audit process or performance audit program/reports, we would be happy to provide a presentation at one of your future meetings.

RESOLUTION

Moved: President Eddie Smith
Seconded: President Cr Matthew Niikkula

That the Gascoyne Zone INVITES a representative from the Office of the Auditor General to present at a future meeting.

CARRIED

5.6 Drought Advocacy Update

By Nicole Mathews, Acting Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning, WALGA

BACKGROUND

The following is an update on drought and WALGA's advocacy;

WALGA has made representations on this issue including to the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, and Northern Australia; the Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC, Minister for Regional Development and Food, Hydrogen Industry; and WA Federal Government members, including meetings between the WALGA Deputy President and Senators Dean Smith and Slade Brockman. WALGA has also met with Minister MacTiernan's Chief of Staff and WA Government officials.

Correspondence from Minister Littleproud received in October 2020 indicated that details of the Commonwealth's Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program were still being worked through with the WA Government, which was yet to commit to co-funding the program. WALGA subsequently sought an assurance that Minister MacTiernan remained committed to 'working with the Minister for Water to ensure WA local government optimally benefit from the Future Drought Fund'.

On 4 July 2021 it was announced that the WA Government had secured \$1.33 million of the \$9.85 million available under the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program for 2021-22 to undertake planning for the Northern Midwest, Southern Wheatbelt and Great Southern Inland regions. This work will be led by Regional Development Commissions working with Local Governments and is due for completion by 30 June 2022. The WA Government has not provided a cash contribution towards this program.

On 3 February 2021 the WA Government announced a \$7.3 million infrastructure plan to upgrade and refurbish 70 community dams in the State's Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions with half to be funded from the National Water Grid Fund, however the State's application for funding was unsuccessful.

The WA Government has also made a request for funding as part of the National Water Grid Connections funding round, which will provide \$20 million for each state and territory to deliver projects with a Commonwealth contribution of up to \$5 million per project. A decision on this funding is expected by end August.

On 15 April 2021, the Commonwealth announced that an additional \$2.8 million would be provided to pay rebates for eligible water infrastructure installed on-farm to all WA farmers who submitted their application prior to 20 January 2021.

In addition, WALGA was advised on 11 August 2021 that the State Government has been successful in securing National Water Grid Connections funding for 9 projects (spanning Water Corporation, DPIRD and DWER):

- Cave Springs Road Tail Water Return System
Two water recycling systems will be constructed in the Ord River Irrigation Area resulting in 2400 megalitres per annum of water savings.
- Agricultural Area Dams and Strategic Community Water Supplies
Infrastructure facilities will be constructed including pipework, tanks, solar pumps and standpipes at 70 dam sites. This will increase resilience and water security in farming communities in the region.
- Katanning to Kojonup Pipeline Enhancement
A number of sections of the existing pipeline between Katanning and Kojonup will be replaced, increasing water reliability and supply to all farmland customers.
- Jerramungup Dam Catchment Improvement
Degraded bitumen will be replaced with plastic liner enabling increased runoff and water storage, and improving reliability to almost 100 per cent of water users in the Jerramungup catchment.
- Gascoyne Irrigation Scheme Augmentation and Modernisation
Essential infrastructure in the Gascoyne region will be upgraded, including additional production bores and modernisation of irrigation systems. This will increase horticultural production capability in the region.
- Community Water Supplies Partnership Program with Local Government
Up to 40 new and improved non-potable water supplies will be developed in priority areas for farming communities to access.
- Ravensthorpe Dam Catchment Extension
The catchment area of the Ravensthorpe dam will be increased by 5 hectares, increasing the volume of water in the dam by approximately 7 megalitres per annum.
- Cranbrook Dam Catchment Improvement

Degraded bitumen will be replaced in Cranbrook Dam 1 catchment, increasing the volume of water in the dam by 15 megalitres per annum, for agricultural and primary industry use.

- Wongutha Independent Water Security Pilot

A small-scale, solar powered water reverse osmosis desalination system pilot will be installed, producing an additional 7.3 megalitres per annum of fresh water.

Total funding for these projects is \$43.8 million, \$23.8 million State Government and other partners, \$20 million Commonwealth.

- In addition with assistance from ALGA, WALGA has secured a seat on the Commonwealth Agriculture Minister's Meeting Working Group on Drought which has representatives from the Commonwealth, all State/Territory Jurisdictions, National Farmers Federation and ALGA.
- Finally, on the Drought Resilience Planning Program, given Minister MacTiernan's decision to direct this funding to Regional Development Commissions rather than Local Governments, I've had initial discussions with DPIRD regarding the need for Local Governments to be involved in the process. I understand that DPIRD was meeting with the Regional Development Commissions last week and I expect to have further information in the next week or so.

Noted

5.5 Zone Status Report – August 2021

Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
2021 June 25 Zone Agenda Item 5.4 Funding for Commodity Routes	That the GDC and RDAMWG set up a working group to progress towards preparing a business case for a funding application for commodity route preservation / upgrading works in the Gascoyne and adjacent regions.	The working group met in July and agreed to invite surrounding Shires. Next meeting 31 August	August 2021	
2021 19 February Zone Agenda Item 5.4 Issues with the DRFAWA Claims and Approvals Process	That the Gascoyne Country Zone recommend WALGA request DFES to form a working group of participants from affected Shires to review the current process and report back on outcomes and solutions.	Data has been collected from a sample of Councils that have recently suffered declared disasters and is being analyzed to inform engagement with DFES.	August 2021	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
2021 19 February Zone Agenda Item 8.1 Rainfall Monitoring	That the Gascoyne Country Zone recommend that WALGA advocate to the Bureau of Meteorology to increase the density of automatic rain gauges towards a 50km grid coverage.	Correspondence was sent to BOM on 2 June 2021 about this matter and the Zone will be kept updated with the progress of discussions (2/06/21). Rob Lawry, WA Senior Hydrologist BOM provided further information to the CEO of Upper Gascoyne on 30 June 2021 outlining current rain gauge density, BOM's Minimum Flood Service, available tools to determine road conditions, and options for obtaining additional rain and river gauges. WALGA also raised the matter at the Flood Warning Consultative Committee meeting on 21 June 2021. Representatives of BOM and DWER indicated their willingness to present to the Gascoyne Zone on the matter at a Zone meeting if the Zone would consider that to be helpful. COMPLETE	August 2021	Nicole Matthews A/Executive Manager, Strategy, Policy and Planning nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039
2021 25 June Zone Agenda Item 8.1 Road Closures	That WALGA be tasked to compile a guidance note on the drafting of a local law to apply fines to drivers ignoring road closure signage and on the use of the Traffic Administration Act to recover compensation for road damage.	This item is being considered by the Infrastructure Policy Team and the Governance Policy Team. Updates on progress will be provided to the Zone.	August 2021	Tony Brown Executive Manager Governance and Organisational Services 9213 2051 tbrown@walga.asn.au
2019 September 5 Zone Agenda Item 5.1 Restricted Access Vehicle Operating Condition	That the Gascoyne Zone request WALGA to establish a Working Group relating to the Restricted Access Vehicle Operating Condition issue as soon as possible, to allow the Working Group to develop possible options prior to meeting with Main Roads.	The RAV Access working group met by teleconference in early December 2019. Based on the resolution of this meeting a letter detailing Local Government expectations was sent to Main Roads WA. The Association discussed this matter with Main Roads WA in November 2020. They are engaging with the State Solicitors Office prior to a proposed consultation with Local Government concerning a proposed approach.	Ongoing	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
2019 March 22 Zone Agenda Item 5.2 Restricted Access	That the Gascoyne Zone request WALGA to:	The RAV Access working group met by teleconference in early December. Based on the resolution of this meeting a letter detailing Local Government expectations was sent to Main Roads WA.	Ongoing	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure

Vehicle Operating Condition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate for thorough consultation with the Local Government sector regarding alternative approaches to the CA07 operating condition; and, 2. Establish a Working Group consisting of representatives from MRWA, WALGA, LGIS, DoT and the Local Government sector incorporating at least one member from each affected WALGA Zone to consider alternative approaches. 	<p>The Association discussed this matter with Main Roads WA in November 2020. They are engaging with the State Solicitors Office prior to a proposed consultation with Local Government concerning a proposed approach.</p>		<p>iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031</p>
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Noted

RESOLVED

Zone delegates agreed to accept the invitation from BOM and DWER to present to a future meeting of the Zone on Rainfall Monitoring.

6. STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – MATTERS FOR DECISION

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

The full State Council Agenda can be found via link: [State Council Agenda 3 September 2021](#)

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

Matters for Decision

5.1 External Oversight of Local Level Complaints

That WALGA advocate for an external oversight model for local level behavioural complaints made under Council Member, Committee Member and Candidate Codes of Conduct, that is closely aligned to the Victorian Councillor Complaints Framework.

5.2 Tender Exemption Provisions – General Practitioner Services

That WALGA:

1. Adopt a new Advocacy Position Statement under 'Local Government Legislation - Tender Exemption General Practitioner Services':

WALGA advocates for the inclusion of a tender exemption for General Practitioner (GP) services under Part 4, Division 2 of the Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996, to support Local Governments to secure and retain necessary primary health care services for their communities; and

2. Undertake additional research in support of the Advocacy Position with the following aims:
 - a. Identify State and Federal Government policy settings and other factors contributing to gaps in primary health care services in regional communities; and
 - b. Quantify the number of regional Local Governments that have current contracts, or are proposing to enter into contracts, for General Practitioner services and the associated costs to Local Government incurred.

5.3 Phase 2 Planning Reform Submission

That the submission to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on Phase 2 Planning Reform be endorsed.

Matters for Noting

- 6.1 Stop Puppy Farming Legislation
- 6.2 Regional Telecommunications Resilience
- 6.3 Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)
- 6.4 2021-22 State Budget Submission
- 6.5 WALGA Submission: Inquiry into the Delivery of Ambulance Services in Western Australia

RESOLUTION

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

That

1. Supports all Matters for Decision as listed above in the 3 September 2021 State Council Agenda; and
2. Notes all Matters for Noting and Organisational Reports as listed in the 3 September 2021 State Council Agenda.

CARRIED

7. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

7.1 State Councillor's Report to the Zone

Cr Cheryl Cowell provided an update on the previous State Council meeting.

Noted

7.2 President's Report to the Zone

WALGA Chief Executive Officer, Nick Sloan presented the President's Report.

Noted

7.3 Gascoyne Development Commission

Chief Executive Officer, Tym Duncanson, provided an update to the Zone.

Noted

7.4 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Angela Gray provided an update to the Zone on DLGSC matters.

Noted

7.5 Roadwise Report

Samantha Adams, Road Safety Officer, Mid-West was an apology for this meeting and will provide an update to the Zone at the next meeting.

Noted

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Funding for Commodity Route Upgrades

Tym Duncanson provided an update on the initiative to develop a business case to pursue funding for commodity route upgrades in the Gascoyne region.

Noted

9. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting: 10:00am, Friday 19 November 2021, hosted by the Shire of Carnarvon.

10. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11.45 am.