

MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE

Shires of –

Cue
Meekatharra
Mount Magnet
Murchison
Sandstone
Yalgoo



ABN 75 305 122 944

39 Mitchell Street
GERALDTON WA 6530

Ph: 0477 788 370

**MINUTES
MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE
OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER – 9.30AM
CUE ADMINISTRATION CENTRE
AUSTIN STREET CUE**

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Ordinary Meeting, Cue Administration Centre on Friday 21 November 2025

1. Opening

The President opened the meeting at 9.30am

2. Attendance

2.1 Delegates

Cr Les Price	President Shire of Cue; Murchison Country Zone of WALGA Zone Delegate
Cr Ross Pigdon	Deputy President Shire of Cue
Cr Raul Valenzuela	President Shire of Yalgoo
Cr Kieran Payne	Deputy President Shire of Yalgoo
Cr Harvey Nichols	President Shire of Meekatharra
Cr Mark Smith	Deputy President Shire of Meekatharra
Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor	President Shire of Murchison; President Murchison Country Zone of WALGA
Cr Emma Foulkes-Taylor	Councillor Shire of Murchison: Board Member Mid West Development Commission
Cr Beth Walton	President Shire of Sandstone
Cr Vicki McQuie	Deputy President Shire of Sandstone
Cr Jorgen Jensen	President Shire of Mount Magnet
Cr Jim McGormn	Councillor Shire of Mount Magnet

2.2 Observers

Mr Richard Towell	CEO Shire of Cue
Mr Ian Holland	CEO Shire of Yalgoo
Mr Nathan Cain	CEO Shire of Meekatharra
Mr Peter Money	CEO Shire of Sandstone
Mr Bill Boehm	CEO Shire of Murchison
Ms Samantha Appleton	Executive Officer Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

2.3 Visitors

Hon Jacquie Jarvis MLC	Minister for Agriculture and Food; Fisheries; Forestry; Small Business; Mid West
Mr Alex Tillenni	Policy Advisor to Minister Jarvis
Ms Karin Grima	Director of Lyssna Consulting
Mr David Price	David Price Consulting
Mr Adam Mursweski	Director of Regional Development, Midwest Development Commission
Ms Debbie Dowden	Chair Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance
Mr Mark Bowen AFSM	Superintendent Midwest Gascoyne Region DFES
Mr Rick Ryan	Community Emergency Services Manager DFES
Ms Lara Dalton	Chair Mid West Development Commission
Ms Leah Hirst	Deputy Chair Mid West Development Commission
Mr Jerry Clune	Board Member Mid West Development Commission
Mr Dane Waters	Board Member Mid West Development Commission
Mr Nils Hay	CEO Midwest Development Commission
Ms Jacqui Bradley	Community Relations Advisor 29 Metals Golden Grove
Ms Liz Kelly	Acting Operations Manager Mid West Murchison WA Country Health Service
Mr Mark Holdsworth	Director of Regional Development Regional Development Australia Mid West
Mr John D'Arcy	Principal Stakeholder Manager Water Corporation
Ms Veronique Thoms	Communication Advisor Water Corporation
Ms Stephanie Brown	Councillor Shire of Sandstone
Ms Raelene Kroon	Councillor Shire of Yalgoo
Mr Paddy O'Brien	Works Manager Shire of Sandstone
Ms Bec Fogarty	Community Manager Shire of Murchison
Ms Rachel Evans	Community Support Shire of Yalgoo

2.4 Apologies

Cr Karen Chappel	President WALGA
Hon Stephen Dawson MLC	Minister for Regional Development; Ports; Science and Innovation; Medical Research and Minister for the Kimberley
Hon Simone McGurk MLA	Minister for Creative Industries; Heritage; Industrial Relations; Aged Care and Seniors; Women
Hon Roger Cook MLA	Premier; Minister for State Development; Trade and Investment; Economic Diversification
Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA	Hon Dr Tony Buti BPE DipEd MIR LLB DPhil MLA
Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA	Minister for Energy and Decarbonisation; Manufacturing; Skills and TAFE; Pilbara
Hon Don Punch MLA	Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Water; Climate Resilience; South West
Hon Hannah Beazley MLA	Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Youth; Volunteering; Gascoyne
Mr Shane Love MLA	Leader of the Nationals, Member for Mid-West
Hon Neil Thompson MLC	Shadow Minister for Planning and Lands; Aboriginal Affairs; Seniors, Opposition Whip

Hon Rob Horstman MLC	Shadow Minister for Emergency Services; Volunteering: Secretary of the Parliamentary National Party:
Hon Julie Freeman MLC	Shadow Minister for Road Safety; Creative Industries; Assisting the Shadow Minister for Regional Development: Leader of the Nationals WA in the Legislative Council
Mr Brendon Clark	CEO Victory Metals Australia
Ms Janet Hartley-West	Director Mid West Gascoyne Region Main Roads
Ms Carol Redford	CEO Astrotourism WA
Mr Basil Zemplis MLA	Leader of the Opposition
Ms Libby Twiss	Community Relations Advisor Westgold
Ms Tralee Cable	CEO Shire of Mount Magnet
Mr Boyd Brown	Regional General Manager Telstra
Ms Kristy Martin	Executive Manager Members Services WALGA

3. Confirmation of the Minutes

3.1 Confirmation of Minutes – Ordinary Meeting 11 April 2025.

Minutes of the meeting held 11 April 2025 have been circulated to member shires.

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Zone Meeting held 11 April 2025 be confirmed.

RESOLUTION Moved: Cr Nichols Seconded: Cr Valenzuela

That the minutes of the Zone Meeting held 11 April 2025 be confirmed.

Carried 12/0

4. Election of Office Bearers

Nominations to be received for all positions. These can be taken from the floor at the meeting if not received before the meeting.

President to vacate the chair, pursuant to the WALGA constitution. The Secretariat shall assume the Chair for conducting the election of office bearers.

4.1 Elections of Chair and Deputy Chair of the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA.

In accordance with sub-clause 9(3) of the WALGA Constitution, representatives and deputy representatives to the State Council shall be elected by Zones of the Metropolitan and Country constituencies for two (2) year terms, commencing from the Ordinary Meeting of State Council in December 2025 and concluding on the day before the Ordinary Meeting of State Council in December 2027.

Chairperson of the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

The following nomination(s) was received for the position of Chair for two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor Shire of Murchison

Declaration

That Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor, be elected as Chairperson for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA for the term of two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Deputy Chairperson of the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

The following nomination(s) was received for the position of Deputy Chair for two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Cr Les Price Shire of Cue

DECLARATION

That Cr Les Price, be elected as Deputy Chairperson for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA for the term of two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

The President assumed the chair.

4.2 Elections of State Council Representative and Deputy State Council Representative for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

WALGA incorporates a 24 member State Council with its members derived from Metropolitan and Country Zones. The State Council is chaired by the Association President.

In accordance with sub-clause 9(3) of the WALGA Constitution representatives and deputy representatives to the State Council shall be elected by the Zones of the Metropolitan and Country constituencies for two (2) year terms, commencing from the Ordinary Meeting of State Council in December 2025 and concluding at the Ordinary meeting of State Council two years later.

For the Murchison Country Zone there is one (1) representative position on State Council and one (1) deputy position.

State Council Representative for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

The following nomination(s) was received for the position of State Council Representative for two years December 2025 to December 2027.

Cr Les Price Shire of Cue

DECLARATION

That Cr Les Price, be elected as State Council Representative for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA for the term of two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Deputy State Council Representative for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

The following nomination(s) was received for the position of Deputy State Council Representative for two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor Shire of Murchison

DECLARATION

That Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor be elected as Deputy State Council Representative for the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA for the term of two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

4.3 Representative and Deputy Representative to the Regional LEMC

Representative to Regional the Regional LEMC

The following nomination(s) was received for the position of Representative of the Murchison Country Zone to the Regional LEMC for two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Cr Emma Foulkes-Taylor Shire of Murchison

DECLARATION

That Cr Emma Foulkes-Taylor, be elected as Representative of the Murchison Country Zone to the Regional LEMC for the term of two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Deputy Representative to Regional the Regional LEMC

The following nomination(s) was received for the position of Deputy Representative of the Murchison Country Zone to the Regional LEMC for two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

Cr Kieran Payne Shire of Yalgoo

DECLARATION

That Cr Kieran Payne, be elected as Deputy Representative of the Murchison Country Zone to the Regional LEMC for the term of two years, December 2025 to December 2027.

5. WA Local Government Association

5.1 WALGA President

President's Report

December 2025

Presented by Cr Price

Introduction

As WALGA President, I want to congratulate everyone who was elected to represent their communities at the recent Local Government Elections and I acknowledge and thank all retiring and outgoing Councillors for their contributions.

It has been another busy period for WALGA and the WA Local Government sector, with key policy matters and emerging issues attracting significant public and political attention.

Since the last report, WALGA has responded to over 70 media queries and at every opportunity, I have sought to champion and support the incredible work of WA Local Governments.

Recently, I responded to media queries regarding the WA Planning Minister's repeated commentary regarding the Local Government sector, which unfairly denigrates the extraordinary work that Local Government performs across the State in supporting new housing development.

2025 Local Government Convention

In late September, the sector came together for WALGA's 2025 Local Government Convention, which saw more than 500 attendees from across Western Australia participate in a full program of events. WALGA's Annual General Meeting was also held, which saw WALGA's 2024-25 Annual Report endorsed, while several motions were debated and passed.

Political Engagement

WALGA has continued to meet with our political representatives from Government and major parties, with discussions held on important issues for the sector including roads and transport, regional health, AI and technology, waste, planning and renewable energy.

The final sitting weeks for the Western Australian and Federal Parliaments were scheduled for late November and provided the last opportunity this year to pass legislation, introduce new bills, or respond to committee reports before the summer recess.

WALGA will continue to engage with decision makers during the recess, to ensure the sector's priorities are front of mind for policy makers when parliament resumes in February 2026.

State Budget Submission

Each year, WALGA prepares a submission to the State Government outlining the sector's priorities for the upcoming Budget.

WALGA's submission in advance of the 2026-27 Budget looks to build on the advocacy work undertaken in the lead up to the 2025 State Election. The submission seeks funding to progress initiatives set out in The West at its Best, which was pitched to Government as a term of Government policy platform.

The submission was presented to Government in November. WALGA is undertaking advocacy targeting several audiences including the Minister for Local Government, Premier/Treasurer, key members of the Expenditure Review Committee, other relevant Ministers and heads of agencies. There will also be traditional and digital media promotion of the key initiatives included in the submission.

Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licences) Bill 2025

On 23 October 2025, the State Government introduced the Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licences) Bill 2025 to Parliament. The Bill has been introduced in direct response to the WA Supreme Court's decision that Crown Land, subject to a miscellaneous licence, is rateable for Local Governments.

WALGA strongly opposes the proposed legislation, which would prohibit the rating of land under miscellaneous and small prospecting licences, extinguish rates imposed since 2017/18, and compel Local Governments to refund previously collected rates within 28 days of Royal Assent. WALGA considers these provisions unnecessarily punitive and disproportionate in their impact on Local Governments that have lawfully levied rates.

WALGA has written to the Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government, urging reconsideration of the Bill's scope and timing. WALGA maintains that Local Governments should retain the right to rate occupied land under miscellaneous licences, consistent with the Supreme Court's interpretation.

High Threat Bushfire and Cyclone Season

As Western Australia enters the high-threat bushfire and cyclone season, WALGA acknowledges the vital role of Local Governments and Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades in keeping communities safe. During emergencies, WALGA maintains situational awareness through the All Hazards Liaison Group and represents the sector at State Emergency Coordination Group meetings. Local Governments are encouraged to review their preparedness, including Local Recovery Plans, to ensure readiness if impacted. WALGA remains available to support members throughout the High Threat Period.

Telecommunications

The high profile 000 outage in September and subsequent public interest and government focus highlights a serious concern that WALGA has consistently highlighted, that in times of emergency everybody needs to be able to rely on their telecommunications systems working. West Australians in peri-urban and rural areas have firsthand experience of emergency situations where there is no ability to communicate with anyone, including emergency services, because the mobile telecommunications system has failed, typically due to loss of power. We have raised this consistently with Federal and State Governments as well as the telecommunications industry.

I am encouraged that despite many hurdles the State Government and telecommunications industry are pushing forward with a pilot initiative to make back-up power generators for telecommunications facilities available in regional areas ahead of the coming bushfire season in parts of the Wheatbelt and Goldfields regions.

State Road Funding to Local Governments

The State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee met in September. Analysis of the 2024-25 financial results was the main topic for consideration. Requests to carry forward allocated funding for road improvement projects that have not been delivered continue to be a significant problem. The Metropolitan and South West regions combined were allocated 49% of the road project grant funding but together were responsible for more than 60% of the carryover in this program.

Options to improve the 2025-26 outcome were discussed and the Committee resolved to invite Metropolitan Local Governments to nominate additional rehabilitation works and to invite other regional Local Governments to nominate additional “shovel ready” projects to be considered for funding in 2025-26. The Committee also discussed the methodologies that Regional Road Groups use to prioritise road project grant funding. It was agreed to prepare and consult on amendments to the State Road Funds to Local Government Procedures to provide additional guidance on this issue and consider these changes at the next meeting.

Finally, in my last report for 2025, I'd like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of all Elected members and officers across the year. Local Government continues to be the institution most relied on by our communities and your efforts, individually and collectively, are critical to making Western Australia the best place in the world to live.

President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP
WALGA President

President's Contacts

The President's contacts since 5 September and scheduled before 3 December are as follows:

State and Commonwealth Government Relations

- Dr Anne Webster MP, Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
 - Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth; Gascoyne
- Hon Sabine Winton MLA, Minister for Education; Early Childhood; Preventative Health; Wheatbelt
- Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Regional Development; Ports; Science and Innovation; Medical Research; Kimberley
- Mr Shane Love MLA, Leader of the Nationals WA & Ms Kirrilee Warr MP, Shadow Minister for Local Government
- Hon Steve Martin MLC, Shadow Minister for Transport; Ports; Communities
- Ms Kirrilee Warr MLA, Shadow Minister for Local Government
- Inquiry into the safety, regulation and penalties associated with the use of eRideables

Zone Meetings

- Great Eastern Country Zone
- Kimberley Zone Meeting
- South West Country Zone
- Northern Country Zone

Local Government Relations

- State Council Meetings
 - Regional State Council meeting, 5 September
 - Information Forum, 5 November
 - Finance and Services Committee
 - Local Government House Trust
 - New State Councillor Induction
- **ALGA**
 - Board meeting, 11 September
 - Ministerial Migration Roundtable
 - ALGA board executive meeting x3
 - Board meeting, 10 November
 - Roads and Infrastructure Congress
- **LGIS**
 - Regional Board meeting & Board Workshop, 8 September
 - Risk and Compliance Committee meeting
 - Board Meeting, 24 October
 - 30th Anniversary function
 - JLT Management Meeting
 - Internal Audit Workshop
- Perth Capital City Plan 2026 and Beyond - City of Perth CEO, Michelle Reynolds
- Regional Capitals Alliance Western Australia Meeting
- State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee

Conferences, Workshops, Public Relations

- Labor Leaders Forum Lunch with Hon Stephen Dawson
- Labor Leaders Forum Lunch with Hon Meredith Hammat
- Labor Leaders Forum Lunch with Hon Roger Cook MLA
- Labor Leaders Forum Lunch with Hon Paul Papalia MLA
- Pathway to Politics Advisory Committee
- State-Local Library Agreement signing with Hon Simone McGurk & LG Professionals President, Mr Anthony Vuleta
- RAC President Cocktail Function
- Auspire Australia Day Awards
- Great Eastern Country Zone Workshop
- WALGA New Councillor Seminar
- WALGA Pre-Season Emergency Management Webinar

- Rural and Remote General Practice Provision Workshop
- 2025 WALGA Local Government Convention
- WALGA Showcase in Pixels
- City of Stirling Christmas Dinner 2025
- WA Electoral Commissioner Vote Processing Centre site visit

5.2 Zone Representative to State Council – Cr Les Price

21st November 2025

Murchison Country Zone - 'CUE PARLIAMENT'

WELCOME Apologies from Kirsty Martin - Executive Director of Member Services WALGA who was unable to be with us today. Kirsty replaces Mr. Tony Brown who has taken an appointment as the inaugural Local Government Inspector. Tony will be greatly missed across the sector if ever there was the perfect appointment then we are fortunate that Tony has been chosen for the role.

SINCE LAST MEETING 11th April 2025

- 3 x State Council Meetings
- 1 x East Metropolitan Zone hosted by the City of Swan at The Vines Resort, The Vines. May 2025
- 1 x Goldfields Esperance Country Zone Meeting – hosted by Shire of Dundas. Sept 2025.
- 3 x State Council Strategic Forums
- 3 x State Council Information Forums
- 3 x State Council Agenda Briefings
- 3 x Environment Policy Team Meeting
- 2 x Joint Environment and Infrastructure Policy Team Meeting.
- 2 x Polyphagous Shothole Borer Webinar – WALGA Spring Seminar Series 1&2 – DPIRD City of Perth
- 1 x Polyphagous Shothole Borer Information Session - DPIRD
- 4 x Metropolitan Waste & Advisory Council (MWAC) Meetings.
- 3 x Selection Committee Meetings
- 6 x Flying Minutes.

In between the more formal meeting process the current State Councillors work closely together collaborating over different issues that impact the either a particular Local Government, Region or the State as a whole. While there are many topics three important areas of engagement have been around Renewable Energy Infrastructure impacts on local communities, Regional Health Services and Climate Change Advocacy.

Metropolitan Zone Meeting

WALGA State Council meeting on 7th May 2025 was held in conjunction with the East Metropolitan Zone hosted by the City of Swan. The meeting presents State Councillors with the opportunity to visit the host council and provides an opportunity for Member Councils of the Zone to showcase their region, identify current focus and key priorities and highlight some of the challenges. State Council received presentations from Zone Members:-

- Town of Bassendean - City of Bayswater - City of Belmont
- City of Swan - City of Kalamunda - Shire of Mundaring

What was notable from all presentations by Mayors and CEO's were some of the challenges their Local Governments faced which closely aligned with the remainder of the sector across the State. Some areas of focus included:

- Housing (affordability and availability) - Multi storey developments are planned.
- Land banking
- Ageing infrastructure.
- Urban infill.
- Recruitment and retention of key personnel and other critical staff.
- Balancing Development with Environment
- Major project funding and the involvement of investment from the private sector.
- Increase in overall population, particularly the young population.

The host City of Swan covers an area of 1,042 sq km with 42 suburbs which represents 20% of the Perth Metropolitan area and has a current population of around 180,000 and forecast to grow to 300,000 by 2050. As the population grows so do the demands on the Local Government's infrastructure and service provision and by default some of the challenges become even more challenging.

One third of the population was born overseas and the median age is 35. 51% of the houses in the city have children in the household. The city boasts a healthy GDP of \$12.36B with 83,000 local jobs.

Key industries include:

- Manufacturing.
- Construction.
- Industrial Logistics and Freight.
- Tourism and Agri Tourism.
- Healthcare and Social Assistance.
- Wholesale and Retail.

Midland and the Swan Valley are the growth areas with the biggest challenge being the revitalisation of Midland with a new hospital and train station planned and a desire by Council to make Midland a medical hub. Parking Management is at critical levels. A coup for the City was the construction of a film studio in Malaga.

Regional Zone Meeting

On 4th September 2025 I attended the Goldfields Esperance Country Zone Meeting hosted by the Shire of Dundas (Norseman). The Zone is made up of nine (9) Local Governments which include:-

- Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku - Shire of Wiluna - Shire of Menzies
- Shire of Laverton - Shire of Leonora - Shire of Coolgardie
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder - Shire of Dundas - Shire of Esperance

The Zone has a combined GDP of \$36.96B. The member Councils have formed the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils ('GVROC') Regional Subsidiary. It is a collaboration

of Local Governments designed to coordinate regional planning, economic development, advocacy, and shared services among member councils. GVROC set about forming a Climate Alliance involving new projects and activities. There is a current focus on what is referred to as 'Foundational Funding' centred on:-

- Carbon emissions.
- Renewable energy projects.
- Climate risk assessment

Current projects include:-

- Water security.
- Natural disasters and bushfires risk mitigation.
- E.V charging stations.
- Urban Greening.
- Menzies & Dundas Dams – Community Water Supplies Partnership

The Zone faces challenges which will be familiar to you all and centre on:-

- Law and order.
- Housing availability and affordability.
- The pushback to Shires to provide GROH housing where the lease terms and projected income offered are not sustainable when measured against the financial commitment required to be undertaken by the Council.
- Power is an issue.
- Native Title - Power of Veto problems causing delays in project approvals and adding significant cost to those projects.
- Water resources are an issue.
- Land availability.
- Recruitment.
- Road Degradation and lack of funding for extensive road networks,
- DFES Flood Damage issues - over compliance and an ability to 'not help' rather than 'help'. The State has to pay the first \$90M in DFRA Funding and it does appear that Shires are being impacted by some harsh and unreasonable assessment measures.

Of all the Zone members the Shire of Esperance has some major projects it is undertaking which included:-

- \$3.5M Sandbank Pass Project involving the construction of a dredging facility and 62,70 cubic metres of sandfill required for the project.
- \$25M Waste Management facility.
- Airport design and upgrade -currently considering one of three options with costs expected to be between \$28M to \$42M depending on which option is settled on.
- \$6.5m Graham "Macka" Mackenzie Stadium to cater for in excess of the 100 basketball teams in Esperance.
- Land development. Council is the major developer in the Shire.
- James Street precinct redevelopment.

The Zone has also had to contend with the Shire of Coolgardie concerns over recent Ministerial intervention as a result of high debt levels arising from the Shire owned construction of the 'Bluebush Village' with 320 large rooms and 8 executive rooms. There was an initial push by the Minister to bring in boundary changes with the City of Kalgoorlie however, The Minister has now issued a 'show cause' notice over Financial Management and Governance and given the Shire 12 months to get its affairs into order.

On 13 October 2025, the Minister announced that she would not suspend the Coolgardie Shire Council. However, the decision comes with strict conditions:

- All councillors must complete financial management training.
- The Shire must provide regular updates to the Department of Local Government (LGIRS) on how it is implementing its Financial Recovery Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan.
- The Minister said that the Shire's financial position will be closely monitored for the next 12 months.

The Zone is a major economic driver for the State.

Strategic Forum.

Aside from the regular State Council meetings WALGA conducts a bi-monthly Information Forum and Strategic Forum. The purpose of the Strategic Forum is to provide an opportunity for State Councillors to raise any issue they believe to have strategic importance for WALGA and the sector. The Forums enable WALGA to receive presentations from Departments, Agencies, Ministers, Shadow Ministers and others with an interest in matters that WALGA is dealing with. Presenters included:-

- Kirrilee Warr Chapman Valley (former Shire President and WALGA State Councillor) and now Shadow Minister for Local Government.
- Dennis O'Malley - WAEC Acting Electoral Commissioner. Dealing with concerns arising from the last State and Local Government Elections.
- Emma Cole, Chair WA Planning Commission.
- Tony Mahar, Commissioner, Australian Energy Infrastructure Commission.

Information Forum

The Information Forum is an interactive and informal briefing session and provides opportunity for State Councillors to be briefed on current activities and items of interest. There has been considerable discussion around renewable energy projects and windfarms which will result in the loss of prime agriculture land. A case in question is a number of proposed projects which will see in excess of 1,000 wind turbines across 100,000 hectares constructed in the Shires of West Arthur, Williams, Wagin and Narrogin. The Bellwether Wind Farm alone proposes approximately 400 turbines.

Some Areas of WALGA's Current Focus

- Large scale renewable energy.
- Rating of Renewable Energy Facilities.
- Rating of Miscellaneous Licences

- Community Infrastructure and Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund Advocacy Position.
- Infrastructure / Road Safety.
- Emergency Management / Resilience.
- Governance & Local Government Reform.
- Rural and Remote Health Services Advocacy Position
- Climate Action & Adaptation
- The polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB) remains a critical biosecurity concern for Western Australia and Local Governments.

Polyphagous Shothole Borer (PSHB)

The Borer continues to be high on the agenda as eradication is now unlikely. The borer has become a Statewide and National issue with the destruction of well in excess of 3,000 trees in the metropolitan area. The national approach has now reverted to a management control program with \$2.1M funding available for local Governments to help control the pest. The current practices are now centred around control and management rather than eradication.

As of 6 September 2024, the quarantine area was expanded to cover the entire Perth metropolitan area. Removal of wood chips, host trees, tree loppings, branches and firewood from the quarantine area is prohibitive.

Policy Teams.

WALGA has a number of Policy teams to consider a variety of matters to go before State Council and encourages all Zones to continue to put forward issues that affect their communities for advocacy consideration. Currently WALGA has four (4) Policy Teams covering :-

- Infrastructure.
- People and Place.
- Governance.
- Environment.

In addition, WALGA has the Municipal Waste Advisory Council ('MWAC') of which I am a representative on behalf of State Council. I also chair WALG's Environment Policy Team.

Environment Policy Team

The major issues under discussion included:-

- **Energy Transmission** and Community Benefit Framework.
- **Climate Change Advocacy Position** is now on hold pending a full review and consultation with all Zones. At the appropriate time WALGA will be expecting a Council endorsed position from all members in light of State Council's decision to refer the matter back to the Environment Policy Team for further development.
- Updated **Water Advocacy Position** is underway and will be developed and a Discussion Paper is being finalised to be issued to the sector.

- Development of a **Renewable Energy Facility Planning Code** is being considered by the WA Planning Commission. WALGA is engaging with DPLH to see how Local Governments can contribute and the timing of any consultation.
- **H5 Avian Influenza.** A serious bird flu that is highly contagious. A National response with a State flavour is being developed. The is transmission from animal to human but not human to human. It's about readiness and preparedness. This is not the same bird flu currently in Victoria.
- **Varroa Mite** is a tiny parasitic mite that attaches to honeybees and weakens or kills them. The mite was first detected in NSW in 2022 is now making its way around the country. WA remains Varroa-free and has strict border controls to keep it out however, the recent purchase of a beehive from Queensland by a keeper in South Australia now sees the mite in that State. The Nullarbor provides a good buffer zone for WA, but we are not immune from its spread.

Joint Environment and Infrastructure Policy Teams

WALGA circulated a '**Native Vegetation Clearing Regulation Advocacy Position**'. 11 Zones considered and endorsed the Advocacy Position without change while 6 Zones provide feedback.

The principal focus of the Position centred on:-

- Statutory timeframes for determination of referrals, permit applications and appeals.
- Increasing the default duration of Area and Purpose permits to 10 years.
- Provide permanent exemption for clearing of previously legally cleared transport corridors.
- Strengthen environmental data sharing for environmental assessment and monitoring purposes. This includes mining companies.
- Ensuring the regulatory system is adequately resourced.
- Establish a dedicated Local Government Unit within DWER to manage Local Government referrals and clearing permit applications.
- Ensuring environmental offsets are relevant and proportionate, including proximity to the area being impacted and the environmental value being impacted.

The Joint Policy Teams received a report on planning around land banking and no requirement for planning approval when demolishing single houses and commercial structures. However, approval is required for multi-level buildings.

The Meeting also considered an update on differential rating for occupied and unoccupied dwellings. The purpose was to address concerns over long term unoccupied land and buildings, which hinder development opportunities, reduce housing supply and negatively impact community amenity and economic vitality. There was some pushback on this issue around the administrative burden that will result not to mention the many reasons why a property would be vacant such as dealing with estate matters, irregularity of Air B&B occupation, relationship breakdown, mortgagee sale, title transfers and disputes, waiting on lengthy planning approvals, etc

Municipal Waste Advisory Council ('MWAC')

The Metropolitan Waste Advisory Council ('MWAC') has been dealing with the usual waste and environmental issues.

Other topics included:-

- Household Hazardous Waste.
- Battery disposal
- Illegal dumping
- Waste Management Infrastructure.
- Circular Economy
- Review of Advocacy Positions and Policy Statements around waste
- Containers for change update.
- Waste Recycling update.
- Charging for waste services.
- Procurement for waste services.
- 'FOGO' (Food Organics and Garden Organics). Council discussed a waste collection service for organic materials in Australia.

Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 (BAM Act)

The panel has now completed its three-stage review process. Approximately 250 people, including representatives from more than 140 organisations, participated in the review.

The government has considered the panel's report and recommendations to determine what action it will take in response to the review.

On 23rd October 2025 the Government provide a response to the recommendations of the Review as follows:-

Of the 33 recommendations from the review panel:-

- 8 are fully supported by the Government.
- 16 are supported in principle (i.e., the Government agrees with the intent but sees need for further work or consultation)
- 9 are 'noted' (i.e., the Government is not committing to act on them at this time).

DPIRD (Dept of Primary Industries & Regional Development) will run a long-term reform program, staged over 'a number of years'.

Some reform recommendations could require major legislative change, including possibly a new Biosecurity Act. But the Government is also considering whether similar outcomes can be achieved without fundamental changes. The Government is committed to a consultative approach, involving government, industry, and community.

The Shadow Minister for Agriculture has come out indicating there are some major concerns around:-

- The lack of action on Declared Pest Rate reform.
- Regional funding.
- A weaker-than-expected commitment to establishing a 'Biosecurity Planning Committee.'

WALGA put in a submission and strongly argued for:-

- A broader view of biosecurity (not just agriculture)
- Better biosecurity planning and reporting structures
- A Declared Pest Rate (DPR) that local governments can access to support community-led pest management.

The Government is taking a 'long term' approach rather than a quick legislative overhaul. It does seem that the government's response lacks urgency and strong commitment on key reforms (especially around funding and community-led pest management).

We wait to see what develops unless the Minister would like to give us an early insight.

Selection Committee

The Committee considered vacancies for a number of positions some of which include:-

- WA Biosecurity Council.
- WA Environmental Health Professional Review Board.
- Local Health Authorities Analytical committee.
- Swan River Trust.
- WA Library Board.
- Local Government Grants Commission.
- WA Biosecurity.

To elected members and officers there are many opportunities available for you to nominate so please make time to review and perhaps consider a worthwhile role.

Honours Recognition and Awards

Just a timely reminder to look closely at the Elected Members and Officers of your Local Governments and consider if there is a person worthy of being nominated for an award in 2026. This is a time to recognise the efforts of those who give of their time to serve the community.

Our Zone's Contribution to WALGA

We, as a Zone, get the opportunity to contribute to the overall framework of policy and advocacy developed by WALGA. Fortunately, my role in WALGA enables me to be on top of those areas that may impact our Zone. All members around this table should take some time to provide feedback and commentary, as brief as that may be, so that I can promote those positions at the appropriate time. If we don't engage then we are not heard and therefore, our region may well fall by the wayside.. I would like to thank those who do contribute...please keep it up!

The Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly (ALGA)

The Assembly was held from 23rd to 27th June 2026 and provided an opportunity for Councils to send representatives to Canberra. Irrespective of whether an individual Council sends representatives it provides a forum for a Council to put forward a recommendation for consideration by the Assembly.

The NGA provides Councillors and the CEO with an opportunity to network and get a broader understanding of the business of Local Government at the national level. You are encouraged to consider the next National General Assembly in 2026.

WALGA 2025 Local Government Convention (LGC25)

The Convention was held on 22nd to 25th September and is an important occasion for attendees to network and be involved with what is happening in our various Local Governments across the State. The Convention is also a time for the Annual General Meeting to consider various motions, one of which was put forward by the Shire of Mt. Magnet.

Thanks must go to the Shire of Mt. Magnet and its CEO, Tralee Cable for putting up a motion at the AGM and highlighting their continued stance on Miscellaneous Licences and pushback against the Minister and the mining sector. It was a bold move to take on the rating of Miscellaneous Licences however; the Supreme Court upheld the Shire's right to rate. The Minister seeks to effectively sidestep the Court judgement and impose measures that could see a widespread reduction in revenue from the rating of mining and exploration licences.

As was pointed out by AMEC CEO, Warren Pearce the revenue streams available to Local Governments are limited and highlights a general lack of available annual grant funding from the State. It does now seem that the legislation before Parliament will have serious consequences for Local Governments.

Next State Council Meeting 3rd December 2025. The meeting Agenda is now available and sets out the main items for consideration. Please advise any issues you would like me to raise at this meeting.



Les Price

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Murchison Country Zone Delegate
Western Australian Local Government Association
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Minister Jarvis addressed the meeting about happenings in her portfolio including grant funding, upgrades to health facilities and programs. She also mentioned that the government was aware of issues relating to disaster relief funding for roads.

Ms Debbie Dowden addressed the meeting about the activities of the Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance and about today being the National Agriculture Day and 2026 being the International year of Rangeland Pastoralists.

5.3 Zone Status Report –

COMPLETE ZONE STATUS REPORT

August 2025

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Murchison C	11 April Zone Agenda Item 7.7 Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements	The Murchison Country Zone request, that should Yalgoo Council agree to pursue a judicial review of the DFES decision in relation to reimbursement of flood damage expenditure, WALGA seek evidence from Local Governments of advice received from DFES concerning application of the DRFA WA in relation to acceptable procurement processes and evidence requirements, and report to the Zone.	Noted that on 2 May the Yalgoo Shire Council resolved: <i>that Council engages Civic Legal to prepare and undertake all such work to advise the Shire and also take such action as appropriate to advance the Shire's interest in respect of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services decision to deny EPAR applications for AGRN962 & AGRN1021.</i>	August 2025	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
Murchison C	11 April 2025 Zone Agenda Item 7.4 Increasing the Department of Communities Presence in Regional and Remote Western Australia	That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA request that WALGA advocate for increasing the Department of Communities presence in regional and remote Western Australia.	The resolution was considered in conjunction with the related April 2025 and November 2024 Gascoyne Zone resolutions by the People and Place Policy Team at its 9 July 2025 meeting. The People and Place Policy Team resolved WALGA to: 1. Initially raise the issues put forward by the Gascoyne Country Zone with the Hon Matthew Swinbourne MLA, Minister for Community Services, and the Hon Hannah Beazley BA MLA, Minister for Local Government, Youth and Gascoyne. 2. Assist Zones to facilitate meetings with relevant State Government regional ministers.	August 2025	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039
Murchison C	11 April 2025 Zone Agenda Item 7.5 Climate Change Advocacy Position	That State Council replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 4.1 Climate Change with the following advocacy position. WALGA calls on the Australian Federal Government and Western Australian State Government to: a. Prioritise and provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to deliver a climate change response that improves the quality of life for all Australians	At the March State Council meeting it was resolved: <i>That State Council refer this advocacy item back to the Environment Policy Team for further development.</i> RESOLUTION 003.1/2025 CARRIED At the 24 March 2025 Environment Policy Team meeting, it was agreed that WALGA would develop a consultation approach for consideration by the Policy Team. At the 29 May meeting, the	August 2025	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039

		b. Provide the required level of funding, resources and support to Local Governments to enable local communities to respond to climate change; and c. Ensure that any climate change action does not impact the standard of living of local communities.	Policy Team agreed to the proposed consultation approach, which involves providing the composite Advocacy Position to all Local Governments for a 10-week consultation period, with Council endorsed or CEO approved feedback preferred. An additional Policy Team meeting will be held to consider comments and a composite resolution. Consultation is expected to commence by September 2025.		
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COMPLETE ZONE STATUS REPORT

November 2025

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Murchison C	11 April Zone Agenda Item 7.7 Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements	The Murchison Country Zone request, that should Yalgoo Council agree to pursue a judicial review of the DFES decision in relation to reimbursement of flood damage expenditure, WALGA seek evidence from Local Governments of advice received from DFES concerning application of the DRFA WA in relation to acceptable procurement processes and evidence requirements, and report to the Zone.	Noted that on 2 May the Yalgoo Shire Council resolved: <i>that Council engages Civic Legal to prepare and undertake all such work to advise the Shire and also take such action as appropriate to advance the Shire's interest in respect of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services decision to deny EPAR applications for AGRN962 & AGRN1021.</i>	August 2025	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031
Murchison C	11 April 2025 Zone Agenda Item 7.4 Increasing the Department of Communities Presence in Regional and Remote Western Australia	That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA request that WALGA advocate for increasing the Department of Communities presence in regional and remote Western Australia.	The resolution was considered in conjunction with the related April 2025 and November 2024 Gascoyne Zone resolutions by the People and Place Policy Team at its 9 July 2025 meeting. WALGA raised the issues put forward by the Gascoyne Country Zone with the Hon Matthew Swinbourne, Minister for Community Services on 22 July and the Hon Hannah Page 9 Beazley, Minister for Local Government, Youth and Gascoyne on 16 September. A subsequent meeting with Minister Swinbourne's advisors was held on 31 July, leading to WALGA facilitating communication between the Minister's office and the Shires of Carnarvon and Cue. COMPLETE	November 2025	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039
Murchison C	11 April 2025 Zone Agenda Item 7.5 Climate Change Advocacy Position	That State Council replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 4.1 Climate Change with the following advocacy position. WALGA calls on the Australian Federal Government and Western Australian State Government to: a. Prioritise and provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to deliver a	WALGA has suggested an approach to the Environment Policy Team which identified that, based on a range of developments at both the State and national level, there is a need to reconsider the draft Advocacy Position. These include the ALGA Adapting Together – Local Government Leadership in a Changing Climate <u>Report</u> , the Australian Government has released the nation's first <u>National Climate Risk Assessment</u> , <u>Climate Adaptation Plan</u> and	November 2025	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039

		climate change response that improves the quality of life for all Australians b. Provide the required level of funding, resources and support to Local Governments to enable local communities to respond to climate change; and c. Ensure that any climate change action does not impact the standard of living of local communities.	<u>2035 emissions target</u> and recent comments from the WA Government regarding <u>climate change targets</u>. These developments provide an opportunity to update and streamline the draft Advocacy Position. WALGA will take the feedback provided by Zones and State Councillors, and the additional information and direction released, to finalise a draft Advocacy Position and Background Paper for consideration by the sector in 2026. As previously recommended by the Environment Policy Team, Local Governments will be encouraged to provide CEO / Council endorsed feedback on the Position and have at least a 10-week period to provide that feedback.		
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5.4 Agenda Briefs – WALGA Meeting Wednesday 3 December 2025

This resolution is presented should members choose to resolve to support and note the Matters for Consideration and Matters for noting en bloc.

Delegates should also note that they can consider items individually.

RECOMENDATION

That WALGA matters for consideration 5.4.1.1 to 5.4.1.4 be supported and matters for noting 5.4.2.1 to 5.4.2.10 be noted.

RESOLUTION **Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor Seconded: Cr Pigdon**

That WALGA matters for consideration 5.4.1.1 to 5.4.1.4 be supported and matters for noting 5.4.2.1 to 5.4.2.10 be noted.

Carried En Bloc 11/0

MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA

WALGA STATE COUNCIL MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AND NOTING

AT WALGA MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2025

Zone delegates are invited to read and consider the full WALGA State Council Agenda, which has been provided as an attachment to delegates in full.

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

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

5.4.1 Matters for Decision

5.4.1.1 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. the following resolutions from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the People and Place Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
 - 7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments
 - 7.2 Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions
2. the following resolution from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
 - 7.3 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position
3. the following resolution from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be endorsed:
 - 7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licences

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA's 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 23 September.
- The meeting resolved for WALGA to act in relation to four Member Motions:
 - Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments
 - Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions
 - Rating Exemption Advocacy Motion
 - Rateability of Miscellaneous Licences
- The action proposed to be taken in relation to each of the resolutions has been summarised for State Council's consideration.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.1.2 2026 SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES TRIBUNAL REMUNERATION INQUIRY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND ELECTED MEMBERS.

2026 SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES TRIBUNAL REMUNERATION INQUIRY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND ELECTED MEMBERS

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission to the 2026 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 (ARIC) member fees.

- The 2026 submission recommends:
 - an increase to Elected Member fees and allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) of 3%;
 - an increase to Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands of 3%;
 - 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; and
 - an increase to the current fee range for independent committee members, including ARIC members and chairs; and
 - a higher fee range for independent ARIC chairs, in recognition of the additional skill, knowledge and time commitment of the role.
- SAT will publish its determination for 2026-27 in April 2026.
- The Governance Policy Team considered the submission at its meeting on 29 October and recommended that it be included in the December Agenda for State Council endorsement.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.1.3 TOURISM ADVOCACY POSITION UPDATE

By Saul Cresswell, Principal Policy Advisor Economic Development

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.9 Tourism with an updated position as follows:

WALGA calls on the State Government to:

- 1. Fund the implementation of the WA Visitor Economy Strategy and the supporting Tourism Destination Management Plans and Regional Tourism Development Strategies, including for:***
 - a. maintenance and renewal of Local Government assets and services that underpin a positive visitor experience***
 - b. new and existing tourism infrastructure***
 - c. improving telecommunications infrastructure***
 - d. measures to reduce the cost and improve the scheduling and routes of regional air services***
 - e. accredited Visitor Centres.***
- 2. Ensure that tourism destinations with a significant seasonal visitor influx have adequate medical and emergency services and reliable telecommunications.***
- 3. Articulate a clear tourism governance framework with defined roles and responsibilities to facilitate coordination and collaboration of tourism activities across the State.***
- 4. Adequately consult and consider Local Government when undertaking strategic tourism planning across Western Australia.***
- 5. Provide improved access to affordable, timely and granular data that delivers LGA-level insights on visitation, spend and event impacts.***

BACKGROUND

The visitor economy is an important driver of economic development for metropolitan and regional Local Governments in Western Australia. Comprising people travelling for leisure, business events, education, and those visiting friends and relatives, the visitor economy contributed \$18.3 billion to the Western Australian economy in 2023-24. Approximately 45 per cent of this spend took place in the regions.

In 2015, WALGA undertook research and consultation on tourism, developing a *Local Government and Tourism Discussion Paper* that included recommendations. As part of the recommendations, Advocacy Position 3.9 Tourism was endorsed by State Council in March 2017.

Local Governments are instrumental in maintaining the amenity of destinations, a critical factor in safeguarding tourism reputation and repeat visitation. There has been a growth in demands on Local Government resources to meet gaps in service delivery from other levels of Government or the private sector and to align with changes in community expectations (see [WALGA's submission on the Inquiry into Local Government Financial Sustainability](#)).

The WA Government's [Diversify WA](#) economic framework considers tourism and events a priority sector in the diversification of the state's economy. The *WA Visitor Economy Strategy* (WAVES) sets a vision for a \$25 billion visitor economy by 2033.

The State Government, through Tourism WA and the Regional Tourism Organisations, have developed regional tourism strategies, known as Tourism Destination Management Plans (TDMPs), to identify the challenges and opportunities across demand, supply and capability. TDMPs are the most informed articulation of a shared tourism vision undertaken to date yet have no funding mechanism to implement them.

Tourism emerged as a key topic in WALGA's 2024 Economic Development Survey, with visitor attraction a focus area for Local Government economic development efforts. Responding to the findings, WALGA undertook a Tourism Survey in June 2025, which received 36 Local Government responses from a diversity of regions, with 92% of respondents stating that tourism had medium or high importance to their Local Government.

WALGA developed the *Role of Local Government in Tourism Discussion Paper*, which outlined the constraints and opportunities for Local Governments, and was distributed for Member and stakeholder feedback in September 2025. It also included a draft revised advocacy position. Feedback was received from 28 Local Governments, plus Tourism WA, Tourism Council WA and Regional Tourism Organisations. Local Government responses were received from each of the five tourism regions: Australia's South West, Australia's North West, Australia's Coral Coast, Australia's Golden Outback and Destination Perth.

The consultation provided unanimous support for the overarching intent of the draft advocacy position. Nearly half of respondents proposed amendments, which were considered and incorporated into the revised draft advocacy positions.

Key sector feedback during WALGA's consultation, included:

Inadequate recognition of the pivotal role Local Government plays in providing community infrastructure and services that underpins amenity for visitors, and the need for sustainable funding mechanisms.

Continued confusion about the roles of tourism agencies across WA and who to turn to for support.

The prohibitive costs of accessing data relating to tourism in Local Government areas.

Impacts of a difficult regulatory environment at all levels of government on tourism and events.

The need for support addressing tourism literacy and the visitor economy.

The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the updated advocacy position at its meeting on 22 October 2025, with the inclusion of an additional point requesting resourcing for emergency management and medical services that face significantly increased demand during peak tourism periods.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.1.4 ELECTORAL MATERIAL – AUTHORISATION STATEMENT ADDRESS REQUIREMENTS

By Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to amend section 4.87 of the *Local Government Act 1995* to:

- 1. Replace the requirement to include the name and address of the person authorising the electoral material, with a requirement to include the name and locality of the person authorising the material.**
- 2. Remove the requirement for the name and business address of the electoral material printer to appear at the end of the electoral material**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Authorisation requirements for electoral material are intended to protect the transparency and accountability of the electoral process.
- The mandatory publication of a street address, often the candidate's home, raises privacy and safety concerns, potentially deterring participation in Local Government elections.
- Other Australian jurisdictions offer more flexible approaches, such as allowing post office boxes or partial addresses, which maintain transparency without compromising safety.
- It is proposed that WALGA advocate that only the locality is included in the authorisation statement.
- The Governance Policy Team revised and endorsed the new advocacy position at its meeting on 20 October.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2 Matters for Noting

5.4.2.1 WALGA TRANSPORT AND ROADS FORUM 2025: SUMMARY REPORT

By Negar Nili, Policy Officer Transport and Roads

FOR NOTING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Transport and Roads Forum was held at the State Reception Centre in Kings Park (Kaarta Koomba), on 14 August.
- With over 200 people in attendance, the event brought together transport experts and leaders from industry, stakeholder groups, Local, State and Federal Governments.
- The Forum is the premier Transport and Roads event for WA Local Governments and is jointly hosted by WALGA and Main Roads WA. The Forum was designed to meet the expressed needs of Local Government Members.
- The keynote speakers were:
 - Hon Jessica Stojkovski, in her capacity as Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport;
 - Paul Durdin, Road safety expert, Technical Director and Board Member of Abley Limited;
 - Michael Caltabiano, CEO, National Transport Research Organisation; and
 - Peter Woronzow, Director General, WA Department of Transport.
- The 2025 theme was 'From Vision to Action' with a focus on:
 - Road Safety
 - Sustainability
 - Active Transport
 - Asset Management
- The Forum was successful in stimulating discussion, challenging thinking and providing opportunities to share knowledge and network with colleagues. It included expert presentations and panel discussion sessions.
- A detailed report summarising the presentations and key deliverables is attached below.
- The full presentations can be viewed on the WALGA website [here](#).

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.2 POLYPHAGOUS SHOT-HOLE BORER (PSHB): TRANSITION TO MANAGEMENT

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste

FOR NOTING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Since the State Government [announcement](#) on 18 June 2025 that it was no longer technically feasible to eradicate Polyphagous Shot-hole borer (PSHB) from Western Australia, a national [Transition to Management \(T2M\) Plan](#) has been put in place.
- The T2M Plan focuses in four program areas:
 - Orderly transition of eradication activities

- Slow the spread
- Capacity building and training
- Future proofing.
- WALGA and Local Governments have been actively engaging with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) on the T2M Plan implementation, including the development of the \$2.5M funding Program for Zone A Local Governments and capacity building.
- WALGA has written to the Director General of DPIRD identifying the priorities for Local Government including:
 - increased and sustained funding for Local Government and community PSHB management;
 - clear and consistent messaging – stop the spread;
 - ongoing and comprehensive PSHB surveillance;
 - development of effective management tools;
 - data sharing to enable targeted management efforts;
 - preparedness outside the Quarantine Area;
 - further funding for PSHB research; and
 - capacity building for Local Government.
- In addition to advocacy, WALGA has been supporting Local Government through a range of capacity building focusing on sharing knowledge on PSHB management.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.3 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO INDEPENDENT BIOSECURITY AND AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT ACT REVIEW

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the release of the Government Response to the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act* Review and WALGA's ongoing advocacy in this area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The first statutory review of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) [commenced](#) in March 2022 with the appointment of an Independent Panel. The three-stage review process was completed in December 2023 when the Panel provided their Report to Government.
- WALGA and Local Government provided considerable input into the Review Process, including through the development of a discussion paper, workshops, presentations to the Panel and [submissions](#).
- The [Review Report](#) was provided to the Minister for Agriculture and Food in December 2023 and the [Government Response](#) was Tabled in Parliament on 23 October 2025.
- The Government response recognises the need to strengthen the State's biosecurity system and undertake reform of the biosecurity system. However, most of the more significant recommendations have only been noted, with the Government citing that further work is required.
- WALGA welcomes the release of the report and Government Response and will be advocating for this work to be progressed as a priority and for the sector to be consulted as part of this process.

- WALGA's 2026-27 State Budget Submission is requesting an additional \$20 million per annum from 2026-27 for the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to ensure WA is prepared and can respond to increasing biosecurity threats.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.4 FLYING MINUTE – SUBMISSION FOR DRAFT GUIDELINES ON COMMUNITY BENEFITS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

By Lisa Harwood, Principal Policy Advisor Economic Development

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission for Draft Guidelines on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Western Australia's energy sector is transforming to achieve the State and Australian governments' 2050 net zero emissions target.
- The State Government released a draft Guideline Benefits Guideline Consultation Paper for consultation on 12 June 2025.
- The deadline for submissions on the draft Guideline was extended to 18 August following a request from WALGA.
- WALGA has prepared a draft submission aligned to WALGA's renewable energy advocacy positions and incorporating feedback from Local Governments.
- Local Governments were provided 4 weeks to provide feedback on the draft WALGA submission, from 26 June to 25 July 2025.
- 48 Local Governments provided feedback, including a joint submission on the Consultation Paper from 36 regional Local Governments.
- The draft submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 08 August 2025. It was provided to the State Government on 18 August 2025.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.5 FLYING MINUTE – COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT CONSULTATION SUBMISSION

By Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager Member Services and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission on the Communications Agreements Consultation, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Consultation is open on the draft [Local Government Regulations Amendment Regulations 2025](#) (the Draft Regulations) and draft [Local Government \(Default Communications Agreement\) Order 2025](#) (the Draft Order) which give effect to reforms regarding communications agreements between Council and the CEO.
- Communications agreements will regulate Council and Committee Member requests and access to information.
- Sector feedback has been collated and identifies some overarching concerns, specific amendments and elements that are broadly suitable.
- The overriding view is that the Draft Order is overly prescriptive and complex and requires simplification. A principles-based approach is preferred.
- The attached submission, informed by this feedback, is recommended for endorsement.
- The submission attached was endorsed by the Governance Policy Team on 11 August and by State Council via Flying Minute on 20 August. It was provided to the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety on 22 August.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.6 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON THE AMENDMENT REGULATIONS AND DRAFT CHAPTERS OF THE WA PLANNING MANUAL

By Coralie Claudio, Senior Policy Advisor Planning

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on the *Planning and Development Regulations Amendment (Review of Planning Instruments) Regulations 2025* and supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual - Local Planning Schemes and the Local Planning Policy, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) is seeking comments on the *Planning and Development Regulations Amendment (Review of Planning Instruments) Regulations 2025* (Amendment Regulations) and two supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual - Local Planning Schemes chapter (LPS Manual) and the Local Planning Policy (LPP Manual) by 3 October 2025.
- The Amendment Regulations facilitate the 10 yearly reviews of local planning instruments, introduces new provisions for local planning policies (LPPs) and expanding the circumstances where Local Government can revoke a local development plan (LDP).
- The LPP Manual was previously consulted on in late 2024 and has been updated in response to submissions received and to ensure consistency with the Amendment Regulations.
- WALGA's submission broadly supports the Amendment Regulations and Manuals, recognising they will modernise planning processes and provide contemporary guidance and resources. The submission includes recommendations on standardising and improving accessibility of local planning frameworks, enhancing WAPC accountability and transparency, and addressing resourcing and implementation challenges.
- The submission was endorsed by the Environment Policy Team on 18 September and State Council via Flying Minute on 30 September.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.7 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON PHASE 2 REFORMS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK LAW

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission on Phase 2 Reforms to Western Australia's Working with Children Check Law, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 26 August 2025, the WA Department of Communities (DoC) released a public Consultation Paper seeking feedback on potential [Phase Two reforms to Western Australia's \(WA\) Working with Children law](#).
- The Consultation period closed on 23 September, however WALGA secured an extension until 14 October 2025.
- The potential Phase 2 reforms aim to:
 - Improve protections for WA's children by updating the [Working with Children \(Screening\) Act 2004](#) (WWC Act) scope to reflect contemporary service provision.
 - Ensure that regardless of where a child lives, they are provided a consistent level of protection by increased national consistency across State and Territory WWC Schemes to the extent possible and appropriate.
- WALGA's submission was informed by Member feedback and provided technical detail on the issues the sector would want to see included in the reforms.
- WALGA's submission recommended that the potential Phase 2 reforms:
 - Amend the WWC Act definitions of 'contact' or 'child-related work' to more appropriately reflect the variety of engagement Local Government staff and Elected Members have with children.
 - That the WWC Act includes a category for those in positions whose duties require ongoing contact with children.
 - That both commercial and non-commercial services remain captured under the WWC Act.
- The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team on 30 September and State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.8 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO COMMUNITY USE OF WA PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission to the Education and Health Standing Committee Inquiry into Community Use of WA Public School Facilities, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 26 August, WALGA was invited to make a submission to the Inquiry into Community Use of WA Public School Facilities.
- The Consultation period closed on 12 October.
- The WALGA submission was informed by feedback from Members and provided high level commentary on this emerging policy direction from the State Government.
- WALGA's submission supported increased community use of WA public school facilities but recommended that the:
 - Local Government sector be included as a key stakeholder in the development and delivery of community use of public school facilities initiatives.
 - State Government prioritises the development of policy frameworks and clarifies roles and responsibilities in consultation with all involved parties to address the identified barriers to community use agreements.
 - State Government establishes funding mechanisms to supplement costs incurred by Local Governments related to community use of public school facilities.
- The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy team on 30 September and was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.9 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS REFERENCE COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission to the Federal Senate Environment and Communications Reference Committee Inquiry into the National Cultural Policy, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In July 2025, the Senate agreed that the National Cultural Policy Inquiry be re-adopted in the 48th Parliament.
- The Consultation period closed on 3 October, however WALGA secured an extension until 14 October.
- ALGA is also provided a submission to the inquiry which the WALGA submission referenced.
- WALGA's submission highlighted the important role of the Western Australian Local Government in fostering the creative industries sector.
- WALGA's submission made 3 recommendations:
 - Future Revive implementation should be developed in consultation with the Local Government sector to identify and prioritise locally based need.
 - The Australian Government provide sustainable funding streams for Local Governments to build and maintain arts and cultural infrastructure to meet community accessibility requirements.
 - That the Australian Government provide \$500 million per annum for community infrastructure through a national formula based, targeted Local Government funding program.

- The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team on 30 September and was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

Carried En Bloc

5.4.2.10 Polyphagous shot-hole borer Update – November 2025

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Since the State Council Agenda and Item for Noting was developed, there has been a further development relating to PSHB management.
- On Friday 14 November, the State Government [gazetted](#) changes to the zones within the Quarantine Area for Polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB).
- This change sees a significantly larger portion of the metropolitan area, and all 30 Local Governments, having responsibility for managing PSHB infestations.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to [advocacy positions](#) 4.4 Post Border Biosecurity and 4.7 Polyphagous shot-hole borer.

BACKGROUND

On Friday 14 November, the State Government [gazetted](#) changes to the zones within the Quarantine Area (QA) for Polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB). Figure 1 shows a comparison of the previous and new areas.

Previously the QA included Zone A and B; with DPIRD undertaking limited activity in Zone A and some tree removal and surveillance in Zone B. Zone A and B have been renamed the Management Zone and Containment Zone, respectively. Zone A, now the Management Zone, has been expanded to cover all 30 Local Governments in the metropolitan area. Previously, Zone A completely covered 15 Local Government areas and partially included 6. The new Management Zone covers 23 Local Governments completely and parts of a further 7 Local Governments.

All Local Governments and other landowners and managers in the Management Zone are now responsible for managing borer-affected trees on their land. The Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) has discontinued tree removal and pruning in the Management Zone – except where trees were already designated for removal or pruning during the eradication phase of the response.

The Containment Zone is the area between the Management Zone and the outer boundary of the QA. Under the Transition to Management Plan, DPIRD's response will now be limited to pruning and removal of trees in the Containment Zone that pose a risk of spreading the borer outside of the QA.

WALGA met with the DPIRD on Thursday 13 November regarding these changes and requested an urgent briefing for Local Governments in the QA – this was held on Tuesday 18 November. A recording of this session will be made available to Local Government. DPIRD are hosting a more extensive briefing on Monday 8 December.

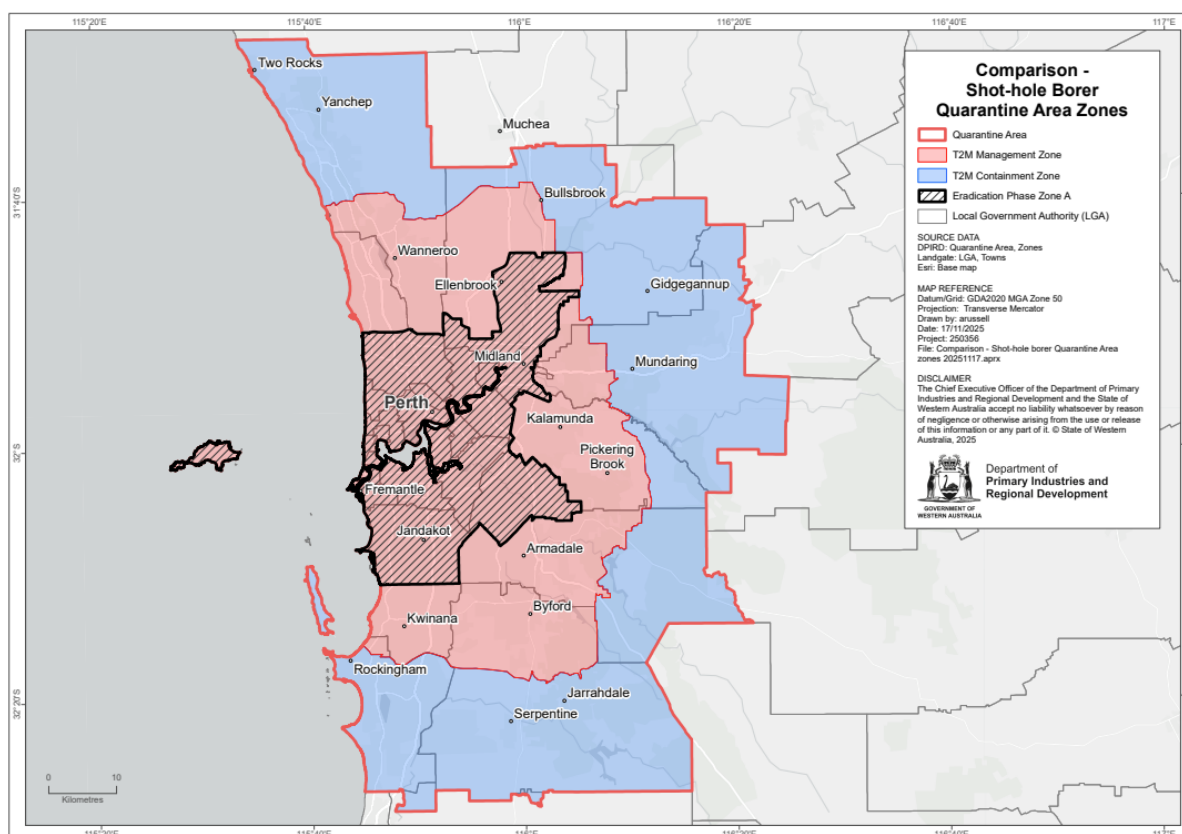


Figure 1: Quarantine Area, with Management and Containment Zones, compared to previous Zone A and B

COMMENT

WALGA was not consulted on these changes, which have immediate and unanticipated impacts for Local Governments that are now in the Management Zone and ongoing impacts for Local Governments who have been managing PSHB since the Transition to Management commenced in July 2025.

WALGA has expressed its concerns to DPIRD regarding the impact of these changes for the spread of PSHB, on Local Government and the urgent need for further financial support.

To assist Local Governments undertaking management activities, WALGA is hosting capacity building webinars and events.

Carried En Bloc

6. Matters for Consideration

6.1 Financial Statements

Proposed by: Executive Officer

Attachments: Income and Expenditure Statements

Comment

Refer to financial statements on the next pages.

Reconciled balances of account as at 30 June 2025 and 31 October 2025.

Cheque Account 229492

RECOMMENDATION

That the financial statements for the periods 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 and 1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025 be received.

RESOLUTION	Moved: Cr Walton	Seconded: Cr Valenzuela
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That the financial statements for the periods 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 and 1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025 be received.

Carried

**MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
1/07/2024 to 30/06/2025**

Bank Balance (as per B/S) 01/07/2024

\$ 21,542.53

Income

Date	Source	Amount
29/11/2024	Shire of Sandstone - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
2/12/2024	Shire of Murchison - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
2/12/2024	Shire of Yalgoo - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
16/12/2024	Shire of Cue - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
27/03/2025	Shire of Mount Magnet - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
28/03/2025	Shire of Meekatharra - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
Total Income to 30 June 2025		\$ 16,800.00

Payments

Date	Source	Amount
25/11/2024	Samantha Appleton - Exec Fee, Catering, Reimbursements, Travel	\$ 5,046.44
25/11/2024	Murchison Club Hotel - Lunches	\$ 1,596.00
14/04/2025	Murchison Club Hotel - Lunches	\$ 1,313.00
14/04/2025	Cr R Foulkes-Taylor - President Honorarium	\$ 600.00
14/04/2025	Cr L Price - Deputy President Honorarium, Zone Delegate Honorarium	\$ 1,900.00
14/04/2025	Samantha Appleton - Exec Fee	\$ 4,000.00
17/04/2025	Samantha Appleton - Catering, Reimbursements, Travel	\$ 1,172.14
		\$ 15,627.58

Reconciliation

Balance Brought Forward 01/07/2024	\$ 21,542.53
Add Income Received	\$ 16,800.00
Less Expenditure	-\$ 15,627.58
Balance	\$ 22,714.95
Balance as per Bank Statement 30 June 2025	\$ 22,714.95

MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
1/07/2024 to 30/06/2025

Account	Budget 2024-25	Actual 2024-25
Income		
General Subscriptions	\$ 16,800	\$ 16,800
Interest Earned	\$ 20	
Reimbursements		
Total Income	\$ 16,820	\$ 16,800
Expenditure		
Meeting Expenses	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,215
Teleconferences		
Special Meetings & Workshops		
Bank Fees & Charges	\$ 20	
Reimbursable Expenses		
Unclassified Expenses (Minute Book)	\$ 100	
Zone Representative Gratuities	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Executive Officer Services	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
Executive Officer Reimbursements	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,913
Total Expenses	\$ 16,620	\$ 15,628
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 200	\$ 1,172

**MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
1/07/2025 to 31/10/2025**

Bank Balance (as per B/S) 01/07/2025	\$	22,714.95
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Income

Date	Source	Amount
9/07/2025	Shire of Meekatharra - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
11/07/2025	Shire of Sandstone - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
11/07/2025	Shire of Yalgoo - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
17/07/2025	Shire of Murchison - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
10/09/2025	Shire of Cue - Annual Subscription	\$ 2,800.00
	Total Income to 31 October 2025	\$ 14,000.00

Payments

Date	Source	Amount
	No payments made	
		\$ -

Reconciliation

Balance Brought Forward 01/07/2024	\$	22,714.95
Add Income Received	\$	14,000.00
Less Expenditure	\$	-
Balance	\$	36,714.95
Balance as per Bank Statement 31 October 2025	\$	36,714.95

**MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
1/07/2025 to 31/10/2025**

Account	Budget 2025-26	Actual 2025-26	Projected 2025-26
Income			
General Subscriptions	\$ 16,800	\$ 14,000	\$ 16,800
Interest Earned	\$ 20		
Reimbursements			
Total Income	\$ 16,820	\$ 14,000	\$ 16,800
Expenditure			
Meeting Expenses	\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000
Teleconferences			
Special Meetings & Workshops			
Bank Fees & Charges	\$ 20		
Reimbursable Expenses			
Unclassified Expenses (Minute Book)	\$ 100		\$ 100
Zone Representative Gratuities	\$ 2,500		\$ 2,500
Executive Officer Services	\$ 8,000		\$ 8,000
Executive Officer Reimbursements	\$ 2,100		\$ 2,100
Total Expenses	\$ 16,720	\$ -	\$ 16,700
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 100	\$ 14,000	\$ 100

Mr Mark Bowen from DFES addressed the meeting about the State Hazard plans for fire for the forthcoming fire season.

The meeting adjourned for the Opening of the restored Bank of Western Australia building including the new Café by Minister Jarvis at 11.58am.

6.2 Call for the Office of the Auditor General to conduct a Performance Audit of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia (DRFAWA)

Proposed by Shire of Yalgoo

Attachments NIL

BACKGROUND

In follow up to previous items and sector dissatisfaction with the arrangements the Shire of Yalgoo is calling for the Office of the Auditor General to conduct a Performance Audit of the management of DRFAWA by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

The Office of the Auditor General provides the following with respect to Performance Audits: *“Performance audits assess the efficiency and effectiveness of entity activities, services and programs. These audits can also identify instances of waste, legislative non-compliance, examples of good practice and make practical recommendations for improvement. Topics are selected by the Auditor General following an exhaustive process which may also include requests for audits from Parliament, the government or the broader community.”*

The Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (also known as the Colvin Review) provides some 47 recommendations for top down improvements of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. What these Federal reviews do not do is benchmark Western Australia's management of this process against other states or ensure that the State is acting in the best interests of both the Commonwealth and the people they serve.

An individual only has to look to media coverage and community sentiment in the aftermath of tropical cyclones, storms and bushfires to understand that this process could better serve all communities. Available information regarding Cyclone Seroja is that only 10-25% of a committed total of over \$100m made it out of government to support regional WA. This large promise and limited expenditure in the affected communities coincided with the Recovery and Resilience Department increase in staff size by approximately 1000%. Residents in the Pilbara are still uncertain about the recovery of their roads some 8 months after Cyclone Zelia and land managers have made it onto the ABC describing how difficult applications for assistance are at a time when it is easily apparent that they have been adversely affected.

It is for this reason that the Shire proposes to seek sector support calling for a performance audit of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services Recovery and Resilience management of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

COMMENT

A performance audit will often result in more red tape and more defined rules for any process. With respect to DRFWA this can only be seen as a positive for the primary

reasons that there is no legislation to refer to and an asymmetrical imbalance exists between what DFES Officers expect and what local governments or other agencies understand they must provide.

For a process that has been described as complex by the two previous Emergency Services Ministers it is astounding that only a handful of A4 fact sheets exist for applicants.

An example of this is funding claims being rejected due to post disaster evidence ie photos being taken too long after repair work has been completed. Nowhere on any published document is an arbitrary 2 year timeframe described yet according to DFES that is the window in which they class that evidence as admissible, notwithstanding the fact that the evidence clearly shows that the work has been completed which is the concern and purpose of the evidence.

Financial audits look at the responsible and compliant use of taxpayer money. It is however the opinion of the Shire of Yalgoo that a performance audit could answer just as important questions such as:

Are the communities of Western Australia being supported in a timely manner after they have been impacted by a natural disaster?

Is agreed funding, that is the responsibility of the State Government, reaching affected communities?

With respect to the scale of different types disasters and different sized communities are the processes of Recovery and Resilience efficient and fit for purpose?

The Auditor General has been quoted as asking whether some government policies or procedures pass the “pub test” and once someone examines the “complexity” of the DRFAWA process they will potentially be making the same assertion.

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	Strong	Partial	Peripheral

Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence			
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)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA and other WALGA Zones to call upon the Office of the Auditor General to conduct a performance audit of Recovery and Resilience management of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia.

RESOLUTION **Moved: Cr Valenzuela** **Seconded: Cr Price**

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA and other WALGA Zones to call upon the Office of the Auditor General to conduct a performance audit of Recovery and Resilience management of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia.

Carried 12/0

Cr Mc Gorman left the meeting.

6.3 Unsustainable Changes to the Restricted Access Vehicle (RAV) Network

Proposed by Shire of Yalgoo

Attachments NIL

BACKGROUND

While local roads are under the care, control and maintenance of local governments the management of the Heavy Vehicle Network is managed from Perth by the Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) Heavy Vehicle Services (HVS) Branch.

The Restricted Access Vehicle (RAV) Network is the list of allowable roads that a truck over 19m is permitted to traverse (among other weight and width requirements).

Before a road is added to this Network (or amended for larger/heavier vehicles) it is assessed by the local government or MRWA under MRWA provided guidelines. A local government then has the opportunity to support this change, reject it or support it with conditions. For noting is the ability of MRWA to override a local government and amend the RAV network in instances where the local government has not supported the change.

Common conditions for the region include no travel on unsealed roads when wet or radio and speed limits. These conditions are important from two key perspectives. The first is allowing utilisation of the road in instances that it does not necessarily meet minimum requirements. The second is that it provides a compromise between use of the road and a local government's ability to maintain it.

In recent history (including significant work by all agencies back in 2019) consensus was reached on the existing CA07 condition which stated that: All operators must carry current written approval from the road asset owner permitting use of the road.

On heavily trafficked routes close understanding of the freight tasks and adjustments to maintenance regimes may not be required as hundreds if not thousands of commercial and residential operators are generating revenue for a local government to maintain access for all users. With so many varied uses and sectors there is also a significantly smaller chance that a single large operation is causing extraordinary damage above what the road was designed for. Notwithstanding that it is still a balancing act for these Councils it is much less likely that a single new operator or freight task will impact them to the point that they cannot maintain a particular road with the resources available to them.

For comparative purposes these operators can use a much larger State Network to get from A to B (which is funded by other revenue streams). To compound this inequity a ratepayer per length of road ratio often shows that a Metropolitan ratepayer is "equivalently responsible" for 20m of road compared to a regional ratepayer who under the same ratio is responsible for 1-20km of road. The available capital from rates and the expected high use is why it is financially possible (and responsible) for metropolitan roads to be asphalt while low use regional roads remain gravel.

In many instances where a regional local government has sealed a road it may only be sustainable in the medium term (ie an initial life of 30-50 years) for a known and designed level of traffic. This is often a balancing act to preserve gravel supplies, improve safety and is less maintenance intensive when traffic or weight volumes increase.

It is easy to understand that many local governments would have included a CA07 condition in order to manage a small number of intensive freight tasks or to assist with compliance checks in areas that have seen only a single HVS visit in the past decade.

This condition provided local governments with a management tool for the assessment of road use agreements, a practical inspection mechanism and supported cost recovery under section 132 of the Road Traffic (Administration) Act 2008.

COMMENT

In the past fortnight and without any consultation or even communication with the sector, HVS have replaced the above CA07 condition with the following:

The operator must notify the road manager via email of their planned transport task, including estimated tonnages and loaded vehicle movements. The operator must copy Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Services (hvsrouteassessments@mainroads.wa.gov.au) into the email.

This effectively takes away all control of the process from the local government and will be entirely unmanageable. A day after the Shire of Yalgoo became aware of this change an email was received from a trucking company stating what they would be doing and that is was for an indeterminate length of time. At the same time nothing has been received from the hundreds of other operators that use Shire roads.

The Shire of Yalgoo has approached dozens of heavy vehicles operators over the past few months on closed roads and non RAV Network roads and these operators are in complete contravention of both signage (closed roads) and conditions (wet roads and permission). For complex situations such as sub contractors there is no timely way for a local government to assess whether they have been notified or not.

City centric changes such as these do not consider the large parts of the state where telecommunications are unavailable. How then does an operator provide evidence and how does a local government officer confirm that evidence while out on the road.

From work done in 2019 it was generally understood that a local government could not unreasonably or even necessarily reject approval or charge for access but as stated above the condition provided a management tool for the assessment of road use agreements, a practical inspection mechanism and supported cost recovery under section 132 of the Road Traffic (Administration) Act 2008.

Highways that allow 60m road trains are some of the worst maintained in the State. If the State Government struggles to keep these routes in serviceable condition what chance does the local government sector stand with the same weights and next to none of the funding. It is extremely apparent that the centralization of Heavy Vehicle Services is a detriment to road safety and compliance. It also contributes to a lack of understanding about the majority of Western Australia where road trains regularly operate with impunity.

Collaboration on the part of MRWA Heavy Vehicle Services could have the potential to:

- Provide for a more practical way to manage this requirement in low/no telecommunication coverage areas
- Have significantly less of an impact on changes to local government policies, forms, safe work methods
- Inform operators and agencies of any changes and allow for a transition period

- Provide for a mechanism to remove roads from the RAV Network. Particularly where no local proponents exist or there is a more suitable State Route

Without collaboration and where this change is found to be inadequate and a local government has reduced capacity to care for or maintain roads that had this condition, it is likely that Councils will have to take steps to physically limit their use through traffic calming, campaign for their removal from the RAV Network or insist that their maintenance become the responsibility of MRWA.

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, bands) or	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)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to:

1. Call for Heavy Vehicle Services decision makers and assessors to be placed permanently or regularly in regional MRWA offices rather than their current insular Perth offices; and
2. Campaign against and call for MRWA collaboration on the recent alteration, if not outright removal, of the CA07 condition on the RAV Network.

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to:

1. Call for Heavy Vehicle Services decision makers and assessors to be placed permanently or regularly in regional MRWA offices rather than their current insular Perth offices; and
2. Directs MRWA to immediately rescind CA07 condition and the road owners (local governments') to have the discretion for RAV permit vehicle access on local government roads.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Valenzuela

Seconded: Cr Walton

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to:

1. **Call for Heavy Vehicle Services decision makers and assessors to be placed permanently or regularly in regional MRWA offices rather than their current insular Perth offices; and**

2. Directs MRWA to immediately rescind CA07 condition and the road owners (local governments') to have the discretion for RAV permit vehicle access on local government roads.

Carried

6.4 Regional Development Australia Mid West Report

Proposed by Mark Holdsworth

Presented by Mark Holdsworth

BACKGROUND

Mr Mark Holdsworth has asked that the most recent Regional Update from Regional Development Australia Mid West be included in the agenda. The document is below.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional Development Australia Mid West Report be received.

RESOLUTION **Moved: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor Seconded: Cr McQuie**

That the Regional Development Australia Mid West Report be received.

Carried

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA MID WEST & GASCOYNE
SUMMARY REGIONAL UPDATE: NOVEMBER 2025.**

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1.0 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA

The Australian Government's vision for regional Australia is one of strong connected regions that shape economic growth and wellbeing; are resilient and responsive to economic shocks; and are inclusive, vibrant and diverse.

1.1 AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

The RDAMW&G program is guided by the Australian Governments Regional Investment Framework.

Investing in people: putting people at the forefront of growth, with local voices influencing decision making.

- Partnering with communities.
- Targeted investment in skills, training & local leadership capacity

Investing in Places: place base investment.

- Sustainable and livable regions
- Delivering infrastructure where and when it is needed.

Investing in Services

- Connectivity and equity of services.
- Communications, health, water and transport.

Investing in Regions & Local Economies

- Investment to help activate economic and industry growth.
- Supporting the conditions needed for industries to diversify and grow.

1.2 FUNDING

- Confirmation of 5-year Funding Agreement with all RDA's throughout Australia from 1st July 2025 to 30th June 2030.

2.0 RDAMW&G NOVEMBER 2025 REPORT

2.1 BOARD: No current updates

PROGRAM SUMMARY RDAMW&G

3.0 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN PEOPLE

3.0.1 Regional Labour Force & Skills

The Department of Training & Workforce Development (DTWD) is the Designated Area Representative (DAR) for the State and therefore the Mid West and Gascoyne Region.

To ensure that DTWD has a current understanding of business recruitment and experience with DAMA

/ VISA programs and businesses and regional stakeholders can develop an understanding of DAMA and other relevant VISA systems and processes RDA and regional partners are reviewing and updating occupation lists, including local government.

Action: *State wide VISA programs including the DAMA contain occupational categories that are relevant to businesses in the Mid West and Gascoyne*

3.0.2 Grant Guru and Funding

Grant Guru is provided under a joint agreement with RDA Wheatbelt covering 63 Shires. The current 2-year agreement concludes on 30th June 2026. Recently the Grants Hub user interface has been enhanced to a more intuitive search capability.

August 2025		
Registrations	Number & Value of Grants	Sector of Grants
839 total registrations	2,947 Grants with a total value of \$84.3B	Community sector with a value of \$53.5
497 users with active email alerts.		Business sector with a value of \$62.5B. Government sector with a value of \$50.7B Other with a value of \$7.6B.

Action: *Funding agreement renewed for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026*

3.1 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN PLACES

3.1.1 Northern Australia Agenda

Member of the Northern RDA Alliance (8 RDA's) which is the representative group for Northern Australia, stretching from the Gascoyne to Gladstone in Central Queensland.

The Alliance met in Canberra on 7th November to identity priorities that the alliance will pursue for Northern Australia

Action: *RDAMW&G will continue to represent the Gascoyne region, as the Alliance supports the Government's focus on building stronger regions, and in particular the agenda to develop Northern Australia.*

3.1.2 Murchison Regional Strategy

The Murchison Regional Strategy provides a comprehensive roadmap for the sustainable development and growth of the Murchison (The Region). It outlines four key regional opportunity pillars: (i) Business and Industry (ii) Jobs & Skills (iii) Liveability (iv) Look to the Future.

The strategy is managed by the Murchison Executive Group (MEG) and RDA has formed a strategic

partnership to implement action plans for regional priorities.

Action: Murchison regional LG priorities. Ongoing partnership with the Murchison Executive Group

3.2 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN SERVICES

3.2.1 Gascoyne Infrastructure Priorities: Waste Management

ASK Waste Management has completed an opportunity assessment for regional waste management in the Gascoyne Region.

Program Sponsors: Shires of Exmouth, Carnarvon, Shark Bay and Gascoyne Junction.

Action: Approach WALGA with a view to support for regional coordination. Ongoing

3.3 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN REGIONS AND LOCAL ECONOMIES

3.3.1 International Year of Rangelands and pastoralists

Member of the WA, IYRP Committee.

The United Nations general assembly has declared 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

This initiative reflects the importance of the pastoral sector as one of the key economies in the Mid West and Gascoyne regions.

Chaired by Deb Dowden (Challa Station) the WA IYRP Committee has a close working relationship with the Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance which was formed to provide leadership and support for sustainable pastoral production and diversification in the Southern Rangelands.

The IYRP Committee is contributing to the global framework of 12 monthly themes for 2026 from a WA perspective.

RDAMW&G attended the Australasian launch of IYRP at the Perth Royal Show on the 3rd October and will continue to provide support leading up to and through the IYRP year.

Action: Ongoing participation in the IYRP Committee. Provision of funding to Rangelands IYRP Committee to support participation in the International Year of Rangelands Pastoralism.

3.3.2 Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

RDA has partnered with the Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship to develop guided development programs and specifically work along communities to evaluate opportunities for community-based ownership of commercial assets. Several opportunities are being pursued and evaluated.

Action: Current initiatives are commercially confidential.

3.3.3 Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance

The Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance was formed to provide leadership and support for sustainable pastoral production and diversification in the Southern Rangelands.

RDA is working with the SRPA Board on a range of funding and growth opportunities.

Action: Initiatives to support ongoing sustainability of SRPA and the Rangelands.

Mark Holdsworth, Executive Officer

eo@rdamwg.com.au / 0425 760 849

Ms Liz Kelly from WACHS spoke to the meeting about issues being addressed by WACHS Midwest including staffing of nursing posts and hospitals.

6.5 Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Bill 2025

Proposed by Shire of Mount Magnet

Attachments NIL

BACKGROUND

The Shire of Mount Magnet was recently successful in their Supreme Court appeal that upheld the Local Government Act 1995 allowed that Miscellaneous Licenses held under the Mining Act 1978 were rateable.

Justice Solomon, in his closing remarks, Justice Solomon stated that the Shires construction of the Act was in harmony with the relevant object of the rating provisions of the Act and that –

“For the reasons explained above, I respectfully take a different view to the conclusion reached by the Tribunal. In my view, on a proper construction of s 6.26(2) Crown land that is the subject of a miscellaneous licence and is occupied is rateable land under s 6.26(1). “

In the days following this decision, the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Hannah Beazley announced the decision of the Government to amend the legislation to make clear that Miscellaneous Licenses should not be rated.

Minister Beazley provided an embargoed copy of the Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Act 2025 to WALGA and to LGPro and allowed four days for their response.

There was no further consultation with the wider sector.

Despite intensive lobbying by the Shire of Mount Magnet, the Bill has passed through the lower house of Parliament.

COMMENT

With time to review the Bill and obtain legal advice, it has become apparent that the implications of the Bill will be consequential on Local Governments.

The Bill as it stands provides that no land in the hands of a holder of a Miscellaneous License is rateable, and requires a clawback provision to 2017, including rates, interest and any debt recovery costs.

The foreseeable consequences suggest that –

Mining Camps previously rated will become subject to a Miscellaneous License and therefore unrateable.

That these newly granted areas of land could be subjected to clawback provisions.

This scenario is likely to extend further to tenements that had previously unrated Miscellaneous licenses – the underlying tenement allowed to clawback paid rates.

It is, in a worst case scenario, possible that a Local Government will not only no longer receive revenue from Mining tenements, but will also be liable for 9 years of clawback on the majority of Mining rates previously levied.

It is likely there are refinements and/or amendments that could be made to this Bill to ensure a more equitable rating model that supports Local Government's financially. One such alternate solution has been proposed to the Amendment Bill which provides a change to the rating provisions which states a Mining tenement issued under the Mining Act 1978 is not rateable.

6.26. Rateable land

(1) Except as provided in this section all land within a district is rateable land.

(2) The following land is not rateable land —

(a) land which is the property of the Crown and —

(i) is being used or held for a public purpose; or

(ii) is unoccupied; or ~~except—~~

~~(I) where any person is, under paragraph (e) of the definition of **owner** in section 1.4, the owner of the land other than by reason of that person being the holder of a prospecting licence held under the *Mining Act 1978* in respect of land the area of which does not exceed 10 ha or a miscellaneous licence held under that Act; or~~

~~(II) where and to the extent and manner in which a person mentioned in paragraph (f) of the definition of **owner** in section 1.4 occupies or makes use of the land;~~

(iii) is a Tenement issued under the Mining Act 1978

This would apply to all types of tenement.

A set fee would instead be payable by the State Government on any Crown land leased or licensed under the Mining Act.

The benefits of such a solution include —

- Reduction to red tape and double handling,
- provides cost certainty for the mining industry,
- ensures fair funding for Local Governments,
- removes complexity from the rating intent in the Legislation
- and centralises administration under the State.

This model effectively allows the Crown to be the ratepayer on land that is leased.

An additional benefit is that the restructured relationship allows Mining companies to focus on building strong philanthropic relationships with communities as being promoted by the current Government. It is anticipated there would be strong Mining sector support for such an amendment.

To ensure that WLAGA are able to support the sector to be flexible with negotiations and refinements, this zone are asked to support the motion below

RECOMMENDATION

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to:

1. Explore alternative options to the unreasonably punitive Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Bill 2025
2. Support a request for the current bill to be forwarded to an enquiry by the Legislative Council.

RESOLUTION Moved: Ce Jensen Seconded: Cr Price

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to:

- 1. Explore alternative options to the unreasonably punitive Local Government Amendment (Rating of Certain Mining Licenses) Bill 2025**
- 2. Support a request for the current bill to be forwarded to an enquiry by the Legislative Council.**

Carried 11/0

7. Shire Reports

7.1 Shire of Yalgoo



Activity Report November 2025

Tourism and Community Events

Mining Objection in the Wardens Court - The Shire will shortly lodge a heritage application for the long term protection of Jokers Tunnel. A Hearing is set before the Wardens Court in February 2026. This is a timely reminder to investigate land tenure of locations of interest for neighbouring local governments and pastoral properties.

The Yalgoo Family Fun Day/Emu Festival was held in October and the event received participation from close to 75 children which is significantly more than the local population. Throughout the year smaller events such as Bingo and Stargazing have been well received.

Human Resources and Council

Shire housing is now at capacity indicating the majority of positions are filled.

Road and Plant

At the reading of this report Local Roads and Community Infrastructure and Regional Road Group funds have been used to complete the seal from Geraldton-Mt Magnet Hwy through to Great Northern Highway on the Yalgoo-Ninghan Road. While there are still instances of widening and reseals required this is a key milestone. 130km of sealed road have been constructed over decades through own resources, Roads to Recovery, mining company contributions and the above mentioned grants.

Projects

The Shire is now the owner of the Yalgoo Hotel. Its third party operation should be confirmed shortly.

A detailed response has been provided to DFES Recovery and Resilience addressing concerns, addition evidence and evidence ignored by DFES previously. The Shire anticipates the assessment of this information will be completed in early 2026 and a favorable outcome will be reached, however the Shire is still resolved to pursue this issue further.

Ongoing Advocacy Concerns

Emergency Services Levy

Correspondence has been received from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services informing local governments that Low Earth Orbit communications products (such as Starlink) are not eligible under Emergency Services Levy funding. This is of particular concern for Brigades that operate in low/no mobile coverage areas. This city centric oversight is out of touch with practical requirements of our volunteers and local governments.

Rescue Helicopter

That WALGA support the sustainable and progressive expansion of services such as the RAC Rescue Helicopter Program statewide. DFES have seen a range expansion of this service with new equipment in 2024. Many regional communities and remote car crash victims would see enormous benefit if this program was expanded to new parts of the state.

Regional Dental Services

It is still extremely disappointing that Murchison School Children are without dental care. This is a key responsibility of the State Government for all Primary School aged children in the State.

Ian Holland

Chief Executive Officer

Shire of Yalgoo - Where the Outback Starts!



7.2 Shire of Mount Magnet



Governance

The Shire welcomed two new Councillors as a consequence of the recent Local Government elections. Previous Shire President Jim McGorman was re-elected with 33% of the primary vote, followed by Jorgen Jensen, Mick Madden, Cecilia Kelly and Jason Homewood. Jorgen Jensen has been elected by Council as President with Jason Homewood elected as Deputy.

It was a hotly contested election and all Candidates were congratulated for their campaigns. A formal civic function was held to swear in new Councillors followed by training on meeting procedures prior to the first meeting of the new Council. The function was well attended with about 30 people from community attending clearly demonstrating continued interest in the Council.

Mr Ian Black has received a three month suspension from Council for failing to make a public apology and will not return until late January. A second apology was made at Council's October meeting and a further SAT hearing will be held on 21st November to determine the consequence for failing to undertake prescribed training pursuant to a Standards panel determination.

Council has this year undertaken a process to recruit and appoint an independent ARIC Chair who has held three meetings with Council to date.

Councillors Kelly, Jones and the CEO travelled to Canberra to attend the National Congress and were very grateful for the opportunity to understand and experience firsthand some of the issues faced by other regional and metropolitan communities in delivering such essential services across Australia. We are not alone.

Administration

Staff numbers remain stable and it is a nice change to be able to build upon the skills of a committed team. Two staff members have final submissions to make to complete their Certificate three in Local Government.

Further training continues to be provided in the fields of IAP2 Engagement, Employment laws, Finance, Records, Navigating Conflict and the Ignite Leadership program through LG Pro. The Shire is again participating in the LG Pro Local, Government Careers Program which promotes the value of a career in the sector. In 2024 this consisted of three of our outdoor crew, all local indigenous staff, being interviewed on camera and promoted across a range of media. This year will focus on the Administrative team and the satisfaction of working in a small regional community delivering high quality services.

The Shire has successfully negotiated lease agreements with the Mt Magnet Raceclub and with Ramelius for their Road Agreement and Community Benefit Funds.

We have completed the full gazettal and compliance with the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation for 9 Local Laws, and have made a further Parking and Parking Facilities Local Law, now subject to final re-gazettal in accordance with JSDCL requirements.

A significant body of community consultation was undertaken with about 120 of our 650 residents surveyed and our Council Plan has now been endorsed by Council. The new Council plan includes our inaugural Public Health Plan and allows for coordinated updates to Long Term Financial, Corporate and Community plans regularly.

Further plans include –

Waste Landfill Site Post Closure Plan – complete

- **Feasibility Study – complete**
- **Business Case – underway**

Caravan Park - Concept Plan – endorsed

- **Business Case – underway**

Headmaster House – Conservation Plan – endorsed

- **Business Case – complete**
- **Quantity Estimation – complete**
- **Lotterywest Application – complete – waiting endorsement**

Administration Extension – Application to second Growing Regions fund unsuccessful

- **Quantity Estimation – underway**

Policy Manual – full review to remove Management Policies from Governance Manual

Record Keeping Plan – 2024 – 2029 – endorsed

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan – 2024 – 2029 – approved

Integrity Framework – developed and endorsed

The Shire was very pleased to present a 2023/24 audit that contained two minor findings after coming from some 23 significant and moderate just three years ago. This represents an enormous commitment to quality service by the team. This extends to collection of outstanding rates with previously some 15 properties being 13 years in arrear. Most of these have now been bought up to date with just 5 properties sold to recover the debts. Unfortunately the matter of legally rateable Miscellaneous Licenses has haunted the Audits and the qualification for these remains.

Economic Development

The Shire has progressed the business case to expand our refuse site into a regional waste hub that can manage waste for the region in a compliant structured facility with the installation of a weighbridge. We will continue to progress to the next phase of expanding our sewerage ponds, and welcome discussions from other communities to accept waste.

There have been 4 Town Planning Scheme amendments progressed to assist with rezoning Residential lots to Rural Townsite, some residential lots into Caravan Park to enable the expansion of the current park, rezoning the Depot to Heavy Industry and rezoning a portion of the golf course from recreation to worker accommodation to accommodate a future expansion of existing worker accommodation.

The Shire continues to pursue tenure options for the old Hospital, the Industrial Estate, the Depot and Caravan Park. The processes to pursue these continues to be convoluted and drawn out with a single lease agreement over Crown Land taking over 14 months to be issued.

8 separate tender processes have been undertaken in the last period of time with 13 separate RFQ processes completed.

Town Development

The \$438,000 Roads to Recovery funds were fully expended with drainage issues to Watson Street and the Town Creek remediated over the last three years.

A generous contribution from Gold Wind was received and utilized to build the extension to Moses Street that joins the Great Northern Highway and the Industrial Estate, heavily utilized by transport operators to access the fuel Station. Congestion on the corner of Richardson and Great Northern Highway has been much reduced, although anecdotally traffic volumes and speed have increased again in the last three months.

Permanent Power supply has been installed at the Race Track allowing the option of CCTV Camera installation in the future to deter vandalism and to support the development of the annual race meeting.

Warren Street between Naughton and Richardson has now been sealed with LRCIP funds and provides a secure parking location for long vehicles without blanketing the town with dust.

Despite the many derogatory comments received over summer about the state of the median strips, we are pleased with the growth of the plants recently. A treatment plant has been ordered to soften the water and hopefully support better, more sustainable growth in the long term. Unfortunately, the Central Business District gardens seem to be showing signs of continued stress with even the established Jacaranda trees not springing back after their winter dormancy. This is expected to be a consequence of water quality and the increased traffic and metal ions from the ore passing through town. That particular section has been subject to decades of poor management and lack of maintenance and will likely need to require significant nurturing to continue to grow.

Community Events

A significant community events calendar has evolved with at least two events each week. Recently hosted was the Regional WA Circuitwest and Theatre 180 “Taking Liberty” Show that was the culmination of a robust week of events celebrating Seniors Week with two events each day and both seniors groups fully engaged in participating.

The year to date has been full of community with the Around the World Long Table Dinner, Stroke Safe Talks for Seniors, Mothers Day Pamper Party, Alvin Sputniks Shows on the Go, Naidoc, the amazing Winter Warmer supported by the High School and seniors groups, the Festival of Small Halls and a full Science Week for the students and community (including an exploding volcano).

We farewelled Jamie and Cora with an extraordinary Community Turnout and followed that with the 2025 Art Exhibition showing exceptional art from students and community. Most recently there was the Town Teams quick wins clean up of Badamia Creek and the now famous (?) Halloween Trunk or Treat including our own Chop Shop in the Butchers van.

As the year comes to a close, we have the Town Christmas Party and Christmas Lights competition, another Emergency Services Quiz night and Australia Day.

7.3 Shire of Murchison



WALGA - Murchison Country Zone November 2025 Report

Murchison Settlement Redevelopment

Progress in Settlement Redevelopments has significantly evolved since development of the Murchison Settlement Masterplan in 2022 and subsequent Roadhouse Redevelopment and Vast Sky Business Case that followed as per the following update.

Improved Water Supply

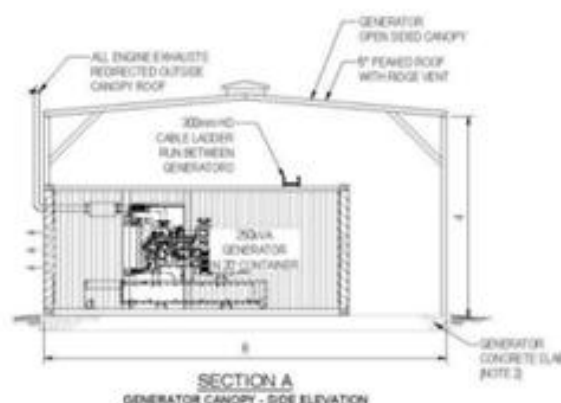
Work towards improving the quality of the water supply for Settlement residents and visitors continued. Works included a new ring main, pump equipment and connection to new bores, and ultimately to existing buildings with existing bores reticulation remaining to service parks and gardens. Works commenced in 2021/22 were completed in 2024/25.



Meanwhile, following a successful funding application under the State Government's Infrastructure Development Program, works to provision a chlorinator to provide potable water and were recently completed. Licencing and commissioning to follow before supply can be potable compliant.

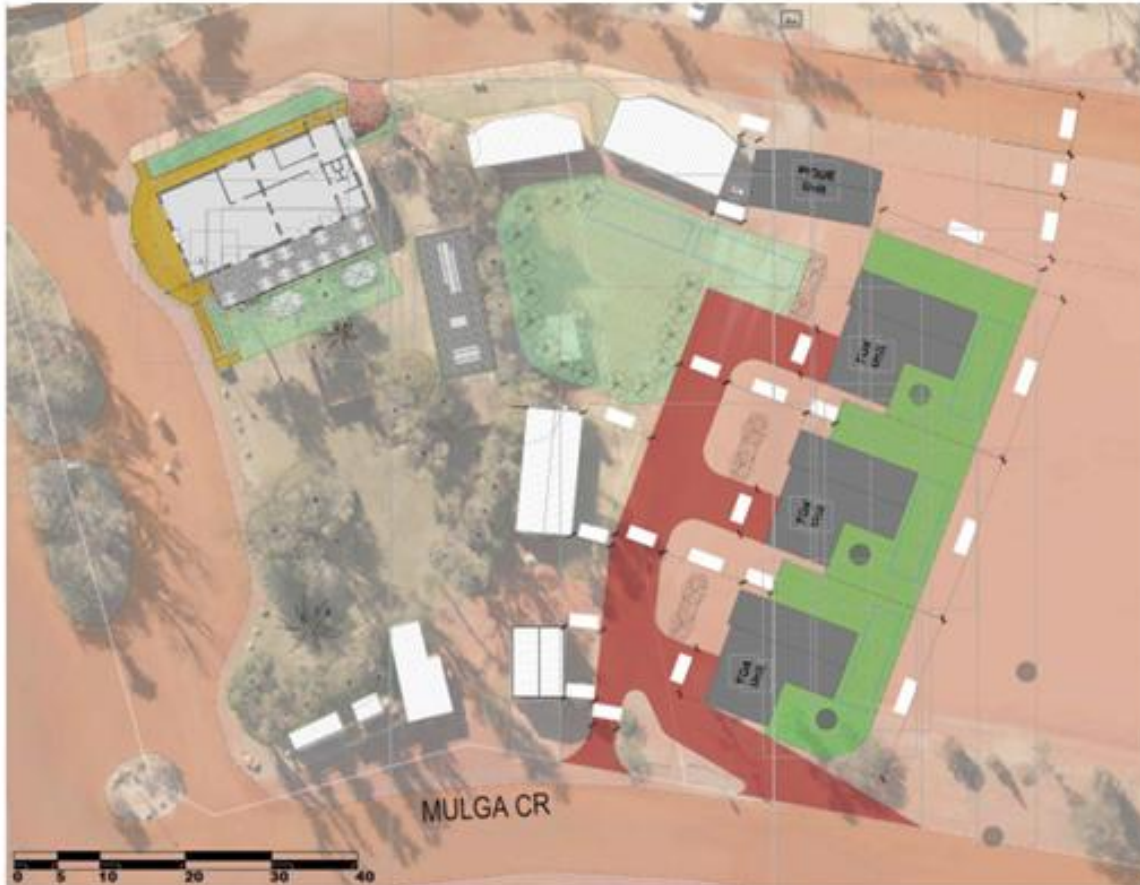
Settlement Power

Council continues to work towards greening our power supply, with new generators installed in 2021-22 having now become insufficient. Designs and specifications for a major upgrade to our power supply completed and works commenced in 2024-25 with completion in 2025-26. This followed a successful funding application under the State Government's Infrastructure Development Fund.



Roadhouse Redevelopment

UDLA from Fremantle have now finalised roadhouse redevelopment plans which includes a redeveloped and extended roadhouse (2027) provision for new roadhouse workforce accommodation (2026), a new 3-unit cabin arrangement for the Caravan Park (2026)



Workforce Accommodation

Construction of 5 new two-bedroom transportable dwelling units has commenced with Fox Modular from Wangara being the successful supplier.

Three are to be located for roadhouse accommodation thereby freeing up the roadhouse for internal renovations and future extensions whilst two will be located elsewhere in the Settlement. Delivery expected April 2026.



Community Centre Improvements

During the year various upgrade works were undertaken including works in the Kitchen (new tiling, new dishwasher) which now render the facility suitable as a commercial kitchen.



External access works to improve access for the disabled by eliminating as step and ramp and improving amenity (paving, grass and reticulation) were also carried out



Swimming Pool & Splashpad

Meanwhile construction of our new Community Splashpad and Caravan Park Pool has been completed. Shire President Rossco has offered to take the first "official" dip when the facility is officially opened at our Christmas Tree Day in December.



Shitbox Rally

Five times a year Box Rallies run very unique, hugely exciting and challenging Outback charity car rallies. These projects raise over \$8 million annually for cancer research. Through their involvement in the rallies each team goes to the community to raise the funds.

Each team spreads the word of what we, as a wider community, are trying to achieve. Every dollar counts and with approximately 950 teams every year the combined donation totals reach huge levels.

Shitbox Rally vehicles arrived in Murchison on 20 June 2025 for day one of their over 4,000km journey to Darwin to raise money for cancer research. Each car purchased can only have a maximum \$1,500 spent on it, hence the term "shit-box." Entrants came from all over Australia. The Friday evening saw over 516 people in 258 cars arrive from 4:30pm onwards. The patrons were well-behaved, respectful and enjoyed a night of good food provided by external caterers that utilised the sports club and kitchen. The Murchison Sports Club had a very busy night in the bar with an overwhelming positive outcome.



2026 International Rangelands & Pastoralists

Following on from the October launch of the 2026 international Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, Council is looking to further engage with our small but pivotal pastoral community to make this year a success. Meanwhile Council resolved to provide a \$20,000 allocation to the Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance to assist.



Murchison Camp Oven Muster Festival

Last year's *Murchison Camp Oven Muster Festival* celebrated the land and skies of the Murchison region at the Murchison Settlement.

An improved offering our second festival is planned with in conjunction with our local energetic working group who undertake much of the work and organisation for the 1-2 August 2025 event.

Headline act Michael Atkinson provided a series of workshops and a movie screening of *Survival in the Outback*.

It's a terrific event with capped numbers and well worth attending. Offerings included a Friday sunset intro overlooking Errabiddy Bluff, wildflower walking tours, market stalls, line dancing, local damper and scones, a long table dinner in the Settlement.



Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC Visit

In May 2025 Council hosted a visit from the Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC, Minister Agriculture & Fisheries, Forestry, Small Business and Mid-West.

Council provided an overview of the Shire's operation and offered suggestions on how we and the Mid-West Region Minister can work together through the WALGA Country Zone, Murchison Executive Group, Mid-West Development Commission, Regional Development Australia Partnership. Council also offered a suggestion by way of an Interest Free Loan Support Program as a means to equitably accelerate local government projects that support the State.



Rating Miscellaneous Mining Licenses

Like WALGA and number of other Local Governments, Council, as shown below, has condemned the State Governments proposal to introduce retrospective legislation that land held under a miscellaneous mining licence be exempt from local government rates.

"This instance of the State Government dismissing a carefully considered and articulated decision of our legal system — simply because it does not suit the Government's agenda — and then promising to hastily "make things right" represents poor governance. In a democracy, the proper course is to introduce legislation for open debate, providing an opportunity to consider alternative paths. It is deeply concerning to see the Government instead yield to lobbying from a powerful sector and issue hasty statements that

“a mistake has been made and they will quickly right the wrong.”

Those opposed to the rating of Miscellaneous Licences have argued that the legislation allowing Shires to do so was merely “a drafting mistake.” Were it not so serious, this claim would be almost amusing — as it implies that whenever an entity dislikes being rated by its Local Council, it can simply declare the legislation flawed and seek exemption. What is more troubling is that powerful interests are then able to exert influence over the State Government to swiftly secure favourable changes.

The inconsistency is further highlighted by the fact that the State Government itself currently collects rent payments on Mining and Exploration Miscellaneous Licences, considering this a fair practice. Yet the same Government has declared that when Local Governments exercise their lawful obligation to levy rates on those very licences they are, apparently, out of order.

A recent National Productivity Commission study on the relative efficiency of 12 different types of rates and taxes found that Municipal Rates ranked as the second-best performer. This underscores the fairness and effectiveness of the Local Government rating system.

In Ministers Beasleys press release, Minister Beazley stated:

“These amendments will uphold the status quo, provide certainty to the Resources Sector and Local Governments, and ensure jobs throughout regional WA are protected.”

In reality, the best way to safeguard jobs across Western Australia is to ensure that regional Local Governments are adequately resourced. Shires provide vital infrastructure and services that support not only the mining and exploration industries, but also the pastoral, tourism, health, education, and defence sectors. Without strong and sustainable Local Governments, the regional economy and community wellbeing are placed at risk.

At the Shire of Murchison’s August Council Meeting, the matter was discussed at length, as reflected in the Minutes of the meeting which were provided to the Government.

In view of the overwhelming evidence highlighting the unfairness of the Government’s response to this issue, The Shire President called on her to remember that we live in a democracy governed by laws created to protect the equal treatment of all and ensure accountability in governance — not to serve the interests of a select few. We urged her to reconsider what is being proposed by the Government.

Whilst a review of the rating provisions within the Local Government Act is indeed overdue, such a process must be guided by the principles of equity and fairness. No single sector should be favoured simply because it wields power and influence.”

By any rationale view in the kindest interpretation, one could wish to use is that the Governments actions are “perplexing” if there is their less than one page response and draft legislation is anything to go by.

Why, one would ask, would a government so comprehensively trash the very principles and values of as outlined as endorsed in the 2023 WA Labor Platform and mechanism that underpins what the Party and State Government stands for?

EXTRACTS	CONTENTS
 WA LABOR PLATFORM 2023	Chapter 1: Enduring Labor Values 63
	Chapter 2: Community and Social Policy 67
	Chapter 3: Conservation, the Environment and Climate Change 68
	Chapter 4: Economics, Industry and Regional Development 71
	Chapter 5: Transport, Roads, Infrastructure and Planning 169
	Chapter 6: Education and Training 188
	Chapter 7: Health 198
	Chapter 8: Law, Public Administration and Community Safety 217
	Chapter 9: International Engagement 246

A full critique of the situation is reflected in following link

[murchison-shire-rating-miscellaneous-mining-licenses-august-2025](https://www.murchison-shire-rating-miscellaneous-mining-licenses-august-2025)

*Bill Boehm
Chief Executive Officer*

7.4 Shire of Sandstone



SHIRE OF SANDSTONE Activity Report November 2025

Human Resources

Current vacancies of Deputy CEO and mechanic were recently advertised with no applications for either position. We are juggling many balls at present for several outside employee positions and unfortunately too many applicants are lacking in versatility in their licencing qualifications.

We're going to introduce a stepped payment system for future employees so that in future higher qualifications (e.g. MC licence will attract a higher rate of pay). Hopefully this will encourage some effort in current employees and applicants to upgrade their licencing.

This year we've trained up numerous employees in the past 6 months in TAFE machinery ticketing and forklift licencing, some of whom have already moved on.

The new Caravan Park managers are settling in and both are keen to take on additional work during the off season.

The attraction of finding gold especially in the winter months, sometimes leaves us short staffed. The employment of backpackers has been very successful with even one backpacker desperately keen to come back next tourist season.

This proved very successful and gave the backpackers a taste of remote country life.

Road Works and Equipment

Extensive maintenance work is costing us dearly on the Paynes Find to Sandstone Road as increased mining traffic including an increase in road trains using the road in breach of the RAV limitations.

The acquisition of gravel is an ever increasing concern along the Paynes Find Road and other roads. We had surveyors using the Shire's gravel pit data collated back in 2007-9 by previous CEO Bill Atkinson, to plot the gravel pits and approved areas on a mapping system.

The process now is to try and identify gravel outside the permitted areas and go through a process of clearing permits. This will be a nightmare process with the existing restrictions placed on local governments.

We are of the opinion that the State Government must relax its numerous restrictions on local governments being able to access gravel sources otherwise there will be an increase in deteriorating gravel roads. We will be following up on this matter in the new year.

Buildings



Earlier in 2025 we advertised for the construction/purchase of two new 2 x 1 staff houses. We received one submission for an enormous cost, not to our preferred design and way over budget.

The Caravan Park units that we opened to public use early in 2025 have been extremely popular. These were very basic 2 x 1 buildings but greatly enhanced by additions designed and built under instruction by the Works Manager Paddy O'Brien.



A new Shire house was slow in coming and slower in completion. There are still some finishing touches to be made especially in adding verandas to help keep inside temperatures down and limit air conditioning use. The quality of the building is excellent other than

the widow locks which seem to be a bit fragile. Due to a lack of volunteers I was compelled to move into the house myself.

Tourism



It has been a very busy tourist season and the talk of Sandstone being regularly referred to as the cleanest, tidiest most attractive town in the whole region has given people reason to visit.

The rose gardens were of particular interest and the bloom were amazing even for the locals.

The Tourist Centre is closed over the summer and we've had cause to close the Post Office Café now that we have a General Store operating which provides the same great food and drinks as the café and also supplies a range of groceries.



Other Matters

Council Elections

The 2025 elections resulted in three new Councillors – Jamie Turner, Stephanie Brown and Maragaret Duhig.

Cr Beth Walton who was first elected Shire President in 1997 was again elected Shire President and Cr Vickie McQuie was elected Deputy President.

Tidy Towns

The Shire of Sandstone has been nominated in finals in 5 categories in the Tidy Towns Competition including being nominated in the overall State Finals of the Award. Anyone who has visited Sandstone in the past year will see why we have achieved these nominations.

The townspeople are keen to get into the healthy lifestyle and various exercise classes will be commencing this month.

Peter Money
Chief Executive Officer
18 November 2025

7.5 Shire of Cue



WALGA – Murchison Country Zone

November 2025 Report

Governance

It was with great sadness that we acknowledged the passing of Councillor Leonie Fitzpatrick, who passed away on Friday, 23 May 2025, following a short illness

Leonie served as a Councillor at the Shire of Cue from 2012 and was a dedicated and passionate contributor to local government. She was known for her sharp wit, infectious laugh, and her active engagement in Council meetings, where she participated in spirited debate on issues close to her heart.

This year we also farewelled two retiring Councillors - Ian Dennis and Elizabeth Houghton.

Councillor Ian Dennis was first elected in 2013, and for more than a decade he has contributed his time, knowledge and especially his passion for this community. Ian brought a steady hand and a thoughtful approach to Council business, always considering what is in the best long-term interests of Cue.

Councillor Elizabeth Houghton joined Council in 2017, and from the outset demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring the voices of our residents' voices were heard and respected. Elizabeth's insight, advocacy and engagement in Council discussions have been invaluable.

We extend our congratulations to returning Councillor Julie Humphreys, and to the newly elected Councillors Norm Lyon, Jacquie Lacy, and Cian Lyon. Les Price has retained his position as Shire President, with Ross Pigdon appointed Deputy Shire President.



The Shire of Cue has again been named a finalist in the 2025 Keep Australia Beautiful WA Awards in the Heritage and Culture category for “Historic Buildings”. This follows our win in 2024 for “Heritage Revived: Saving the Old for Tomorrow.”

In late June, representatives attended the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly in Canberra, joining delegates from across the country. The Cue delegation included four Councillors and two staff members.

The Assembly provided a valuable platform to advocate for regional priorities and engage with industry leaders. The insights gained will inform future strategic planning and policy development within the Shire. In addition to the formal proceedings, the event also offered an excellent opportunity for representatives from the Shires of Cue, Yalgoo, Mount Magnet, and Meekatharra to strengthen regional relationships through informal networking and social interaction.

Administration

In May 2025, the Shire of Cue welcomed Mrs Lisa Keen as Deputy Chief Executive Officer. Since her appointment, Lisa has quickly proven to be a capable and respected member of the executive team. Her leadership, professionalism, and collaborative approach have made a positive impact to the organisation’s culture and operations.

To support staff wellbeing, the Shire engaged Jodi Reilly, a Mindset and Corporate Wellness Coach, to deliver quarterly onsite well programs. The initiative provides practical tools to manage stress and improve performance, with staff reporting increased resilience and better communication.

The Shire, in collaboration with Outback Grave Markers, have commenced detailed research into the Cue Pioneer Cemetery, focusing on the historical significance of early burials. Their investigation includes the ten graves relocated in November 1898 from the proposed railway reserve to the newly established cemetery. To date 66 known burials have been researched, revealing valuable historical narratives that preserve Cue’s heritage and honour its pioneers.

Economic Development

The Café at the Queen of the Murchison has reopened, revitalising the local scene. The Café has quickly become a popular spot for locals and visitors alike, with plans to expand its grocery items.

The Cue Roadhouse is preparing to install Cue’s first Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station, marking an important milestone in the town’s infrastructure and environmental sustainability efforts.

Newhaul continues to grow its mining operations within the Shire. Beebyn W11 site is now operational, with the haul road expected to be sealed by November 2025. Newhaul currently operates 45 trucks in and out of Cue, with five additional trucks to be added soon.

A follow-up meeting with Newhaul and Kodiak management discussed a trial of autonomous trucks on the private Beebyn W11 haul road. Each truck will initially

include an onboard observer driver to ensure safety, with potential future expansion to the Fenix Cue Interchange on Miners Pass Road.

In May 2025, Victory Metals CEO Brendan Clark and his team brought the 2024 Melbourne Cup to Cue as part of a community engagement initiative. Hosted at the Murchison Club Hotel, the event drew a strong crowd of residents and visitors, giving attendees a rare chance to hold the iconic Cup. The event strengthened community spirit and reinforced the relationship between Victory Metals and the Cue community.



Peter Batt from the Department of Biosecurity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) has been appointed as the new Senior Ranger based in Cue. He is establishing a ranger program that will provide local employment opportunities for Wajarri Yamaji rangers and oversee the management of Lakeside Conservation Park and Dalgara National Park in conjunction with Minangu people through a joint management body (JMP). Planned works include removal of internal fences, maintaining fire access tracks, erosion control, fauna studies and feral animal management. Restoration and dual-badged boundary signage at Dalgara National Park are also planned.

Town Developments

As part of the Austin Street Heritage Project, Jason and Felicity of Kaboom Toons were commissioned to recreate the town's historical streetscape. The installation of heritage style shopfront signage will bring history to life, celebrating Cue's rich heritage and enhancing its appeal as a historical destination.



The restoration of the Bank of Western Australia building, including the new Café Kitchen project, has been completed, with the official opening scheduled for Friday 21 November 2025. The Café Kitchen project was supported by a RED grant.



Plans have been finalised for stage one of the Masonic Lodge restoration, including construction of a new kitchen, decking and toilets to replace facilities previously attached to the building. Tenders are to be presented at the November 2025 Council meeting.

At the Special Meeting on 5 August 2025, Council resolved to purchase the Bell & Co. property. The site will be leased as a goods and liquor outlet while restoring the historic shopfronts to highlight its heritage features. Heritage Architect Suzanne Hunt has provided initial concept plans to assess the scope of restoration.

Works

Significant roadworks have been undertaken across the Shire, including:

- Widening and resealing of Lakeside Road
- Re-sheeting sections of Dalgarranga Road
- Patching and floodway repairs on Wilgie Mia Road
- Reconstructing, resealing and general road maintenance of Beringarra–Cue Road

Flood damage repair works are scheduled to commence.

The Shire has also expanded its plant fleet with the purchase of

- John Deere 524K Loader
- John Deere 670GP Motor Grader with premium circle
- John Deere 335P-Tier Skid Steer and Profiler attachment
- Prime Mover
- 2 x Side tippers and dolly

Community Events

Wednesday 21 May 2025 the Shire hosted Gina Williams and Guy House at the Shire Hall.



Thursday 19 June 2025, a lively Quiz Night was held in conjunction with Craig from XL2 as a fundraiser for the Variety Bash. Around 60 participants helped raise over \$700 for Variety Australia

Monday 14 July 2025 the Shire presented CircuitWest's the Adventures of Alvin Sputnik: Deep Sea Explorer, a one-man performance blending puppetry, animation and storytelling, which captivated audiences.

Monday 4 August 2025, Aladdin and his Magic Smartwatch delighted children and families with an interactive and engaging performance.

On Sunday 10 August 2025, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research hosted a Stargazing event, relocated to the Shire Hall due to weather. Over 40 attendees enjoyed good food and an informative presentation.

The Shire also supported the Murdoch University Veterinary program on Friday 24 October 2025, with eight surgeries, over twenty vaccinations, and twenty-five pet checks completed. Community support was excellent, contributing to a successful program in partnership with Murdoch University and Canine Control.

Richard Towell
Chief Executive Officer

7.6 Shire of Meekatharra



Community Events and Activities

Spirit of Meekatharra

The annual Outback Festival was renamed to the Spirit of Meekatharra Festival, with the main event held on Saturday 27 September 2025.

Live performances by Adam Brand and the Pigram Brothers, food vendors, sideshow alley, and fireworks successfully attracted many people to town for the day.

Volunteers from the student body at Curtin University and assistance from Ms Rachel Evans (Shire of Murchison) significantly aided in the success of the day ... a very BIG thank you to all who helped.



Community Engagement

Moore Australian and UDLA (WA) were engaged to undertake community engagement for the development of Council's Strategic Community Plan.

Engagement occurred over a week and involved representatives from the community, school, local businesses, and visitors, with nearly 100 registered participants engaging.



Karalundi Community College Fundraising

The Shire recently assisted the Karalundi Community College in fundraising efforts for an interstate education initiative, with the result car washing is now a regular event in Meekatharra.



Council also contributed \$10,000 towards the initiative.

As a sign of gratitude and thanks, the College undertook a cleanup of the creek system in town.



Fiji Day Celebration

Council was recently invited to the Karalundi Community College to be the Chief Guests for their Fiji Day Celebration.

The day was full of food, dance, food, prayer, food, song, food, and thanks.

Shire officers were honoured to represent Council at the event.



Long Table Dining Event

As part of the Spirit of Meekatharra Festival, the Shire delivered a night of dining under the stars at Peace Gorge, which was attended by approximately 70 attendees.

As the first of its kind for the Shire (well, specifically for the current cohort of employees) teething issues were saved by wonderful entertainment from the Pigram Brothers and the weather and location, which could not have been any more perfect.



Human Resources / Administration

Staffing Levels

Council has an approved organisational structure of 38.2 full time equivalents. There are currently 7.4 FTE vacancies.

A lack of housing and suitable licencing requirements (primarily MC operator) have been identified as the main reasons for not having a full workforce.

A risk exists in the current employment arrangements whereby several husband-and-wife combinations exist which reduce the number of houses required however increase the likelihood of "one goes, both go" scenarios.

Governance

Elections

The recent Local Government Election for Meekatharra received 5 nominations for 3 vacancies.

Councillor Matthew Hall was returned to office, and 2 new Councillors (Councillor Adrian Moses and Councillor Maurice Anderson) were voted in.

Councillor Anderson was previously a Councillor and returns after missing out at the 2023 Election.

Councillor Judy Holden was not returned.

Extraordinary Election

Immediately following the Council Election, Councillor Wesley Ward was successful in applying for a position with the Shire and subsequently resigned from Council.

Due to conflicting dates over the Christmas / Summer holiday period the Acting Electoral Commissioner has been requested to set a date in March 2026 for the Extraordinary Election.

Road and Plant

Regional Road Group

Council has been successful in receiving additional funding under the Regional Road Group program.

The additional funding will be used to extend existing re-sheeting, and drainage works, on the Wiluna North Road.

Floodways

Council recently entered a contract with KRPM Pty Ltd for the construction of 5 floodways along the Ashburton Downs-Meekatharra Road.

Endurance Mining (Abra Operations) are partnering with the Shire of Meekatharra to deliver over \$7 million worth of concrete floodways which will reduce the duration of road closures for the mine and other users.

Endurance Mining are contributing \$2.5 million to the works.

New Waste Truck

The Shire recently purchased a new Waste Truck, which will be used in addition to the current Waste Truck.



The current Waste Truck will be retained and available for dry hire to Murchison Country Zone members.

Projects

Townsite CCTV and Free Wi-Fi

Council recently gave support for Shire officers to commence a “proof-of-concept” for a widescale CCTV project for the Meekatharra townsite.

In conjunction with WA Police and Horizon Power, the proof-of-concept project will establish the suitability of a wide-area Wi-Fi network capable of handling high-bandwidth CCTV video across the townsite.

If successful, the final project will see up to 50 CCTV cameras established throughout the townsite, which will include facial and number plate recognition, with live-streaming available to WA Police.

The project will also establish the entire townsite as a Free Wi-Fi Hotspot.

Housing

An application to the Regional Housing Support Fund is being made for 11 dwellings.

The dwellings are a combination of short-stay and family-size facilities.

Concept drawings are complete, and planning and environmental health approvals are imminent.

The Grant Application and Business Case are being developed using external consultants.

Effluent Facilities

The Shire has engaged Talis Consultants to develop a Site Assessment and Tender Documentation for the upgrade of the townsite effluent facilities.

A contributing factor for the delay of the Meekatharra Hospital has been the suitable disposal of effluent into an approved / licenced facility.

The hospital currently disposes of effluent to facilities established by the State Government many years ago and which were handed to the Shire.

Compliance upgrades are required and will be undertaken by the Shire, which will eventuate in a reduction of costs associated with the upgrade to the Meekatharra Hospital.

Waste Facility

The Shire has engaged Talis Consultants to undertake a Compliance Site Assessment and Rehabilitation Estimate for the Waste Facility.

The consultation will also provide a Management Plan to ensure the site remains viable for the medium to long term.

Airport

Discussions have been held with Aerodrome Management Services for upgrades to the Meekatharra Aerodrome Runway, Aprons, and Terminal, to accommodate larger jets which are now preferred by mining contractors.

Advocacy

Meekatharra Hospital

Shire officers have been working alongside State government contractors to progress the development of the new / upgraded hospital in Meekatharra.

The Department of Housing and Works has recently let a tender seeking suitable contractors to participate in a collaborative, early engagement approach to deliver a package of works for the development of new / upgraded hospital facilities in Meekatharra.

Regional Dental Services

The Shire has assisted in progressing accommodation for regional dental services, which will commence in Meekatharra in December 2025.

Goldfields Highway

Council continues to advocate for the sealing of the Goldfields Highway between Wiluna and Meekatharra.

Economic Development

New Mines

Several new mines have been commissioned, or survey and drilling underway, with aerodrome services nearing capacity.

Businesses in town have benefitted from the increase in activity with many of the accommodation facilities regularly at capacity.

8. Presentations

- Hon Jackie Jarvis Minister for Agriculture and Food; Fisheries; Forestry; Small Business; and Mid West
- Ms Debbie Dowden Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance
- Mr Mark Bowen DFES
- Mr David Price David Price Consulting

9. Meeting Dates 2026

The Executive Officer has received many requests to advise of the meeting dates for 2026 by various parties including politicians to enable them to plan their attendance well in advance. This may facilitate increased attendance. This motion will include a resolution for both meetings in 2026.

9.1 April 2026 Meeting Date

With the May 2026 State Council meeting being scheduled on 6 May 2026, it is suggested that the April meeting be held on 17 April 2026 which is one week after Good Friday and not immediately prior to the Anzac Day long weekend.

RECOMMENDATION

That the next meeting of the Murchison Country Zone be held in Cue on Friday 17 April 2026.

RESOLUTION	Moved: Cr Jensen	Seconded: Walton
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That the next meeting of the Murchison Country Zone be held in Cue on Friday 17 April 2026.

Carried 9/0

9.2 November 2026 Meeting Date

With the December 2026 State Council meeting being scheduled on 2 December 2026, it is suggested that the November meeting be held on Friday 20 December 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That the November 2026 meeting of the Murchison Country Zone be held in Cue on 20 November 2026.

RESOLUTION	Moved: Cr McQuie	Seconded: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor
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That the November 2026 meeting of the Murchison Country Zone be held in Cue on 20 November 2026.

Carried 9/0

Mr David Price addressed the meeting with some hints and tips for councillors with regard to persuading members to accept your reasoning for supporting a motion, alternative motion or amendment.

10. Meeting Close

There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 2.00pm.