

# Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

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Shires of –ABN 75 305 122 944  
Cue  
Meekatharra  
Mount Magnet  
Murchison  
Sandstone  
Yalgoo



## **MINUTES**

### **MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE**

### **OF**

### **Western Australian Local Government Association**

### **Friday 11 April 2025 – 9.30am**

### **Cue Administration Centre - Austin Street Cue**

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ABN 75 305 122 944



## Ordinary Meeting, Cue Administration Centre on Friday 11 April 2025

### 1. Opening

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.00am.

### 2. Attendance

#### 2.1 Delegates

Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor	President Shire of Murchison, Zone President
Mr Bill Bohem	CEO Shire of Murchison
Cr Jim McGorman	President Shire of Mount Magnet
Cr Les Price	President Shire of Cue, Deputy Zone President
Mr Richard Towell	CEO Shire of Cue
Cr Beth Walton	President Shire of Sandstone
Mr Peter Money	CEO Shire of Sandstone
Cr Harvey Nichols	President Shire of Meekatharra
Cr Judy Holden	Shire of Meekatharra
Cr Stan Willock	Shire of Yalgoo
Mr Ian Holland	CEO Shire of Yalgoo

#### 2.2 Observers

Ms Samantha Appleton	Executive Officer Murchison Country Zone
Mr Paddy O'Brien	Works Manager Shire of Sandstone
Mr Nathan Cain	CEO Shire of Meekatharra
Cr Elizabeth Houghton	Shire of Cue
Ms Bec Fogarty	Community Development Officer, Shire of Murchison

## 2.3 Visitors

### In Person

Mr Nick Sloan	Chief Executive Officer, WALGA
Mr Ian Duncan	Executive Manager Infrastructure, WALGA
Mr Shane Love MLA	Member for Mid-West, Leader of the Nationals
Mr Mark Holdsworth	Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia Mid West
Ms Alison Cooke	Office of Shane Love
Ms Karin Grima	Director, Lyssna Consulting
Mr Nils Hay	Chief Executive Officer MWDC
Mr Adam Mursweski	A/Director Mid West Development Commission
Ms Bev Brosnan	Senior Regional Development Officer, MWDC
Ms Amberley Laverick	Intern, Mid West Development Commission
Mr John D'arcy	Principal Stakeholder Manager, Water Corporation
Ms Veronique Thoms	Communication Advisor, Water Corporation
Ms Joanne Fabling	Chief Executive Officer, Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Ms Libby Twiss	Community Relations Advisor, Westgold
Ms Karen Morrissey	Project Officer, Murchison Geo Region
Ms Alison Jenkin	Business Advisor, Small Business Development Corporation

### Via Teams

Ms Liz Kelly	Acting Operations Manager Mid West Murchison, WA Country Health Service
Mr Boyd Brown	Regional General Manager, Telstra

## 2.4 Apologies

Cr Karen Chappel K.J AM JP	President, WALGA
Hon Melissa Price MP	Member for Durack
Mr Basil Zemplis MLA	Member for Churchlands, Leader of the Opposition
Hon Neil Thompson MLC	Member Legislative Council
Hon. J. Jarvis, MLC	Minister for the Mid West
Hon L Mettam MLA	Member for Vasse
Mr Mark Bowen	Superintendent DFES
Hon Kyle McGinn MLC	Member Legislative Council
Hon Roger Cook MLA	Premier of Western Australia
Cr Raul Valenzuela	President Shire of Yalgoo
Cr Emma Foulkes-Taylor	Shire of Murchison
Ms Tralee Cable	CEO Shire of Mount Magnet
Cr Vicky McQuie	Shire of Sandstone

### **3. Official Opening of Conference**

Mr John Darcy from the Water Corporation opened the meeting. He mentioned he had been coming to the “Cue Parliament” since 2007.

### **4. Vale Dr Kelvin Matthews**

CEO Richard Towell paid tribute to Dr Matthews who was his first CEO at the Shire of Shark Bay. Dr Matthews then relocated to Mount Magnet, then Meekatharra and had participated in Zone meetings while in the region.

## **5. Confirmation of Minutes**

### **5.1 Confirmation of Minutes – Ordinary Meeting 22 November 2024**

#### **Comment**

Minutes of the meeting held Zone Meeting held 22 November 2024 have been circulated to Member Shires.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Minutes of the Zone Meeting held 22 November 2024 be confirmed.

**RESOLUTION      Moved: Cr Nicholls      Seconded: Cr Walton**

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**That the Minutes of the Zone Meeting held 22 November 2024 be confirmed.**

**Carried**

## 6. WA Local Government Association

### 6.1 WALGA President

WALGA CEO Mr Nick Sloan presented the President's Report.

# President's Report

## May 2025

### Introduction

As always, I am proud to highlight our continual efforts to use our influence and support our Members through advocacy, expertise and the services provided by WALGA.

One election finished, two more to go in 2025.

In this report, I outline the State election result and touch on the outcomes of WALGA's advocacy, the Federal election strategy, the Aboriginal Engagement Forum, Local Government legislative reform and work in the Renewable Energy area.

- State Election

The State Election was held in March and saw the re-election of the Cook Government.

I have written to the Premier, Deputy Premier, Leader of the Opposition and all Ministers to congratulate them on their appointment and seek the opportunity to discuss the sector's priorities for the next term.

I have invited Ministers with a Regional Portfolio to attend Zone meetings where possible.

WALGA's "The West at its Best" State Election Priorities was highly successful with all parties committing to components of the priority requests. The Labor Government's commitments were significant, and a report will be provided in the State Council agenda for this round of meetings.

### Federal Election Strategy

WALGA's 2025 Federal Election policy platform is now complete and was provided to the Federal Government and WA Members of Parliament and candidates in February 2025. The Australian Local Government Association will also be running a public campaign to seek additional funding for priority areas for Local Governments.

WALGA's key areas of focus are Community Infrastructure, Coastal Management, Emergency Management, Regional Health, Safer Roads and Telecommunications.

WALGA is seeking meetings with relevant Members of Parliament in coming months to discuss these important priorities.

- Aboriginal Engagement Forum

I want to thank those Elected Member and State Councillors who have registered to join us at the Aboriginal Engagement Forum on 9 April and especially mention Cr Barry Winmar and Cr Helen Sadler for their membership of the event Reference Group. I'm delighted to report that we've had a record number of State Councillors, Elected Members, and CEO delegates register this year, which speaks to the importance of this issue and high calibre program.

The afternoon before the Forum, WALGA will hold its first Aboriginal Elected Members Roundtable with 15 Aboriginal Elected Members from across the State. This event will provide an opportunity for attendees to share their experiences, achievements, challenges and aspirations as a Councillor and to explore how WALGA can assist and support them. I look forward to building on this important work.

- **Renewable Energy**

Work has commenced on the development of a best practice Community Benefits and Engagement Guide to assist Local Governments working with proponents on large scale renewable energy projects. Two workshops have been held with Local Governments, providing them the opportunity to speak about the challenges and opportunities they are facing.

WALGA is also conducting research relating to Local Government rating and payment in lieu of rates in respect to renewable energy projects.

Through this project, consultants have been engaged to provide advice on current rating provisions available to Local Governments. This includes differential rating and reviewing rating methods from other jurisdictions including Victoria's Payment in Lieu of Rates (PILOR) Scheme.

Letters have also been sent to the Premier and the new Minister for Energy and Decarbonisation; Manufacturing; Skills and TAFE; Pilbara, seeking a meeting to discuss the key issues being faced by Local Governments.

- **Local Government Legislative Reform**

WALGA continues to support members in implementing and preparing for reforms included in the Local Government Amendment Acts of 2023 and 2024.

The requirement to appoint all Committee Members by absolute majority Council decision by 1 July 2025 is now in effect. Preparation is also being made for the anticipated reforms to Audit Risk and Improvement Committee, including the requirement to appoint an independent person as Presiding Member. In addition, Local Governments are required to consider the application of newly introduced caretaker restrictions in their forward planning.

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries consultation regarding the publication of CEO KPIs and online registers is open until 8 May. WALGA circulated an Info Page and Discussion paper, seeking feedback on the draft regulations. The results of this consultation, and proposed WALGA submission will be in the State Council agenda to be considered at the April/May round of Zone and State Council meetings.

**President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP**  
**WALGA President**



# President's Contacts

The President's contacts since 5 March and scheduled before 7 May are as follows:

## State and Commonwealth Government Relations

- Australian Government Black Spot - WA Consultative Panel Meeting
- Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering Youth; Gascoyne
- State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee Meeting

## Zone Meetings

- Kimberley Zone Meeting
- Murchison Country Zone Meeting
- Northern Country Zone Meeting

## Local Government Relations

- State Council Meetings
  - State Council Performance Evaluation Outcome Workshop
  - Strategic Forum, 5 March
  - State Council Meeting, 5 March
  - Governance Policy Team Meeting
  - Environment Policy Team Meeting
  - State Council Information Forum, 2 April
  - Finance & Services Committee Meeting
- **ALGA**
  - Executive Meeting
  - Local Government Tech Leadership Summit
  - Board Meeting, 13 March
- **LGIS**
  - JLT Management Committee Meeting
  - LGIS Board Workshop
- RCAWA Meeting
- Meeting with City of Wanneroo Mayor, Linda Aitken & CEO, Bill Parker
- Meeting with Shire of Augusta Margaret River Shire President, Julia Meldrum & CEO Andrea Selvey

## Conferences, Workshops, Public Relations

- WA Women's Hall of Fame Ceremony 2025
- City of Cockburn 100 Years at Memorial Hall
- Great Eastern Country Zone Forum
- Office of the Auditor General IMPACT 2025 Conference
- Aboriginal Elected Members Roundtable

- 2025 WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum
- Pathways to Politics for Women

## 6.2 Zone Representative to State Council - Cr Les Price

**11<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

### **“ CUE PARLIAMENT – Murchison Country Zone**

<b>Welcome</b>	Mr Nick Sloan – CEO, WALGA Mr Ian Duncan – Executive Director Infrastructure, WALGA
<b>LAST MEETING</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2024 2 x State Council Meetings 1 x South West Country Zone Meeting – City of Busselton 2 x Strategic Forums 2 x State Council Information Forums 1 x State Council Performance Assessment Survey 2025 1 x State Council Performance Evaluation 2 x Environmental Policy Team Meeting 1 x Joint Environment and Infrastructure Policy Team Meeting 2 x Metropolitan Waste & Advisory Council (MWAC) Meetings 1 x Flying Minutes

### **Election Time**

With a WA State election having been run and won and a Federal election on the horizon it has been an exceptionally busy time for WALGA President, Karen Chappel, CEO Nick Sloan and the WALGA team as they develop a set of Local Government priorities. The “West at its Best” publication was internally developed and produced Publication which captured a range of Local Government priorities which can be viewed on the following link.

<https://thewestatitsbest.walga.asn.au/>

The new Cooke Government Ministry sees the Hon Hannah Beazley retain the Local Government portfolio along with other responsibilities of Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth and the Gascoyne while Hon Jackie Jarvis is the new Minister for Agriculture and Food; Fisheries; Forestry; Small Business and the Mid West. This link will show you the full list of Cabinet Ministers.

<https://dpcmedia.azureedge.net/pdfs/Cook%20Labor%20Government.pdf>

### **Federal Election**

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is running a Federal Election Campaign on behalf of Local Governments and has prepared a campaign website. The main focus is on seeking:

- \$11 billion per year for enabling infrastructure to unlock housing supply.
- \$500 million per year for community infrastructure.
- \$600 million per year for safer roads.
- \$900 million per year for increased Local Government emergency management and capacity.
- \$400 million per year climate change adaptation.

WALGA has prepared a policy platform highlighting the priority issues for Local Government.

### **Metropolitan Regional Meeting**

WALGA State Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December was held in conjunction with the South West Country Zone meeting, which was hosted by the City of Busselton. The meeting presents State Councillors with the opportunity to visit the host council and find out first-hand what is happening in the South West. Regional meetings provide 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:

- Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils (5 Local Governments)
- Bunbury Geopraphe Group of Councils (6 Local Governments)
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River
- City of Busselton

What was notable from all presentations were some of the challenges their Local Governments faced which closely align with the remainder of the sector across the State. Some areas of focus include:

- Housing (affordability and availability)
- Childcare
- Ageing infrastructure
- Waste
- Recruitment and retention of key personnel and other critical staff
- Regional economic development
- Major project funding and the involvement of the private investment sector
- Increase in overall population, particularly the young population

The host City of Busselton has a current population of 43,000 and is expected to grow to 90,000 by 2051. 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. Busselton is still a haven for retirees. The median age is 45 years, and a significant portion of the population is 60 years or older.

Key industries include:

- Agriculture
- Healthcare
- Construction
- Accommodation
- Education

WALGA conducts a bi-monthly State Council Information Forum in between the State Council meetings. Preceding each meeting there is a Strategic Forum.

### **Some Areas of WALGA's Current Focus**

#### **1. Polyphagous Shothole Borer**

- The polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB) remains a critical biosecurity concern for Western Australia and Local Government. Since its detection in August 2021, 4,515 trees have been removed, and the Quarantine Area has expanded to encompass 30 Local Governments. There are at least 212 host tree species affected by PSHB in WA of which 107 are considered reproductive hosts.
- The PSHB national response plan, which is focussed on eradicating the borer, is being led by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) under a national cost sharing arrangement. The National Management Group will decide whether it will continue with the response depending on whether it is still technically feasible to eradicate the borer. This will have significant implications for Local Government, who may be responsible for costs associated with the ongoing management of infected and diseased trees.
- WALGA was successful in its advocacy for funding for PSHB recovery with the State Government announcing a \$7.2 million tree recovery package in August 2024, that is expected to commence shortly. The Government also responded to the sector's call for PSHB research funding, with \$2 million made available through the WA Agricultural Research Collaboration, although projects have yet to be announced.

#### **2. Large Scale Renewable Energy Update**

- WA does not have a plan or framework that provides a consistent approach to how proponents of major projects consult with communities and how they can share in the benefits.
- WALGA has been progressing a number of initiatives to support Local Governments since State Council endorsed the energy transmission advocacy position in 2024.
- The then Minister for Energy, Environment, Climate Action has acknowledged Local Government's concerns and reinforced the role of "Powering WA" to engage with the sector to understand the opportunities and challenges.

#### **3. Coast WA Government Survey**

The survey was sent to 52 coastal and estuarine Local Governments which identified the increasing need to act and respond to coastal hazards and heavy reliance on grant funding to implement coastal adaptation projects.

#### **4. Local Government Legislative Reform**

Tranche 2 Reforms to the Local Government Act 1995 are now in force. A number of the reforms impacting Local Government include:

- Office of the Local Government Inspector
- Local Government Monitors
- Clarified Roles and Responsibilities of Council, Council Members, Mayors, Presidents and CEOs
- Independent Member and Chair of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
- Unreasonable / Vexacious Complaints
- An adjudicator will replace the Standards Panel

A brief summary of the roles;

### **Monitors**

- In respect to who can be a monitor, will be subject to regulation when they are developed. The Act states that regulations will make provision.
- Also the Inspector will provide a monitor to the Local Government concerned.
- The role of a monitor is not to be punitive.
- Local Governments bear the cost of a Monitor.
- Councils can bring in a Monitor.

### **Adjudicators (Replace the Standards Panel)**

- All adjudicators must be legal practitioners with at least 5 years of experience (potentially employees of DLGSC or SSO/DOI).
- Adjudicators cannot be Council members, Local Government employees or WALGA employees.

The Tranche 2 reforms are intended to provide a process for early intervention around conduct complaints, misappropriation of funds, misbehaviour, fractious Councils along with a number of identified issues. The Office of Inspector will have carriage of these areas of concern and the power to appoint monitor. An inspector can conduct inquiries and can delegate, but not to a monitor.

## **5. Urban Greening Grants**

Round 3 recipients of the Urban Greening Grants were announced in December 2024 with \$1.6 million being awarded to 16 Local Governments. These Local Governments will plant 5,400 trees and 238,000 understory species in winter 2025.

## **6. Disaster Ready Fund Round Three**

\$200 million is available and opened on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025. 17 Local Governments received more than \$23 million in Round 2 for fire danger rating signage, community education, evacuation centre improvements and infrastructure projects. Proposals must be submitted to DFES.

## **7. Regional Primary Health Services**

The Local Government Primary Healthcare Survey Report has been shared with Local Government CEO's. The advocacy on this issue is being informed by the survey's results and

additional feedback from Band 4 Local Governments. As with all surveys please take time to respond.

### **Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)**

The Council meets regularly where all things waste is discussed. The disposal and the recycling of waste around the world has become a significant issue and we in the regions are not immune from the impacts of the storage and recycling of waste.

- **Circular Economy Advocacy Position** has identified that action is required from all levels of Local Government. A comprehensive consultation on the advocacy position is planned for 2025.
- **An e-Cigarette Collection Study** has been completed and MWAC discussed the advocacy options with a focus on risk to waste management collection and processing infrastructure and safe disposal/recycling avenues for e-cigarettes.
- **Waste Processing and Contingency Planning.** WALGA has been advocating for effective contingency planning for waste management. A review of the State Waste Strategy highlighted some of the challenges and the limited options for processing of some materials.
- A review of the **Recycling and Waste Reduction Act.**
- A review of the **Local Government Waste Reporting Requirements.**
- Update on **Queensland Fruit Fly (Qfly) Outbreak.**
- A review of **DWER Waste Education.**
- Review of WALGA's **Waste Management Legislation Policy Statement.**

### **Environment Policy Team**

The major issues under discussion included:

- **Energy Transmission** and Community Benefit Framework.
- Updated **Water Advocacy Position** is underway and will be developed in 2025 with a discussion paper to be issued to the sector.
- **Urban Forest Conference.** A successful conference was held at Murdoch University on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025. The keynote speaker was Dr Frayer Thomas who is the Senior Urban Forester at the City of Melbourne who undertakes strategic planning for the urban forest.
- **HS Avian Influenza.** A serious bird flu that is highly contagious. A National response with a State Flavour is being developed. There 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.
- **DAP Advocacy Policy** Review.
- **Public Building Regulations** – Submission
- **Planning Principles and Reform Advocacy Position**
- Draft advocacy position on **Native Vegetation Clearing.** The revised advocacy position is intended to be an overarching sector position on climate change. Other advocacy positions including Urban Forest (4.5), Renewable Energy (6.16, 6.17, 6.18), Emergency Management (8.1, 8.2, 8.11) and Coastal Planning (6.8) provide a sector position on specific climate related matters.
- **Polyphagous Shothole Borer.** Previously thought to have no impact.

- **Climate Change.** The revised advocacy position is intended to be an overarching sector position on climate change. Other advocacy positions, include Urban Forest (4.5), Renewable Energy (8.1, 8.2, 8.11) and Coastal Planning (6.8) provide a sector position on specific climate related matters.

### **Joint Environment and Infrastructure Policy Teams**

The teams agreed to replace the following Advocacy Positions:

- 5.2.1 Environmental Protection Act.
- 5.2.2 Land Clearing in Road Reserves

...with an updated 'Native Vegetation Clearing Regulation Advocacy Position'. 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.

### **Honours Recognition and Awards**

Look closely at the Elected Members and Officers of your Local Government and consider if there is someone who is worthy of being nominated for an award. This is a time to recognise the efforts of those who give of their time to serve the community.

The Local Government hours Awards is now open. Nominations will close at 5:00pm on Friday, 18 April 2025. Any nominations or supporting information received after this date will not be accepted or considered by the Honours Panel.

### **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 is considering the panel's report and recommendations to determine what action it will take in response to the review.

### **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. WALGA will only know your concerns through the Zone process.

### **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. If we don't engage then we are not heard and therefore, our

region may well fall by the wayside. 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. I would like to thank those who do contribute...please keep it up!

### **The Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly (ALGA)**

The Assembly is coming up on 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and provides 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. Unfortunately, 2025 NGA motions have closed as of 31st March 2025.

The NGA provides Councillors 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 sending representatives from your Council to the National General Assembly

This is the link to ALGA <https://alga.com.au/events/2025-national-general-assembly/>

**Next State Council Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> May 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**

**President, Shire of Cue**  
**Murchison Country Zone Delegate**  
**Western Australian Local Government Association**  
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**COMPLETE ZONE STATUS REPORT****February 2025**

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Murchison C	22 November 2024 Zone Agenda Item 6.2 Need for Accessible Medical Services in the Murchison Region	<p>That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to make representation to the Minister for Health and lobby the State Government to implement the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extended and On-Call Nursing Support: Establishing after-hours nursing support in the Murchison Region, either through rotating or on-call staff arrangements, to help address the gap in care over weekends and after hours, reducing the need for ambulance support in non-emergency cases.</li> <li>2. Elderly and Aboriginal Care Services: Specialised services for elderly and aboriginal residents, such as regular home visits, monitoring for chronic conditions, medication management and to allow them to receive essential care without the need for travel or dependence on ambulance transport.</li> <li>3. Relief for Volunteer St John Ambulance Services: Reducing reliance on St John Ambulance for routine care and transport services to alleviate some of the strain on the organisation's critically limited number of volunteers. Enhanced nursing and elderly support services would mean volunteers are only called upon for genuine emergencies, improving response times and resource availability.</li> <li>4. Mobile Health Clinics: A mobile health service to provide essential care in various Murchison communities, addressing basic needs such as welfare care, wound redressing, and chronic</li> </ol>	<p>WALGA is progressing advocacy regarding access to primary health services to the State and Australian Governments. This work builds on the recently published WALGA Local Government Primary Healthcare Survey Report and will focus on State level issues and recommendations. The Community Policy team is happy to discuss this work with the Murchison Zone.</p> <p>In addition, the Zone may wish to consider writing directly to the relevant candidates and Ministers leading into the State and Federal elections.</p>	February 2025	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039

		<p>disease management. This service would reduce travel and help bridge the gap when nursing posts are closed.</p> <p>5. Telehealth and Remote Monitoring for Elderly Care: Equipping elderly residents with telehealth and monitoring devices to provide immediate support and enable healthcare professionals to remotely manage patients' needs, reducing the need for in-person care outside of emergency situations.</p>			
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Mr Mark Holdsworth from Regional Development Australia Mid West addressed the meeting outlining recent activities and programs of RDAMW.

#### **6.4 Agenda Briefs – WALGA Meeting 7 May 2025**

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

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That WALGA agenda items 6.4.1.1 to 6.4.1.7 be supported and matters for noting items 6.4.2.1 to 6.4.2.3 be noted.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Cr Walton**

**Seconded: Cr Price**

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**That WALGA agenda items 6.4.1.1 to 6.4.1.7 with amendments be supported and matters for noting items 6.4.2.1 to 6.4.2.3 be noted.**

**Carried**

# **MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA**

## **FLYING AGENDA**

### **WALGA STATE COUNCIL MATTERS FOR DECISION and NOTING**

#### **AT WALGA MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2025**

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*The following recommendations have been taken directly from the WALGA State Council Agenda for 7 May 2025 and which contains important detail of each item.*

*Each recommendation is followed by a direction to refer to the full WALGA State Council Agenda and 3 voting options. This is an editable Word Document so all that is required is to delete the 2 voting options you do not support and in the case of option 3 state your alternative recommendation. Zone members may also opt to move the Matters for Consideration and the Matters for Noting en bloc.*

*Please note that the full WALGA agenda will be circulated to make available all attachments and background information for the WALGA items presented for consideration and noting.*

*Please note that this agenda will be included in our Zone Agenda for discussion on 11 April 2025 so no response is required until our meeting on the Friday 11 April 2025.*

## 6.4.1 Matters for Decision

### 6.4.1.1 Regulations for CEO KPIs and Online Registers – WALGA Submission (State Council Agenda Item 8.1)

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement*

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Consultation is open on the draft Local Government Regulations Amendment Regulations 2024 (the Draft Regulations), which give effect to reforms relating to the publication of online registers, publication of CEO performance criteria and performance reviews, and other CEO matters.
- The Local Government legislation reform platform from the State Government indicated that one of the reform outcomes was "Reducing red tape, increasing consistency and simplicity".
- The overwhelming sector feedback is that these reforms will not achieve this aim and will instead increase red tape without any clear public benefit.
- Sector feedback has been collated and identifies overarching concerns listed in this report.
- The attached submission, informed by this feedback, is recommended for endorsement.

#### ATTACHMENT

- [Regulations for CEO KPIs and public registers Draft WALGA submission](#)

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

**That WALGA endorse the recommendations contained in the attached '*Regulations for CEO KPIs and public registers submission*'.**

#### RESOLUTION

**That the Zone support the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.1 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.**

**Carried En Bloc**

#### 6.4.1.2 Dog and Cat Management Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda Item 8.2)

By Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement and Marnie Herrington, Governance Specialist

##### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Motions from Zones regarding the PetsWA Centralised Registration Database provide an opportunity to review the existing *Puppy Farming* advocacy position and replace it with a new *Dog and Cat Management* advocacy position.
- The purpose of the new position is to reflect the progression of the *Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Act 2021* and the emerging concerns of the Local Government sector regarding the PetsWA centralised registration system.
- The Governance Policy Team endorsed the new advocacy position at its meeting on 24 March.

##### ATTACHMENT

- [Comparison table between current Advocacy Position 2.12 Puppy Farming, and proposed advocacy position Dog and Cat Management.](#)

##### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA replace Advocacy Position 2.12 *Puppy Farming* with a revised *Dog and Cat Management* advocacy position, as follows:

*In regard to the Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Act 2021 and the PetsWA Centralised Database, the WA Local Government sector advocates:*

- a) that fees reflect completed cost modelling to ensure that Local Governments achieve full cost recovery in ensuring compliance with the Dog Act 1976 or Cat Act 2011.*
- b) that Fees and Charges set in Regulations are reviewed bi-annually and, at minimum, adjusted by the Local Government Cost Index.*
- c) that the PetsWA centralised registration database is developed, operated and maintained by State Government, with no loss to Local Government registration fee revenue.*
- d) that the function of PetsWA be restricted to the registration of dogs and cats, exclude ancillary functions such as animal related complaints and infringement notices, and integrate with existing Local Government corporate systems.*
- e) for the continued legislative exemptions for livestock working dogs in recognition of their special breeding requirements.*
- f) for a State Government-led education initiative whereby the community is encouraged to purchase puppies from approved breeders.*

##### RESOLUTION

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

Carried En Bloc

### 6.4.1.3 Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda Item 8.3)

*By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy and Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure*

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The effectiveness, cost and complexity of the regulatory system for native vegetation clearing has been a longstanding concern for Local Governments, particularly in relation to its impacts on the delivery of road and other infrastructure projects.
- WALGA has made numerous representations and submissions to the State Government on this issue.
- WALGA's current [advocacy positions](#) relating to the regulation of clearing of native vegetation were endorsed by State Council in 2004 (5.2.1) and 2006 (5.2.2).
- Numerous reviews and significant legislative and policy changes aimed at streamlining regulatory requirements have occurred since that time which has resulted in some improvement, however, problems persist.
- The updated Advocacy Position, seeks to respond to feedback and issues raised by the sector, calls the State Government to:
  - implement **legislative, policy and process changes**, including the imposition of statutory timeframes for assessments and appeals; increasing the duration of clearing permits; providing a permanent exemption to enable clearing in previously legally cleared transport corridors; and strengthening environmental data sharing requirements.
  - allocate **adequate resources** to implement an expedited process for road safety and state and federally funded or co-funded projects; a dedicated Local Government unit to process applications and support the sector; timely compliance and enforcement action; and implement a state-funded collection and provision of data.
  - undertake **bioregional planning** and implement **strategic solutions for environmental offsets** for Local Government.
  - **reduce duplication** between the State and Australian government regulatory systems.
- At their joint meeting on 24 March, the Environment and Infrastructure Policy Teams recommended that State Council endorse the Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations advocacy position.

#### ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Issues Paper](#)
- [Road Safety Briefing Note](#)

## **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That WALGA replace the following Advocacy Positions:

5.2.1 Environmental Protection Act

5.2.2 Land Clearing in Road Reserves

with an updated Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Advocacy Position as follows:

*WALGA calls on the Western Australian Government, in consultation with Local Government, to undertake legislative and policy reform to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the regulatory system for clearing native vegetation in Western Australia, including:*

1. *Amending the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and associated regulations to remove unnecessary process, complexity and improve timeframes, including:*
  - a. *introducing statutory timeframes for the determination of referrals, permit applications and appeals*
  - b. *increasing the default duration of Area and Purpose Permits to 10 years*
  - c. *provide a permanent exemption for clearing of previously legally cleared transport corridors*
  - d. *strengthening environmental data sharing requirements to ensure proponents cannot opt-out of sharing data collected for environmental assessment and monitoring purposes.*
2. *Ensuring the regulatory system is adequately resourced to:*
  - a. *implement an expedited process for clearing permits for projects that prevent death and serious injury (road safety), and state and federally funded or co-funded projects*
  - b. *establish a dedicated Local Government unit within the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to:*
    - i. *case manage Local Government referrals and clearing permit applications*
    - ii. *provide guidance and training for Local Governments, particularly in relation to roadside vegetation management*
    - iii. *support partnerships with Local Governments in strategic environmental offsets*
  - c. *enable timely investigation and enforcement action for illegal clearing*
  - d. *increase investment in the collection and provision of statewide biodiversity data, including:*
    - i. *funding and coordinating a state-wide biodiversity survey program to standardise habitat and vegetation mapping*
    - ii. *making biodiversity data more discoverable, accessible and useable.*
3. *Undertaking bioregional planning for native vegetation management, with a focus on highly cleared areas and implementing strategic solutions for environmental offsets that can be utilised by Local Government.*
4. *Working with the Australian Government to reduce duplication between the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.*



## RESOLUTION

**That the Zone support the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.3 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.**

Carried En Bloc

### 6.4.1.4 Submission on the State Recovery Arrangements (State Council Agenda Item 8.4)

*By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager Emergency Management*

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is consulting on revised State Recovery Arrangements via [Engage WA Emergency Management](#). Formal consultation closes Friday, 2 May.
- WALGA was granted an extension to enable the draft submission to be included as an Item for Decision in the 7 May State Council Agenda.
- The revised arrangements integrate lessons from past recoveries, current best practices, and clarify roles and responsibilities.
- There are no significant changes to Local Government roles and responsibilities under the *Emergency Management Act 2005* and State Emergency Management Framework.
- The Commonwealth - State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements - Western Australia (DRFA-WA) are not part of the State Emergency Management Framework and are outside the scope of the review.
- WALGA's draft submission was shared with Local Governments and the draft final version incorporates feedback.
- WALGA's submission is generally supportive of the revised State Recovery Arrangements, which provide improved clarity on roles and responsibilities in recovery, particularly for State Government, and clearer arrangements for transitioning from response to recovery and from recovery to business as usual.
- WALGA's submission highlights the need for State Government investment in streamlined, appropriate and effective funding mechanisms for recovery and resilience building, and the need to ensure adequate support to Local Governments.
- The People and Place Policy Team noted the draft submission at its 18 March meeting.

#### ATTACHMENT

- [Draft State Recovery Arrangements – WALGA submission](#)

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

**That State Council endorse the submission to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services on proposed revisions to the State Recovery Arrangements.**

## RESOLUTION

That the Zone support the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

Carried En Bloc

### 6.4.1.5 Health (Public Buildings) Regulations Consultation (State Council Agenda Item 8.5)

*By Coralie Claudio, Senior Policy Advisor, Planning*

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Health (DoH) is seeking feedback on the [Consultation Paper 2025 Health \(Public Buildings\) Regulations 1992](#) (Consultation Paper), which examines whether the Regulations should be repealed without replacement.
- Repealing the Regulations is not supported by the sector, as it would impede Local Governments' ability to proactively manage and mitigate public health risks.
- Revised Regulations are supported to provide a contemporary, risk-based approach to public building management, eliminating unnecessary building construction requirements and incorporating modern compliance and enforcement tools.
- WALGA received an extension of time from DoH to allow the submission to be considered by State Council as part of the May Agenda.

#### ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA's submission on the Health \(Public Buildings\) Regulations Consultation](#)

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA endorse the submission on Health (Public Buildings) Regulations Consultation to the Department of Health.

## RESOLUTION

That the Zone support the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.5 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

Carried En Bloc

#### **6.4.1.6 Zone Priorities for Ministerial Briefings**

*By Dana Mason, External Affairs Manager, WALGA*

##### **BACKGROUND**

Following the March election, the Cook Government has unveiled its new Cabinet, emphasizing regional representation by appointing a dedicated Minister for each region.

The new Cabinet structure shows that the Government intends to have a greater focus on regional WA during this term.

WALGA has written to all Ministers responsible for specific regions, inviting them to participate in upcoming meetings of their respective WALGA Zones.

WALGA will also provide each Minister with a written briefing on the key issues facing their region.

To ensure these briefings are comprehensive, WALGA is seeking input from the Zones to identify the top three to five priorities they would like highlighted.

The Zones provide an important opportunity for the Government to have a direct line of communication and engagement with regional WA and ensure that local issues are considered in the broader policy agenda.

WALGA will report on engagements with Ministers responsible for specific regions through the President's report at a future Zone meeting.

##### **RESOLUTION**

**That the Murchison Country Zone provide the below top three to WALGA as the Zone's priorities:**

- a. Medical Service Provision with an emphasis on Meekatharra Hospital upgrade/rebuild and nursing post provision and operation within the Murchison Country Zone.**
- b. State management of disaster relief funding.**
- c. Law and order.**

**Carried En Bloc**

#### 6.4.1.7 Other State Council Agenda Items

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

### 6.4.2 Matters for Noting

#### 6.4.2.1 Local Government (Development Assessment Panels) Regulations 2025

*By Chris Hossen, Policy Manager, Planning and Building and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement*

##### BACKGROUND

The State Government's 2021 updates to the *Action Plan for Planning Reform* included measures to improve consistency and transparency for DAP applications, including clarifying the respective role of Elected Members and officers to remove Elected Members from what were deemed to be administrative DAP functions.

These changes were not included in amendments to the *Planning and Development Act 2005*, but were included as part of the 2024 reforms to the *Local Government Act 1995* through the insertion of a new section (s. 9.69 B) to allow for the creation of regulations that specify DAP functions that must be performed on behalf of the Local Government by the CEO or authorised officer.

On Tuesday 1 April 2025, new *Local Government (Development Assessment Panels) Regulations 2025* (the Regulations) were gazetted. The Regulations come into full effect from 1 May 2025, and will apply to all Development Assessment Panel (DAP) applications lodged from that date. The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) sent an LG Alert to the sector on 2 April advising of the new regulations.

The Regulations:

- require Responsible Authority Reports (RARs) to be prepared and submitted by the CEO of a Local Government, or an employee authorised by the CEO
  - CEOs of Class 1 and 2 Local Governments must authorise at least one employee
  - Local Governments will still be able to engage external consultants to assist in preparing RARs
- prohibit the Council from directing the CEO, an authorised employee or a consultant in preparing the RAR or directing the CEO to engage a particular consultant
- require the CEO and authorised employees to disclose conflicts of interests in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*, and not undertake any DAP functions in which they have a conflict of interest.

The Regulations are available on the [WA Legislation website](#).

##### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA [Advocacy Positions](#) 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform and 6.4 Development Assessment Panels (see Attachment A).

## COMMENT

Local Governments have one month to consider and implement the appropriate authorisations, and any resulting changes to systems and processes. WALGA will produce template authorisations and will host an officer information session with the relevant departments to assist Local Governments.

While Councils will be prevented from directing staff in the preparation of RARs, the administration can continue to brief Council on the content and progress of any DAP applications. There are no changes to the composition of DAPs.

WALGA will continue to oppose changes that erode Local Government autonomy and influence in the WA planning system and will continue to advocate for reforms that recognise the benefits of local decision making in planning.

WALGA is commencing a review of its Development Assessment Panel advocacy position and will consult with the sector and zones as part of that process.

Questions regarding the Regulations can be directed to the local government reform team at [actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au) or the DAP secretariat at [daps@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:daps@dplh.wa.gov.au).

**For noting.**

### **6.4.2.2            *Local Government (Development Assessment Panels) Regulations 2025***

*y Chris Hossen, Policy Manager, Planning and Building and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement*

## BACKGROUND

The State Government's 2021 updates to the *Action Plan for Planning Reform* included measures to improve consistency and transparency for DAP applications, including clarifying the respective role of Elected Members and officers to remove Elected Members from what were deemed to be administrative DAP functions.

These changes were not included in amendments to the *Planning and Development Act 2005*, but were included as part of the 2024 reforms to the *Local Government Act 1995* through the insertion of a new section (s. 9.69 B) to allow for the creation of regulations that specify DAP functions that must be performed on behalf of the Local Government by the CEO or authorised officer.

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The Regulations:

- require Responsible Authority Reports (RARs) to be prepared and submitted by the CEO of a Local Government, or an employee authorised by the CEO
  - CEOs of Class 1 and 2 Local Governments must authorise at least one employee
  - Local Governments will still be able to engage external consultants to assist in preparing RARs
- prohibit the Council from directing the CEO, an authorised employee or a consultant in preparing the RAR or directing the CEO to engage a particular consultant

- require the CEO and authorised employees to disclose conflicts of interests in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*, and not undertake any DAP functions in which they have a conflict of interest.

The Regulations are available on the [WA Legislation website](#).

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

WALGA [Advocacy Positions](#) 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform and 6.4 Development Assessment Panels (see Attachment A).

## **COMMENT**

Local Governments have one month to consider and implement the appropriate authorisations, and any resulting changes to systems and processes. WALGA will produce template authorisations and will host an officer information session with the relevant departments to assist Local Governments.

While Councils will be prevented from directing staff in the preparation of RARs, the administration can continue to brief Council on the content and progress of any DAP applications. There are no changes to the composition of DAPs.

WALGA will continue to oppose changes that erode Local Government autonomy and influence in the WA planning system and will continue to advocate for reforms that recognise the benefits of local decision making in planning.

WALGA is commencing a review of its Development Assessment Panel advocacy position and will consult with the sector and zones as part of that process.

Questions regarding the Regulations can be directed to the local government reform team at [actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au) or the DAP secretariat at [daps@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:daps@dplh.wa.gov.au).

**For noting.**

### **6.4.2.3 2025 Determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members**

*By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance*

## **Background**

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (SAT) has issued its 2025 determination in relation to Local Government Chief Executive Officer remuneration and Elected Member fees and allowances.

WALGA made a submission to SAT on behalf of the sector late last year. The submission was considered by Zones and State Council in November/December last year. WALGA's submission recommended:

1. A 4% increase to Elected Member fees and allowances and CEO remuneration bands.
2. An increase to the Regional/Isolation Allowance, and publication of clear guidance to the sector outlining how the Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings.
3. The creation of a new fee category for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members without bands, with the fee set at a level which recognizes the skills and knowledge required for such a role, and that the new category provide a fee for the independent chair position as well as independent member positions.

## **Attachment**

- [2025 Determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Council Members](#)

## **Comment**

On 4 April, SAT released its latest Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members Determination.

In summary, the 2025 Determination provides for the following:

- A 3.5% increase to CEO remuneration band ranges (plus the 0.5% additional Superannuation Guarantee).
- A 3.5% increase to the fee band ranges and some allowances for Elected Members (exclusive of superannuation where relevant).
- A reduction of the four band ranges for independent committee members to one band, with the range to be from \$0 to \$450.
- Provision for reimbursement of expenses for independent committee members has also been determined for the first time.
- A determination as to the rates for the independent chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee will be determined at a future date, to coincide with the commencement of the legislative changes.

The Tribunal have also committed to conducting a comprehensive survey of Local Governments in the latter half of 2025 to assess the:

- placement of CEOs within their band and the adequacy of the current remuneration ranges;
- placement of Elected Members within their band and the adequacy of the current fee ranges and suitability of allowances;
- effectiveness of the Regional/Isolation Allowance, Housing Allowance and motor vehicle provisions; and
- attraction and retention issues for CEOs and executives, particularly in the regions.

The Tribunal will then review the eligibility criteria to receive the Regional/Isolation Allowance, as well as the quantum and effectiveness of the Allowance.

The Determination comes into effect from 1 July 2025.

## **For noting**

## **7.0 Matters for Consideration**

### **7.1 Financial Statement**

Proposed by: Executive Officer

Attachments: Income & Expenditure –01/07/2024 to 31/03/2025

#### **COMMENT**

Refer Financial Statement on next page

Reconciled balances of account as at 31 March 2025 –

Cheque Account (229 492)	\$31,700.09
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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Financial Statement for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 be received.

<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>Moved: Cr Nicholls</b>	<b>Seconded: Cr Walton</b>
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**That the Financial Statement for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 be received.**

**Carried**



**MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**1/07/2024 to 31/03/2025**

**Bank Balance (as Per B/S) 01/07/24**

**\$21,542.53**

**Income**

Date	Source	Amount
29/11/2024	Shire of Sandstone – Annual subscription	\$2,800.00
02/12/2024	Shire of Murchison – Annual subscription	\$2,800.00
02/12/2024	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
	<b>Total Income to 31 March 2025</b>	<b>\$16,800.00</b>

**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
	<b>Total Expenditure to 31 March 2025</b>	<b>\$6642.44</b>

**Reconciliation**

Balance Bought Forward 01/07/2024	\$21,542.53
Add Income Received	\$16,800.00
Less Expenditure	\$6,642.44
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$31,700.09</b>
<b>Balance as per Bank Statement 31 March 2025</b>	<b>\$31,700.09</b>

<b>MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE FINANCIAL STATEMENT</b> <b>1/07/2024 to 31/03/2025</b>			
<b>Account</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Projected</b>
	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25
<b>Income</b>			
General Subscriptions	16,800	16,800	16,800
Interest Earned	20	0	0
Reimbursements			
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>16,820</b>	<b>16,800</b>	<b>16,800</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Meeting Expenses	4,000	1,760	4,000
Teleconferences			
Special Meetings & Workshops			
Bank Fees & Charges	20	0	0
Reimbursable Expenses			
Unclassified Expenses (Minute Book)	100	0	0
Zone Representative Gratuities	2,500		2,500
Executive Officer Services	8,000	4000	8,000
Executive Officer Reimbursements	2,000	882	2,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>6,642</b>	<b>16,500</b>
<b>Net Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>10,158</b>	<b>300</b>

## 7.2 Budget 2025 - 2026

Proposed by: Executive Officer

### BACKGROUND

The 2024-25 Budget was adopted at the April 2024 meeting. The Zone has usually considered the subscriptions for the new financial year at this time in preparation for member Shires own budgets.

### COMMENT

The Zone budget for 2024/2025 is likely to result in a small deficit which can be funded by the surpluses carried forward over a number of years. It is suggested that Member Shire subscriptions remain at \$2,800.00 each, excluding GST for 2025-26.

The honorariums approved for 2024-25 which are due to be paid, are –

- Zone President \$600
- Zone Deputy President \$400
- Zone Representative to WALGA \$1,500

There are proposed increases to the Executive Officer Reimbursements (+\$100) to cover increased travel and accommodation costs, and the Unclassified Expenditure account (+500) to cover the costs of getting minutes bound which has not been done for a number of years.

If further expense is incurred by the Zone through unforeseen circumstances, an additional charge may be required from each Shire, however the surplus funds being held may accommodate any eventuality.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the draft Budget for 2025-26 be adopted, incorporating –

- a) Member Shire subscriptions of \$2,800.00 per Shire, excluding GST, and
- b) Honorariums be set at the same level as applied last year.
  - Zone President \$600
  - Zone Deputy President \$400
  - Zone Representative to WALGA \$1,500

**RESOLUTION      Moved: CEO Holland    Seconded: Cr McGorman**

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**That the draft Budget for 2025-26 be adopted, incorporating –**

- a) Member Shire subscriptions of \$2,800.00 per Shire, excluding GST, and**
- b) Honorariums be set at the same level as applied last year.**
  - Zone President \$600**
  - Zone Deputy President \$400**
  - Zone Representative to WALGA \$1,500**

**Carried**

## Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

### Budget 2025-2026

Account	Budget 2024-25	Estimated Actual 2024-25	Budget 2025-26
<b>Income</b>			
General Subscriptions	16,800	16,800	16,800
Interest Earned	20	0	20
Reimbursements	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>16,820</b>	<b>16,800</b>	<b>16,820</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Meeting Expenses Teleconferences Special Meetings & Workshops	4,000	4,000	4,000
Bank Fees & Charges	20	0	20
Reimbursable Expenses Unclassified Expenses (Minute Book)	100	0	600
Zone Representative Gratuities	2,500	2,500	2,500
Executive Officer Services	8,000	8,000	8,000
Executive Officer Reimbursements	2,000	2,000	2,100
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>16,500</b>	<b>17,220</b>
<b>Net Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>(400)</b>

### **7.3 Request for Support – Shire of Carnarvon**

Proposed by: President Eddie Smith – Shire of Carnarvon

#### **BACKGROUND**

The following email was received by Cr Price from the President of the Shire of Carnarvon requesting the support of the zone with regard to issues arising due to child neglect.

**Subject:** FOR THE ATTENTION THE MAYOR/PRESIDENT - REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Greetings from the Shire of Carnarvon.

The Shire of Carnarvon Council is seeking your support to bring attention to the Government's current failures to address the ongoing issues of child neglect. We as a Council feel that the needs of these children are not being addressed by the State and the Government needs to be held to account.

The Shire of Carnarvon endorsed a Vote of No Confidence at the February 2025 Council Meeting (refer attached), and I am respectfully requesting that you consider putting this, or a similar motion to your Council and also to your WALGA Zone Meeting.

Please feel free to contact me on 0438 911 465 should you wish to discuss further.

Regards and thank you for your consideration.

**Eddie Smith**

Shire President

<https://carnarvon.wa.gov.au/>

P: (08) 9941 0000

Their meeting resolution is on the next few pages.



## **SHIRE OF CARNARVON ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – FEBRUARY 2025 URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE PRESIDING MEMBER OR BY A DECISION OF THE COUNCIL**

### **JUSTIFICATION FOR A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT HANDLING OF CHILDREN AT RISK**

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#### **Systemic Failures in Child Protection Services**

Despite multiple inquiries highlighting systemic neglect, governments have reduced funding for frontline child protection services in regional areas like Carnarvon, increasing the risks for vulnerable children.

#### **Failure to Implement Key Inquiries & Royal Commission Recommendations**

- The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017) made over 400 recommendations, many of which remain unimplemented at both State and Federal levels.
- The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory (2017) exposed widespread abuse in juvenile detention centres, including Don Dale, yet key reforms have been ignored.

#### **Overrepresentation of Indigenous Children in Out-of-Home Care**

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 10 times more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children (AIHW, 2022).
- The Family Matters Report (2023) highlights the increasing rate of Indigenous child removals despite government commitments to reduce these numbers.
- The failure to invest in early intervention and community-led solutions has exacerbated intergenerational trauma and the breakdown of family structures.

## **2. Youth Justice System in Crisis**

#### **High Rates of Youth Offending**

- Well documented evidence of young offenders who have over 400 counts of offending prior to turning 15
- In WA, NT, and QLD, Indigenous children make up over 80% of those in detention, reflecting the at risk environment they live in
- Rather than addressing the root causes of crime, governments continue to rely on punitive detention measures, leading to a revolving-door justice system that fails to rehabilitate young offenders.

### **3. Failure of Government Programs & Service Reductions in Regional WA**

#### **The Failure of Target 120 and Other Youth Programs**

- Target 120, a key WA Government initiative aimed at reducing youth crime, has failed to produce meaningful results, particularly in towns like Carnarvon, Broome, and Derby.
- Reports from community leaders indicate that youth crime continues to rise in regional areas, despite Target 120's presence, due to insufficient funding, lack of wraparound services, and inadequate community engagement.
- Government data itself shows that the program has failed to meet its goals, with increasing youth reoffending rates and ongoing community safety concerns.

#### **Cuts to Youth Services & Early Intervention Programs**

- The closure or reduction of youth programs, family support services, and mental health resources in regional WA has worsened the crisis for at-risk children.
- In Carnarvon, Broome, and other regional towns, the withdrawal of crisis support, diversionary programs, and rehabilitation services has left vulnerable children with nowhere to turn.
- No service operates past 5pm in these towns with systemic at risk youth. Services shut when they are needed most.
- The State Government's own cuts to regional service delivery have resulted in a loss of essential youth outreach services, forcing more children onto the streets without supervision, support, or protection.

### **4. Rising Youth Crime and Social Breakdown in WA**

#### **Escalating Youth Crime in Regional WA**

- Carnarvon, Broome, Derby, and other regional WA towns have seen a significant rise in youth crime and antisocial behaviour, directly linked to the failure of government intervention programs.
- Local businesses, police, and community members report that children as young as 7 or 8 years old are frequently seen roaming the streets at night, engaging in criminal activity, or placing themselves in dangerous situations due to a complete lack of supervision or support.
- The government response has been reactive, focusing on punitive measures rather than addressing the underlying social and economic issues leading to youth crime.

#### **Impact of Service Reductions on At-Risk Youth**

- Withdrawing or reducing regional services has directly contributed to child neglect, family breakdown, and increased youth crime.
- The lack of safe spaces, crisis accommodation, and after-hours support in places like Carnarvon has created a crisis where children are left to fend for themselves on the streets.
- Overburdened police and local services are being forced to pick up the slack, despite having neither the funding nor resources to provide long-term solutions.

### **5. Mental Health and Social Welfare Failures**

#### **Severe Underfunding of Youth Mental Health Services**

- Indigenous youth suicide rates in WA remain among the highest in the world, yet mental health services continue to be critically underfunded in regional communities.
- In 2023, the WA and NT Children's Commissioners warned of a growing mental health crisis among at-risk youth, with governments failing to address the root causes of despair, trauma, and self-harm.

- Without proper mental health interventions, at-risk youth are left in crisis, further increasing their vulnerability to criminal behaviour, substance abuse, and violence.

#### Housing Crisis and Family Instability

- The lack of social housing and crisis accommodation in regional WA has worsened child neglect and homelessness, forcing more families into unstable and unsafe living conditions.
- Domestic violence and substance abuse remain leading causes of child protection interventions, yet government support services for affected families have been reduced.
- Governments have ignored repeated warnings from community leaders that the housing crisis is directly linked to rising youth crime and child protection concerns.

Conclusion: A Vote of No Confidence is Justified

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

*The Council of the Shire of Carnarvon, representing its community and acknowledging the escalating crisis of children and youth at risk in our region and across Australia:*

- 1. Approves a Vote of No Confidence in the State and Federal Governments for their systemic failure to address the worsening crisis affecting vulnerable children and youth, leading to increased crime, social breakdown, and harm to our communities.**
- 2. Condemns the Government's ongoing neglect and failure to act on well-documented inquiries, expert recommendations, and community-led solutions that could have prevented the crisis from reaching its current state.**
- 3. Demands urgent and immediate intervention, including:**
  - *A full-scale overhaul of the current youth intervention strategies in WA, including the failed Target 120 program, and an urgent redirection of funding to community-led initiatives that actually work.*
  - *The immediate restoration and expansion of essential youth services that have been cut from regional WA, including mental health, diversion programs, crisis housing, and family support services.*
  - *An increase in frontline service resources in regional areas, including Carnarvon, to address the youth crisis with a combination of enforcement and prevention, rather than reactive policing alone.*
  - *The establishment of a dedicated Regional Youth Crisis Response Taskforce, in consultation with local governments, Aboriginal community organisations, and law enforcement, to implement a real and measurable strategy to tackle this crisis.*
  - *The State and Federal Governments to formally report on the progress of previous inquiries, royal commissions, and policy commitments, ensuring transparency and accountability on their failures to act.*
- 4. Urges the State and Federal Governments to recognise that their current approach is failing, and that without decisive action, they will continue to abandon the most vulnerable children in our communities, further fuelling crime, social collapse, and intergenerational harm.**



## MOTION

### COUNCIL RESOLUTION OCM 01/02/25

Moved: Cr Dudley Maslen

Seconded: Cr Paul Kelly

*The Council of the Shire of Carnarvon, representing its community and acknowledging the escalating crisis of children and youth at risk in our region and across Australia:*

- 1. Approves a Vote of No Confidence in the State and Federal Governments for their systemic failure to address the worsening crisis affecting vulnerable children and youth, leading to increased crime, social breakdown, and harm to our communities.*
- 2. Condemns the Government's ongoing neglect and failure to act on well-documented inquiries, expert recommendations, and community-led solutions that could have prevented the crisis from reaching its current state.*
- 3. Demands urgent and immediate intervention, including:*
  - A full-scale overhaul of the current youth intervention strategies in WA, including the failed Target 120 program, and an urgent redirection of funding to community-led initiatives that actually work.*
  - The immediate restoration and expansion of essential youth services that have been cut from regional WA, including mental health, diversion programs, crisis housing, and family support services.*
  - An increase in frontline service resources in regional areas, including Carnarvon, to address the youth crisis with a combination of enforcement and prevention, rather than reactive policing alone.*
  - The establishment of a dedicated Regional Youth Crisis Response Taskforce, in consultation with local governments, Aboriginal community organisations, and law enforcement, to implement a real and measurable strategy to tackle this crisis.*
  - The State and Federal Governments to formally report on the progress of previous inquiries, royal commissions, and policy commitments, ensuring transparency and accountability on their failures to act.*
- 4. Urges the State and Federal Governments to recognise that their current approach is failing, and that without decisive action, they will continue to abandon the most vulnerable children in our communities, further fuelling crime, social collapse, and intergenerational harm.*

FOR: Crs Eddie Smith, Burke Maslen, Marco Ferreirinha, Luke Vandeleur, Paul Kelly, Dudley Maslen and Adam Cottrell

AGAINST: Nil

ABSENT: Cr L Skender

CARRIED BY SIMPLE MAJORITY 7/0

## COMMENT

The Zone has an item addressing some of these issues at item 7.4.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA supports the resolution of the Shire of Carnarvon's Vote of No Confidence at the February 2025 Council Meeting with regard to issues relating to children and youth at risk.

**RESOLUTION**                      **Moved: Cr Walton**                      **Seconded: Cr Nicholls**

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**That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA supports the resolution of the Shire of Carnarvon's Vote of No Confidence at the February 2025 Council Meeting with regard to issues relating to children and youth at risk.**

**Motion Lapsed**

#### **ALTERNATE RESOLUTION**

**RESOLUTION**                      **Moved: Cr Walton**                      **Seconded: Cr Nicholls**

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**That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA understands the Shire of Carnarvon's frustrations and accordingly supports the resolution of the Shire of Carnarvon's Vote of No Confidence at the February 2025 Council Meeting with regard to issues relating to children and youth at risk.**

**Carried**

#### **7.4 Increasing the Department of Communities Presence in Regional and Remote Western Australia**

Proposed by    Shire of Cue

*Attachments*    *Nil*

#### **BACKGROUND**

A report released on 27 March 2025 by Human Rights Watch indicate that Western Australia has the highest rate of Indigenous child removals in the country. This alarming statistic highlights the urgent need for systemic change in how communities are supported, particularly in rural and remote areas where service availability is minimal.

According to the report, Indigenous children in WA are disproportionately represented in the child protection system, emphasizing the significant gap between service availability and community needs.

Due to a lack of Department of Communities presence, regional and remote areas often lack adequate social services, leaving families without the necessary support to address challenges before they escalate to child removal. The removal of children from their families and communities disrupts cultural connections, leading to long-term social and emotional harm.

A more consistent presence of the Department of Communities can facilitate partnerships with police, schools, and healthcare providers to address anti-social behaviour and provide protective measures for children at risk.

## COMMENT

The Murchison Country Zone of WALGA is requesting that WALGA advocate the State Government to increase staffing and resources to deploy more social workers and community support officers in remote areas.

An increase in these services will enable local partnerships between the Department of Communities, police, educational institutions, and healthcare providers to develop a holistic approach to child safety and well-being. Every town that has these services should also have a Department of Communities office to engage with and support families as well as implement culturally sensitive programs that strengthen family connections and reduce the risk of child removal.

By increasing the Department of Communities' presence in regional and remote Western Australia, the State Government can take a critical step toward addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child protection system. This investment will not only support families but also foster community resilience and protect cultural heritage. WALGA is requested to advocate for this fundamental change, aligning local government efforts with the broader goal of social justice and community support.

## RECOMMENDATION

That Murchison Country Zone of WALGA request that WALGA advocate for increasing the Department of Communities Presence in Regional and Remote Western Australia.

## RESOLUTION

Moved: CEO Towell

Seconded: Cr Nicholls

---

**That Murchison Country Zone of WALGA request that WALGA advocate for increasing the Department of Communities Presence in Regional and Remote Western Australia.**

**Carried**

## 7.5 Climate Change Advocacy Position

Proposed by President R Foulkes Taylor, Deputy President L Price

### BACKGROUND

The Climate Change Advocacy Position was considered by WALGA State Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March this year. As the Zone only has 2 meetings a year the Zone as a group had not considered the item. It is likely to come up again for consideration again at State Council prior to our November meeting.

The WALGA State Council agenda item presented in March is below.

### 8 MATTERS FOR DECISION

#### 8.1 CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCACY POSITION

*By Jade Mains, Senior Policy Advisor Environment*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 41 Climate Change with the following advocacy position:

*Climate Change significantly impacts Local Governments' operations and responsibilities, as well as their communities.*

*Local Government is committed to taking climate action, including by:*

- *reducing operational emissions in line with Australian and Western Australian Government 2050 net zero targets*
- *providing leadership and support to their communities to reduce carbon emissions*
- *embedding climate risk management into their operations to enhance adaptation and build community resilience to the impacts of climate change*
- *working with other levels of Government and key stakeholders to ensure policy and on-ground programs are effective, equitable and targeted.*

*WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to:*

1. *Ensure Australia and Western Australia meet net zero emissions targets through:*
  - a. *enacting legislation which sets clear, measurable targets for emission reduction*
  - b. *developing and funding coordinated emissions reduction policies, guidance and programs*
  - c. *acknowledging the role of Local Government as an implementation partner in emissions reduction policy and planning.*
2. *Empower Local Government to accelerate adaptation and build resilience in their communities through:*

- a. *ensuring the roles and responsibilities set out under the Council of Australian Governments Roles and Responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation in Australia are implemented and adequately resourced*
- b. *providing up to date, consistent and accessible data to enable evidence-based decision making and investment*
- c. *developing national guidance on adaptation responses to facilitate coordinated and equitable planning and implementation.*
3. *Provide funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable on-ground implementation, including for*
  - a. *the implementation of the Regional Climate Alliance Program across Western Australia*
  - b. *the establishment and maintenance of corporate emission inventories and action plans*
  - c. *providing transformational investment to facilitate emission reduction activities*
  - . *undertaking climate risk assessments and the development of adaptation action plans*
  - a. *a dedicated adaptation fund to address localised climate risks and build climate resilience.*

#### **ZONE CONSIDERATION**

<b>Avon Midland Country Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported
<b>East Metropolitan Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported
<b>Gascoyne Country Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported
<b>Kimberley Country Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported
<b>Murchison Country Zone</b>	No meeting held
<b>Northern Country Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported
<b>Pilbara Country Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported
<b>South East Metropolitan Zone</b>	No meeting held (no quorum)
<b>South West Country Zone</b>	WALGA recommendation supported

#### **CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE**

That State Council replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 41 Climate Change with the following advocacy position:

*WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to:*

- 1. provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to deliver a climate change response that improves and maintains the quality of life for all Western Australians for generations to come.*
- 2. provides funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable local communities to respond to the effects of climate change*

#### **CENTRAL METROPOLITAN ZONE**

That the recommendation be endorsed with the following amendment to lb:

*developing and funding coordinated emissions reduction policies, guidance, programs and standards.*

#### **GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE**

The Zone supported the recommendation. However, the Zone also requests that WALGA remains open minded to further conversations on climate change.

#### **GREAT SOUTHERN COUNTRY ZONE**

The Zone's motion to support the recommendation was defeated and the following comment was noted:

*The majority of Zone Delegates noted their Local Governments did not have adopted positions on climate change and those delegates considered they did not have a basis by which they could support the proposed WALGA advocacy position.*

#### **GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE**

That the GVROC note the WALGA recommendation for the State Council to replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 41 Climate Change with the advocacy position as presented and provide the following alternate simplified recommendation for consideration by WALGA and State Council:

*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 and Western Australian Governments to:*

- Prioritise and provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to deliver a climate change response that improves quality of life for all Western Australians for generations to come; and*
- Prioritise the provision of funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable local communities to respond to the effects of climate change.*

#### **NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE**

1. That the following additional points be included in the Climate Change Advocacy Position:

Section 2 - d. Australian and State Governments to lead on state-wide adaptation issues to ensure a cohesive strategic approach.

Section 3 - f. Australian and State Governments to provide funding for community members to implement mitigation actions and reduce carbon emissions.

2. That WALGA undertake a formal consultation process with Local Governments regarding the latest version of the Climate Change Advocacy Position (as amended to include the above changes to sections 2 and 3) to ensure that all Local Governments have an opportunity to provide considered feedback.

#### **PEEL COUNTRY ZONE**

That the Peel Country Zone supports the WALGA Climate Change Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda Item 81) subject to the following amendments underlined:

*Local Government is committed to taking climate action, including by:*

- reducing operational emissions in line with Australian and Western Australian Government 2050 net zero targets*
- providing leadership and support to their communities to reduce carbon emissions*
- embedding climate risk management into their operations to enhance adaptation and build community resilience to the impacts of climate change*
- working with other levels of Government and key stakeholders to ensure policy and on-ground programs are effective, equitable and targeted.*

*in a manner that does not compromise Western Australian productivity or impose an increased cost of living burden on Western Australians.*

*WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to:*

3. *Provide funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable on-ground implementation, including for:*
- a. the implementation of the Regional Climate Alliance Program across Western Australia*
  - b. the establishment and maintenance of corporate emission inventories and action plans*
  - c. providing transformational investment to facilitate emission reduction activities*
  - d. undertaking climate risk assessments and the development of adaptation action plans*
  - e. a dedicated adaptation fund to address localised climate risks and build climate resilience.*

WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to undertake these actions in a manner that does not compromise Western Australian productivity or impose an increased cost of living burden on Western Australians.

### **SOUTH METROPOLITAN ZONE**

That the South Metropolitan Zone supports State Council Agenda Item 8.1 with the first sentence of the updated Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position to read:

*Climate Change significantly impacts Local Governments' operations and responsibilities, as well as their communities.*

*We recognise that we are now facing a climate emergency. and more action is*

### **SECRETARIAT COMMENT**

WALGA notes the substantial feedback from the sector on the proposed updated Climate Change Advocacy Position and appreciates the sectors engagement on this item.

The 2018 Climate Change position was endorsed by the sector following extensive consultation, including through the Climate Change Discussion Paper. In the development of the 2025 updated position, a significant body of research was considered including bi-annual sector wide survey data on climate change activity within each Local Government collected in 2020, 2022 and 2024. A comprehensive review of the Australian and State legislative and policy context since 2018 was also conducted. Two workshops with Local Government officers to inform the development of the position were held in 2024. The draft Advocacy Position was then consulted on with the same officer network in the second half of 2024 for informal sector feedback and provided to the WALGA Environment Policy Team in December 2024 for their consideration and endorsement to take through to State Council.

The circulation of the draft position through the Zones follows the standard process of WALGA for engagement in updating and refining existing advocacy positions. This process ensures that all Local Governments have the opportunity to provide considered comments. The updating of this position is part of a broader initiative within the Policy portfolio to review and revise existing positions, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in an evolving political and policy landscape.

The proposed updated position does not materially depart from the existing 2018 position or its underlying intent. Rather, it aims to recognise the significant legislative and policy changes that have occurred since that time and to emphasise the need for practical leadership, support, and resources by other levels of Government for Local Governments to address the impacts within their communities. Simplifying the position, as put forward by the Central Coast and Goldfields Esperance Country Zones, is not proposed as it is considered

important that the position clearly and succinctly articulates the challenges and needs of the sector to inform WALGA's climate change advocacy to government and policy development. The position outlines specific asks for mitigation and adaptation activities separately, aligning with the policy development approaches of both the Australian and State Governments on Climate Change. Additionally, the position seeks to highlight the level of activity and action already being undertaken by the Local Government sector, acknowledging their significant contribution towards achieving government targets.



## COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 41 Climate Change with the following advocacy position:

*Climate Change significantly impacts Local Governments' operations and responsibilities, as well as their communities.*

*Local Government is committed to taking climate action, including by:*

- *reducing operational emissions in line with Australian and Western Australian Government 2050 net zero targets*
- *providing leadership and support to their communities to reduce carbon emissions*
- *embedding climate risk management into their operations to enhance adaptation and build community resilience to the impacts of climate change*
- *working with other levels of Government and key stakeholders to ensure policy and on ground programs are effective, equitable and targeted.*

*WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to:*

1. *Ensure Australia and Western Australia meet net zero emissions targets through:*
  - a. *enacting legislation which sets clear, measurable targets for emission reduction*
  - b. *developing and funding coordinated emissions reduction policies, guidance, programs and standards*
  - c. *acknowledging the role of Local Government as an implementation partner in emissions reduction policy and planning.*
2. *Empower Local Government to accelerate adaptation and build resilience in their communities through:*
  - a. *leading and resourcing on national and statewide adaptation issues to ensure a cohesive strategic approach*
  - b. *providing up to date, consistent and accessible data to enable evidence-based decision making and investment*
  - c. *developing national guidance on adaptation responses to facilitate coordinated and equitable planning and implementation.*
3. *Provide funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable on-ground implementation, including for:*
  - a. *the implementation of the Regional Climate Alliance Program across Western Australia*
  - b. *the establishment and maintenance of corporate emission inventories and action plans*
  - c. *providing transformational investment to facilitate emission reduction activities*
  - d. *undertaking climate risk assessments and the development of adaptation action plans*
  - e. *a dedicated adaptation fund to address localised climate risks and build climate resilience.*

## **COMMENT**

The President and Cr Price would like for the Zone to consider the proposed advocacy position at this meeting due to the complexity of the position and the possible impact and consequences of adopting it. This will enable to Murchison Country Zone of WALGA members to provide some input to Cr Price so that the views of the group are able to be conveyed to State Council by Cr Price when this is represented.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA considers the proposed WALGA Climate Change Advocacy Position for when it is next presented to State Council.

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<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>Moved: Cr Price</b>	<b>Seconded: Cr McGorman</b>
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**That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA considers the proposed WALGA Climate Change Advocacy Position for when it is next presented to State Council.**

**Motion Lapsed**

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<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>Moved: Cr Price</b>	<b>Seconded: Cr McGorman</b>
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**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**
- 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.**

**Carried**

## **7.6 Regional Development Australia Mid West Report**

Proposed by Mark Holdsworth

### **BACKGROUND**

Mr Mark Holdsworth has asked that the February 2025 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 Nicholls**      **Seconded: CEO Bohem**

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**That the Regional Development Australia Mid West Report be Received.**

**Carried**

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA MID WEST & GASCOYNE  
SUMMARY REGIONAL UPDATE: FEBRUARY 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 30<sup>th</sup> June 2030.

## **2.0 RDAMW&G FEBRUARY 2025 REPORT**

### **2.1 BOARD**

Applications for RDA Chair positions closed on 23 December 2024. All Chair positions are appointed by the Minister for Regional Development with 2025 appointments commencing on 1 April 2025 for a two-year period.

The Current Chair and Deputy Chair of RDAMW&G are:

- Yvonne Messina (Grain grower)

- Michael May (General Manager, Supply Chain Operations: Geraldton Fishermen's Co-Operative)

Including the Chair and Deputy Chair RDAMW&G has an 8-member board.

In late 2024 RDAMW&G Chair, Yvonne Messina was awarded the inaugural AICD Award for Governance Excellence in rural regional and remote Australia. The award was sponsored by Southern Ports.

**Action: Apart from the Chair role all RDA Board positions will be renewed after 30 June 2025.**

### 3.0 PROGRAM SUMMARY RDAMW&G

#### 3.1 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN PEOPLE

##### 3.1.1 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 has:

- Shared the business case occupational lists with DTWD. As the consequence the occupational lists have been updated.
- Facilitated briefings and informational sessions through 2025 including all Mid West and WALGA zone meetings and Chambers of Commerce (2 – 3 information sessions through 2025).

**Action: Monitor, support and facilitate regional briefings**

##### 3.1.2 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 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

December 2024		
Registrations	Number & Value of Grants	Sector of Grants
727 total registrations	2,200 Grants with a total value of \$74.8B	Community sector with a value of \$60.5B
392 users with active email alerts.		Business sector with a value of \$63.8B. Government sector with a value of \$49.2B Other with a value of \$4.5B.

4,415 email alerts		<i>Note: Some grants are for Community &amp; Business</i>
404 search queries (month) (tourism, arts, renewable energy)		

**Action: Review Funding agreement June 2025**

### 3.2 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN PLACES

#### 3.2.1 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.

As a member of the eight RDA Committees that make up the Northern RDA Alliance, submission to the Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia's Inquiry into Food, Energy, and Water Security.

**Action: RDA MW&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.**

#### 3.2.2 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 was prepared by the Murchison Executive Group (MEG) in collaboration with RDA & MWDC.

**Action: Murchison regional LG priorities. In progress systems-based review of regional priorities.**

### 3.3 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN SERVICES

#### 3.3.1 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.

Program Funders: RDAMW&G, Gascoyne Shires, Gascoyne Development Commission.

Interim opportunities were presented to the Gascoyne Region WALGA on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

**Action: Further prioritizing and costing of ranked priorities**

Opportunity (Ranked)	Action	Outcome
Define LG waste Infrastructure Capability	Determine location, capacity, capping costs and asset renewal cost & recycling services.	Knowing: - when landfills will be full. - Cost to cap, close and monitor. Cost for new facility.
LG waste services: Economic Assessment	Regional economic assessment of waste costs & revenues. 15 yr P&L to show key capex timing.	Clarity: - Actual cost of service. - Fees required. - Timing for reserves and future sites.
Regional waste resource and recovery strategy	Regional waste and resource recovery strategy.  Defined regional objectives.  Costed action plan and responsibilities.	Agreed single strategy.  Regional and local linkages.  Synergies for advocacy and funding.
Knowledge & training: operations mgt & strategic	Training guide & program: covering operations, mgt and strategic considerations	- More efficient operations. - Improved compliance. - Improved decision making.
High Risk, Low Volume waste.	Highly polluting, low volume waste.  Suitable treatments inc. options to fund collection & transport.	Regional roadmap solution. Underpin business cases & advocacy.  Avoid legacy pollution risk
Regional waste awareness & Education	- Regional awareness & education. - Beyond LG. - Customised messages to different stakeholders.	Improved: - alignment with 'clean & green' brand. - Recycling rates - Economies of scale.
Regional waste infrastructure & material flow mapping	- Broader regional view. - Map waste & recycling flows. - Broader consultation.	- Holistic regional view. - Improved economies of scale. - Regional collaboration. - Data transparency.
Regional Coordinator (role)	Coordinate planning & implementation of regional approach and projects.	- Build regional value. -
Off Site Waste support role: feasibility assessment	Assess delivery of support & administration services by staff remote to the region.	- Build linkages & synergies. - Take pressure off on-site staff.



### **3.4 REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: INVESTING IN REGIONS AND LOCAL ECONOMIES**

#### **3.4.1 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.

RDA has contributed to the:

- development of international knowledge and resource sharing relationship with Kenya, through an ongoing dialogue with the Kenyan High Commissioner in Canberra.
- a report on pastoral practices in the Laikipia Region (Kenya).
- participation at a showcase of regional initiatives at Parliament House.
- development of brochures and supporting material.
- submission to the National Economic Development Awards for Excellence (Category: Regions under 15,000 people). The submission reached the finalist stage. Alys McKeogh (Carey Downs Station) and Dana Kelly (National IYRP Coordinator) attended the awards dinner in Melbourne.

***Action: Ongoing participation in the IYRP Committee. Provision of funding. Management of relationship with Kenyan High Commission.***

#### **3.4.2 Mining Industry & Community Relationships**

A report and best practice guide that can be used by local communities and mining companies to achieve sustainable local and regional outcomes.

**Status:**

**Phase 1:** Interviews with mining company and all Local Governments in the Murchison region have been completed. A draft report has been prepared and published.

**Phase 2:** A forum was held with Murchison LG's and Mining companies on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in Geraldton.

**Action: Follow up activities included:**

- (i) **Terms of Reference for a Murchison Industry Group (completed)**
- (ii) **Murchison regional LG priorities. In progress systems-based review of regional priorities.**

#### **3.4.3 Murchison Regional Tourism Activities assessment.**

In partnership with the MEG, RDA has provided funding for the preparation of a report to discuss options for the Murchison Tourism offer and associated funding.

#### **3.4.3 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.**

**Mark Holdsworth, Executive Officer**

[eo@rdamwq.com.au](mailto:eo@rdamwq.com.au) / 0425 760 849

Ms Joanne Fabling of the Mid West Chamber of addressed the meeting outlining the programs and partnerships and activities of the MWCCI.

Mr Shane Love Leader of the Nationals spoke about the recent State election including the challenges being faced by newly elected members.

## **7.7 Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements AGRN962 & AGRN1021**

Proposed by Shire of Yalgoo

Attachments AGRN962 & AGRN 1021 Non Approval Letters

Confidential Legal Advice can be shared with interested local governments upon request

### **BACKGROUND**

The Shire of Yalgoo is appalled by the lack of transparency and oversight of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia (DRFAWA).

Against the interests of the community and wider public DFES has outright denied two claims submitted by the Shire.

At 10:00pm on Friday the 3rd of January 2025 the Shire received two letters from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Recovery Funding Director. These two Non approval of Cost Estimate letters are attached.

Following this correspondence Administration has sought specifics from DFES as to why the claims have been rejected and all evidence presented so far suggests that Recovery and Resilience are not acting in the interests of the public in a fair and reasonable way.

The Shire of Yalgoo have presented a number of concerns and questions to DFES regarding the process and they are yet to provide responses. Even in meeting with their Director and Lawyers Recovery and Resilience continued to provide inaccurate information. Initial Freedom of Information inquiries stated that to receive our assessed application and associated correspondence it would take more than 6 months.

During interviews on 6PR the Acting DFES Deputy Commissioner Strategy and Emergency Management Kate Vivian stated that flood damage assessment contracts and civil works were too expensive before claiming that the Shire had acted in a way which was not the responsible spending of taxpayer money. She eventually settled on applicable procurement processes not being followed. DFES has never had any evidence to make such claims and cost effectiveness has never been part of the states remit in assisting with claims under the DRFAWA guidelines.

Evidence provided to DFES as part of their black box assessment over three years was never described to the Shire as “insufficient” during any part of the process. The Shire is also aware that DFES have provided markedly different advice to other local governments that undertook a lump sum tender or similar process.

DFES have hinged their refusal on Council choosing a compliant tender which did not have a granular per defect breakdown of the works but rather put forward a lump sum per road (which is what was required for the tender). DFES chose to ignore or did not provide the option of submitting the actual per defect break down which accompanied every invoice submitted by the tenderer for 6 months prior to this refusal.

DFES have deemed a proposal (scope of work and schedule of rates), purchase order and subsequent approved invoices for a WALGA preferred supplier as insufficient evidence to support the engagement of a contractor.

A competitive tender response to a scope of works (approved by DFES) was considered in their opinion as insufficient evidence that the price tendered only related to the scope of works. The scope of works was already costed by an engineer with appropriate experience and this estimate was easily comparable to the lump sum figures and other submitted tenders.

In meeting with DFES the Shire maintains that their responses to the following issues were insufficient or outright false:

- DFES never informed the Shire of Yalgoo that any provided evidence was “insufficient”.
- Assertions made by officers assessing the Shires Claims – That it was difficult to understand the Shires Purchasing Policy
- Deletion by DFES officers of significant amounts of information in the Shires applications which had to be resubmitted
- Detrimental comments and bias expressed towards the contractor engaged by the Shire
- Significant period of time (6 months plus) that no case officer was assigned
- Submission of AGN962 which was then ignored after DFES staff provided advice to combine AGRN962 and AGRN1021 – The Director of Recovery attempted to refute this claim in a recent meeting so email evidence from their staff was provided.
- DFES staff then reversing their prior decision and determining that an assessment could not be made of the two combined events
- Repeated confusion (of DFES staff) between the Shires claims and claims by other local governments (including providing sensitive information to the incorrect local government)
- Either a lack of understanding or purposeful deceit in acknowledging that the tender was requested on a lump sum basis
- What further cost effective evidence could be provided to ensure the tender only related to the scope of works (that was the basis for and included in the tender)
- No avenues for internal or external review
- Reasons why DFES officers chose to identify other potential issues after the letter received 3/01/2025 that are not unreasonable and have assurance controls (ie baseless claims or where DFES has not requested evidence)

## COMMENT

When approaching the previous Minister for Emergency Services the DRFA was described by them as “a complex reimbursement scheme with significant assurance and evidentiary requirements”. We believe the so called complexity is why the Minister referred the Shire back to the original decision maker instead of providing oversight.

The Shire is developing a submission to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman) however trust in this system has been diminished by recent Corruption and Crime Commission findings.

The Shire has written to the Premier and recently appointed Emergency Services Minister detailing our concerns now that the election caretaker period has ended. Lawyers for DFES have also stated as recently as the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 that they continue to assess the information supplied by the Shire of Yalgoo and its contractors.

A number of other options for review that would normally exist in relation to a State Government Officer Decision are not applicable to DRFAWA such as the State Administrative Tribunal. Based on the Shires Legal advice a Judicial Review is possible in the Supreme Court of WA and this must be commenced within 6 months of the decision. Council have approved funding for legal proceedings in its most recent budget review and will make a determination on whether to proceed to court at their Ordinary meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

Ministerial assistance may not be forthcoming and the recent election has eaten into the allowable timeline for this action.

WALGA will shortly consider a draft submission on State Recovery Arrangements. While the DRFAWA are not within the scope of the State Emergency Management WALGA still recommends in its submission that:

1. The State Government should develop streamlined, appropriate and effective funding mechanisms to invest in Local Government recovery and resilience building.
2. Investment in recovery should not be limited by the eligibility requirements of the DRFA-WA and should meet the recovery requirements of Local Governments and Communities.
3. The DRFA-WA must be urgently reviewed to streamline administration, approvals and evidentiary requirements, address the cash-flow impacts of the reimbursement model and enable resilient reconstruction / betterment following a disaster.
4. The State Government should invest in effective risk assessment and risk reduction, in addition to ensuring to providing effective and fit for purpose State Recovery Arrangements.

<b>Impact on Local Government Sector</b> Impact on Local Government sector without intervention	<b>High</b>	Medium	Low
<b>Reach</b> Number of member Local Governments affected	Sector-wide	<b>Significant (multiple regions, Zones, or bands)</b>	Few
<b>Influence</b> Capacity to influence decision makers	High	<b>Medium</b>	Low
<b>Principles</b> Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence	<b>Strong</b>	Partial	Peripheral
<b>Clarity</b> Policy change needed is clear and well-defined	<b>Clear</b>	Partial	Unclear
<b>Decision-maker support</b> Level of support among decision-makers (political and administrative)	High	Medium	<b>Low</b>
<b>Public support</b> Level of support among the public or other stakeholders	<b>High</b>	Medium	Low
<b>Positive consequences for WALGA</b> Prospect of positive consequences for WALGA. E.g. enhanced standing among members or leverage for other issues.	High	<b>Medium</b>	Low

<p><b>Negative consequences for WALGA</b></p> <p>Prospect of negative consequences for WALGA for not undertaking the advocacy effort. E.g. diminished standing among members or other stakeholders.</p>	High	<b>Medium</b>	Low
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <p>Potential for partnerships with other stakeholders</p>	<b>Yes (3+)</b>	Possibly (1-2)	No (0)

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA reach out to their membership calling for evidence or assistance from local governments who have been adversely affected by the conduct, interpretations and decisions of state government employees administering the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia and inform them of the Shire of Yalgoo's chosen method/s of review pending their Ordinary Meeting scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

**RESOLUTION**      **Moved: CEO Holland**      **Seconded: Cr Walton**

**That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA reach out to their membership calling for evidence or assistance from local governments who have been adversely affected by the conduct, interpretations and decisions of state government employees administering the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia and inform them of the Shire of Yalgoo's chosen method/s of review pending their Ordinary Meeting scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.**

**Motion Lapsed**

## ALTERNATE RESOLUTION

**RESOLUTION**      **Moved: CEO Holland**      **Seconded: Cr Walton**

**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.**

**Carried**



Our Reference: D37021; 25/001821

Ian Holland  
Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Yalgoo  
37 Gibbons St  
YALGOO WA 6635

Dear Ian,

**Non approval of Cost Estimate for Essential Public Asset Reconstruction Works under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia (DRFAWA) for AGRN962 – Storm, Heavy Rain and Associated Flooding in the Mid-West and South West Land Division (1-5 March 2021).**

I refer to Essential Public Asset Reconstruction (EPAR) application submitted by the Shire for AGRN962 - Storm, Heavy Rain and Associated Flooding in the Mid-West and Southwest Land Division (1-5 March 2021). I acknowledge that the process to review the cost estimates for AGRN962 has been complex and complicated given the Shire was impacted by a subsequent event in late March 2022, AGRN1021 - Flooding Midwest and Gascoyne (26 March - 3 April 2022), prior to the assessment of the AGRN962 submission being completed.

Due to the impact of AGRN1021, changes were required to the AGRN962 submission, where roads in the AGRN962 submission that were re-damaged as a direct result of AGRN1021, needed to be removed from the AGRN962 submission and included as part of the AGRN1021 submission. This resulted in additional work for both the Shire and DFES Recovery Funding.

In support of the Shire's attempts to seek reimbursement of eligible costs of the reconstruction of assets damaged as a direct result of the event through the DRFAWA, DFES had sought three Allowable Time Limit extensions from the National Emergency Management Agency. The first being 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, the second from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 and the final from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024.

There are two stages to complete the approval process for EPAR works, Stage 1 – Scope of Works, and Stage 2 – Procurement and estimated reconstruction costs. For AGRN962, the Shire's Scope of Works was approved via letter on 15 February 2024. In this letter, the Shire was advised of the actions required to establish the estimated reconstruction costs and verify the applicable procurement processes were followed in obtaining pricing information. Many meetings, follow-up emails and significant effort by Sarah Aulin, Senior Recovery Funding and Policy Officer were designed to assist the Shire through Stage 2 of the approval process.



On the 6 December 2024, DFES, the Shire, and the Shire's consultant Core Business Australia met to discuss what information was still required to progress the application through the EPAR process to ensure all assurance requirements were being met. On 10 December 2024, the additional information required was confirmed in email by DFES to the Shire, and Core Business Australia. DFES also confirmed the additional information required to be provided by 13 December 2024 to enable time for DFES Recovery Funding to review the information provided and complete this to determine an outcome prior to the allowable time limit expiring on the 31 December 2024.

The primary assurance requirements related to:

- C3. Estimated reconstruction costs are developed in accordance with these arrangements and verified by an engineer or quantity surveyor with the appropriate level of expertise and experience.
- C4. Applicable procurement processes are followed.

Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) provides technical advice to DFES in determining the C3 assurance requirement as being met, with the C4 assurance requirement being assessed by DFES Recovery Funding.

The DFES Recovery Funding team and MRWA have completed their review of the submission against the DRFAWA EPAR Cost Estimate assurance requirements and determined there is insufficient evidence to support the requirements for C3 and C4 as being met.

From a procurement policy perspective, it was unclear what the Shire's applicable procurement processes were. It was noted that different versions of the policy were provided through the assessment process, and it was difficult to determine what was the applicable procurement process and has sufficient evidence been provided that demonstrates the applicable process had been followed. As an example, there is insufficient evidence to support the engagement of Core Business Australia to undertake the damage assessment following the event and the ongoing nature of their engagement to perform project management activities including the on-ground project supervision and how this engagement aligns with the Shire's procurement processes.

In relation to the Civil Works contract, there were also inconsistencies in the evidence to demonstrate the Shire had followed their applicable procurement processes. As an example, both DFES and MRWA were unable to verify that the lump sum cost provided by the respondent was to undertake the works specifically identified in the approved Scope of Works. The Tender Request asked for a Pricing Schedule to be completed on a per road /per defect basis, however, the Shire accepted a tender where the respondent only provided a price on a per road basis. Insufficient evidence was provided to support why the tender had been accepted on this basis and what assurance the Shire had that the price tendered was only to complete the works outlined in the approved scope of works. Consequently, neither DFES or MRWA were satisfied that either C3 or C4 was met for this Works contract.

In relation to the project management component of the estimate, aside from concerns regarding the level of evidence to support the engagement of Core Business Australia, there was considerable concern on the proposed cost and basis of assumptions used in estimating project management costs. The proposed hours for project management, project supervision and mileage were considered excessive for the approved scope of works and a significant re-work of this element of the estimate would be required.

Given the issues identified in relation to procurement processes, as part of our diligence processes, it was checked to see if any issues in procurement had been identified through audits undertaken by the Office of Auditor General (OAG). In the council minutes for the Ordinary Council Meeting – 26 May 2023 the "Report to the Minister of Local Government on significant Audit Findings 2020-21" was tabled which identified issues with compliance with the Internal Purchasing Policy of the Shire. Issues identified in the report tabled appeared consistent with the issues DFES identified in assessing C4, that applicable procurement processes had been followed.

It was also noted that whilst the OAG had identified issues, the Shire reported that they had/were implementing strategies to address the issues identified with the purchasing policy.

Based on the submissions made by the Shire and Core Business Australia, the Shires AGRN962 EPAR application is not approved for the following reason:

Insufficient eligible evidence has been provided within the Allowable Time Limit to verify the estimated reconstruction costs and satisfy the assurance controls that apply to developing estimated reconstruction costs under the DRFAWA.

Whilst appreciative this is a disappointing outcome for the Shire, the DFES Recovery Funding team is available to assist and support the Shire through DRFAWA specific training and provide guidance through the DRFAWA process and requirements to ensure future applications for reimbursement of DRFA funding have a greater level of success.

Yours sincerely



**Tim McNaught**  
**DIRECTOR RECOVERY FUNDING**

3 January 2025



Our Reference: D27183; 25/001822

Ian Holland  
Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Yalgoo  
37 Gibbons St  
YALGOO WA 6635

Dear Ian,

**Non approval of Cost Estimate for Essential Public Asset Reconstruction Works under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements Western Australia (DRFAWA) for AGRN1021 – Flooding Midwest and Gascoyne (26 March – 3 April 2022).**

I refer to Essential Public Asset Reconstruction (EPAR) application submitted by the Shire for AGRN1021 - Flooding Midwest and Gascoyne (26 March - 3 April 2022). I acknowledge that the process to review the cost estimates for AGRN1021 has been complex and complicated given this event re-damaged a significant number of roads that were already being assessed under an EPAR application submitted by the Shire for AGRN962 – Storm, Heavy Rain and Associated Flooding in the Mid-West and South West Land Division (1-5 March 2021).

Due to the impact of AGRN1021, changes were required to the AGRN962 submission, where roads in the AGRN962 submission that were re-damaged as a direct result of AGRN1021, needed to be removed from the AGRN962 submission and included as part of the AGRN1021 submission. This resulted in additional work requirement for both the Shire and DFES Recovery Funding.

In support of the Shire's attempts to seek reimbursement of eligible costs of the reconstruction of assets damaged as a direct result of the event through the DRFAWA, DFES had sought two Allowable Time Limit extensions from the National Emergency Management Agency. The first being 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 and the final from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024.

There are two stages to complete the approval process for EPAR works, Stage 1 – Scope of Works, and Stage 2 – Procurement and estimated reconstruction costs. For AGRN1021, the Shires Scope of Works was approved via letter on 15 February 2024. In this letter, the Shire was advised of the actions required to establish the estimated reconstruction costs and verify the applicable procurement processes were followed in obtaining pricing information. Many meetings, follow-up emails and significant effort by Sarah Aulin, Senior Recovery Funding and Policy Officer were designed to assist the Shire through Stage 2 of the approval process.

On the 6 December 2024, DFES, the Shire, and the Shire's consultant Core Business Australia met to discuss what information was still required to progress the application through the EPAR process to ensure all assurance requirements were being met. On 10 December 2024, the additional information required was confirmed in email by DFES to the Shire, and Core Business Australia. DFES also confirmed the additional information required to be provided by 13 December 2024 to enable time for DFES Recovery Funding to review the information provided and complete this to determine an outcome prior to the allowable time limit expiring on the 31 December 2024.

The primary assurance requirements related to:

- C3. Estimated reconstruction costs are developed in accordance with these arrangements and verified by an engineer or quantity surveyor with the appropriate level of expertise and experience.
- C4. Applicable procurement processes are followed.

Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) provides technical advice to DFES in determining the C3 assurance requirement as being met, with the C4 assurance requirement being assessed by DFES Recovery Funding.

The DFES Recovery Funding team and MRWA have completed their review of the submission against the DRFAWA EPAR Cost Estimate assurance requirements and determined there is insufficient evidence to support the requirements for C3 and C4 as being met.

From a procurement policy perspective, it was unclear what the Shire's applicable procurement processes were. It was noted that different versions of the policy were provided through the assessment process, and it was difficult to determine what was the applicable procurement process and has sufficient evidence been provided that demonstrates the applicable process had been followed. As an example, there is insufficient evidence to support the engagement of Core Business Australia to undertake the damage assessment following the event and the ongoing nature of their engagement to perform project management activities including the on-ground project supervision and how this engagement aligns with the Shire's procurement processes.

In relation to the Civil Works contract, there were also inconsistencies in the evidence to demonstrate the Shire had followed their applicable procurement processes. As an example, both DFES and MRWA were unable to verify that the lump sum cost provided by the respondent was to undertake the works specifically identified in the approved Scope of Works. The Tender Request asked for a Pricing Schedule to be completed on a per road /per defect basis, however, the Shire accepted a tender where the respondent only provided a price on a per road basis. Insufficient evidence was provided to support why the tender had been accepted on this basis and what assurance the Shire had that the price tendered was only to complete the works outlined in the approved scope of works. Consequently, neither DFES or MRWA were satisfied that either C3 or C4 was met for this Works contract.



In relation to the project management component of the estimate, aside from concerns regarding the level of evidence to support the engagement of Core Business Australia, there was considerable concern on the proposed cost and basis of assumptions used in estimating project management costs. The proposed hours for project management, project supervision and mileage were considered excessive for the approved scope of works and a significant re-work of this element of the estimate would be required.

Given the issues identified in relation to procurement processes, as part of our diligence processes, it was checked to see if any issues in procurement had been identified through audits undertaken by the Office of Auditor General (OAG). In the council minutes for the Ordinary Council Meeting – 26 May 2023 the "Report to the Minister of Local Government on significant Audit Findings 2020-21" was tabled which identified issues with compliance with the Internal Purchasing Policy of the Shire. Issues identified in the report tabled appeared consistent with the issues DFES identified in assessing C4, that applicable procurement processes had been followed.

It was also noted that whilst the OAG had identified issues, the Shire reported that they had/were implementing strategies to address the issues identified with the purchasing policy.

Based on the submissions made by the Shire and Core Business Australia, the Shire's AGRN1021 EPAR application is not approved for the following reason:

Insufficient eligible evidence has been provided within the Allowable Time Limit to verify the estimated reconstruction costs and satisfy the assurance controls that apply to developing estimated reconstruction costs under the DRFAWA.

Whilst appreciative this is a disappointing outcome for the Shire, the DFES Recovery Funding team is available to assist and support the Shire through DRFAWA specific training and provide guidance through the DRFAWA process and requirements to ensure future applications for reimbursement of DRFA funding have a greater level of success.

Yours sincerely



**Tim McNaught**  
**DIRECTOR RECOVERY FUNDING**

3 January 2025

## **8.0 Shire Reports**

### **8.1 Shire of Yalgoo**



#### **Activity Report April 2025**

##### **Tourism and Community Events**

Mining Objection in the Wardens Court - The Shire has lodged an objection to a mining proposal over Jokers Mine Rd and the adjacent feature Jokers Tunnel. The mine has stated the project would not be viable without removing the hill containing Jokers Tunnel. Council may weigh potential community compensation against amenity and cultural arguments. This has the potential to make significant amounts of tourism investment obsolete as well as shift driving trails and Murchison GeoRegion priorities.

Yalgoo is looking to fully participate in this years Marlu Football League season. The school holiday program will visit Pilroc Animal Rescue in Paynes Find and Thundelarra Station. Art workshops and Bingo nights have also been planned.

##### **Human Resources and Council**

Council and Administration would like to express their gratitude for training and information sharing invitations received from many neighbouring local governments. Face to face training is beneficial for the sector and this is one way to combat the tyranny of distance experienced in the Mid West Region.

In February the Shire President had the opportunity to meet Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC Governor-General when she attended events in the City of Greater Geraldton.

##### **Road and Plant**

MC Civil completed significant flood recovery works across the Shire network. Planned efforts to follow this repair with improvement works have been stalled by DFES refusing to reimburse the Shire for these two flood damage claims.

##### **Projects**

Safer Shafts – The Shire continues to work with the Abandoned Mines division of the Department of Mines to improve townsite safety particularly around the Yalgoo Primary School. Initial surveys found more than a dozen open or loosely covered mine shafts and consultation will begin shortly on how to close or mitigate these dangerous features.

Bushfire High Threat Season – Yalgoo and Paynes Find Brigades are grateful for the assistance of staff and heavy plant authorized by the Mid-West Office. Lightning at this time of year has impacted many accessible in inaccessible parts of the LGA. The Shire intends to

continue its strong working relationship with regional operations while dealing with major failures of both Recovery and Resilience and the Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS).

Work continues on the restoration of the Yalgoo and Railway Halls as well as due consideration for the purchase of the Yalgoo Hotel.

### **Future Advocacy Position Proposals**

Yalgoo Shire is investigating advocacy positions for the following topics to be presented at future zone meetings:

#### **Prospecting ESL**

Emergency Services Levy (ESL) charges on exploration and prospecting tenements. The Fire and Emergency Services (FESA) position over a decade ago was that an ESL charge on exploration and prospecting would disincentivize mining exploration. Based on previous correspondence to the zone from the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, DEMIRS only have the intention of providing educational information in the area of prospector safety. It therefore falls to local communities and other state government agencies to locate or assist missing or injured people in remote locations at significant cost. This position would likely support WALGA Position Statements 8.7 and 8.8.

#### **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 Blood Supply**

The Shire is anecdotally aware of patients visiting oncology services in Geraldton from more remote locations and being asked to rebook their treatments at a future date due to pharmaceutical supplies such as blood being required by the regional hospital for other patients. While some of these situations may be triaged as emergency or immediately more important the ongoing nature of this happening speaks more to poor logistics. Since May 2024 Lifeblood has been trialing pop up blood donations sites which will hopefully speak to the viability of blood donation in areas such as Geraldton where this has not been possible since 2012. Based on the success of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for blood donation by the South African Blood Service and advocacy position could suggest that the state government investigate innovative logistics solutions with a partner such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service alongside the proposed redevelopment of the Geraldton Health Campus and election commitments for a Geraldton RFDS base.

**Ian Holland**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Shire of Yalgoo - Where the Outback Starts!**

## **8.2 Shire of Mount Magnet**

Not Received.

## 8.3 Shire of Murchison



### WALGA - Murchison Country Zone April 2025 Report

#### Murchison Settlement Redevelopment Works

Council has been progressing on upgrade to its water supply. Recent funds under the State Government's the Infrastructure Development Fund- Stream 3 - Unlocking Regional Worker Accommodation Opportunities, will lead to works to chlorinate the upgraded water supply and to upgrade the current power supply network. Tenders for both were award at the March 2025 Council Meeting.

Over the next 3 years 5 workforce accommodation units are required to be delivered. Part of this includes new accommodation for roadhouse workers. UDLA from Fremantle have now nearly finalised these developments into a succinct plan which also accommodates an expanded Roadhouse and a new playground as refinement of our Settlement and Roadhouse Masterplans. These works are proposed to be delivered in the next 2 years

Meanwhile construction of our new Community Splashpad and Caravan Park Pool has been completed with paving, fencing and commissioning underway. Council has also adopted a Murchison Pool and Splash Pad Pool Policy to outline the objectives and regulate each facility's use.

Shire President Rossco has offered to take the first "official" dip when the facility is officially opened.





Meanwhile Mulga Crescent, the Murchison Settlements Ring Road has been upgraded with two coat red laterite aggregate seal too match the front strip of the Settlement. A sealed section within the Caravan Park has been added to front the new Ablutions Block.



### **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 has been confirmed for his appearance. He will provide 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 include a Friday sunset intro at Errabiddy Bluff, wildflower walking tours, market stalls, line dancing, local damper and scones, a long table dinner in the Settlement on the Saturday, and other events on the Sunday.



### **Wild Dog Bounty Scheme**

Since 2013 Council has run its own Wild dog Bounty scheme to assist local pastoralists in a modest but important way to support the activities of the Carnarvon Rangelands Biosecurity Association in relation to declared pests, which, by definition, include wild dogs. A bounty of \$100 for each wild dog destroyed is paid once evidence which includes the consent of the relevant station owner/manager is presented. In 2015 a similar bounty (now \$20 per tail) for camels and donkeys was added.

In late 2024 the owners of one local Station petitioned the Council to have the wild dog bounty removed. This followed an online petition, generating considerable media coverage, being initiated. The petition was presented to Council in November with 16,465 signatories. 5 signatures came from Station who initiated the petition, with no other support emanating from within the Murchison Shire and minimal representation from the broader pastoral region.

At the December 2024 Council Meeting, Council rejected the petitioners demands and also wrote to the Pastoral Land Board requesting it consider and review the wild dog management issues raised given that it is a responsibility of all pastoral stations under the *Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 1997* to make efforts to control declared pests on their land.

At this stage no response has been received from the Pastoral Lands Board nor DPLH. It is fair to say that the Council is not impressed with the lack of action in relation to the control and management of wild dogs on one Station, and the resultant adverse effects for all other pastoralist within the Shire.

### **Governor General Geraldton Visit**

Cr Emma Foukes-Taylor and Shire President Rossco attended an afternoon tea reception with the Governor General Sam Mostyn in Geraldton on 17 February 2025.

Cr Emma received her invitation as a MWDC Board member and Cr Rossco was invited as the Murchison Country Zone and Murchison Shire President.

Rossco felt for the CGG Crew though, as they were only given about six days' notice that the GG was going to visit and they were expected to get everything organised straight away.

The reception had a pretty positive tone. CGG Mayor Jerry Clune welcomed everyone (about 40 odd guests and around 15 CGG and Governor General support staff) and then went on to say plenty of positive things about Geraldton and surrounds.

The Governor spoke and was generous in her thanking for their service, the many volunteers present along with some paid representatives. These included Local Govt reps, Scouts, Military, Emergency services, Politicians - Member for Gtn Lara Dalton and member for Durack Melissa Price, plus a few other Australia Day award recipients.

While admitting local bias, when Rossco spoke with the GG and said that Geraldton and surrounds do have some decent attractions, but the really interesting country began when you headed a bit further east to where the Mulga trees started.

A few of our regions, regular issues such as population decline, service provision, the importance of keeping outback areas economically healthy and populated were touched on but not explored in any detail as time was a bit short.

While having no definitive outcomes, Rossco felt the reception was worth attending and found the most constructive aspect being discussions had with other Council reps from around our Midwest region.



### **Community Economic Development**

Over the past few months a range of Community Development Actions have been actioned. Snapshot includes the following.

#### *Community Garden.*

The Shire was successful in receiving a \$10,000 grant from the Department of Communities to establish an Orchard. The intention is for the orchard to bring together residents of the vast local government area to share knowledge and established agricultural practices. The fruit produced by the orchard will allow residents of the shire to come together to preserve the harvest through homesteading practices that have been occurring on the surrounding 26 pastoral stations of many decades.



These would include jams, jellies, chutneys and canning to be shared throughout the community.

The orchard will build understanding of where food comes from and how to develop the skills to nurture and preserve these valuable resources. The funds sought through this grant will support the initial purchase of fruit trees, soil conditioner, irrigation materials, mulch, fertilisers and tree boarder rings.

Works on the orchard by way of construction of 25 epic holes required to penetrate the coffee rock which underpins the Murchison Settlement have begun.

Late last year In November the community garden tunnel was producing well with roughly 10 – 15kgs of tomato's coming out per week a steady supply of carrots, cucumbers and radishes. Summer crops of melons, corn, beans, pumpkins. Eggs are also a regular staple.



### *Shit Box Rally*

In mid-2024 the Shire was contacted by Box Rallies expressing their interest to make Murchison a stop on their 15-year anniversary Shit Box Rally in 2025. Box rallies have proposed they will bring 250 vehicles and 500 people for an overnight stop on in Murchison. Shit Box Rally is not a race, rather a challenge to achieve the unthinkable... To drive cars worth just \$1,500 across Australia via some of its most formidable roads, all in the name of charity.

The Shire has been working with the event organisers for the scheduled 20 June 2025 visit.

### *Other*

Council's Local Loyalty Scheme associated with the Roadhouse has been launched.

Containers for Change Recycling is now in full swing. Council further supports this "community focus" action by deciding to allocate refund income that the Shire receives on a equal basis to the Murchison Arts Council, Murchison Sports Club, Murchison Museum and Community Garden. Only our landfill is not happy.... it's got less to eat!!!

Unfortunately, the 2024 Shire Christmas Tree celebrations and a raft of community meetings held with the 13 December Council Meeting had to be cancelled at short notice due to rain and high flows in the Murchison River. A curry night and meetings with Sports Club, Fire Brigade and traditional general Shire wide community meetings were successfully held on Harmony Day on 21 March 2025 as a replacement.

### **Anzac Day**

Meanwhile arrangements for Anzac Day are in train.

A brief local dawn service followed by the Shire's official mid-morning service, "smoko" and later lunch.

This year like last year there has been a departure from the traditional sporting activities to a Shire wide working bee for the Community Garden and Museum.

Dress for the occasion is work gear.



*Bill Boehm*  
*Chief Executive Officer*

## 8.4 Shire of Sandstone



### SHIRE OF SANDSTONE Activity Report April 2025

#### Human Resources

My Deputy CEO resigned as on 31 March 2025. This was somewhat a loss as Tracey was excellent at her job, she had great initiative and was ready to tackle any job and was an excellent manager of her staff. She was a great team player and integral member of the management team. We are fortunate to recruit a highly regarded former CEO of Murchison Shire in Dianne Daniels who will commence her duties on April 20.

Our maintenance grader operator decided the grass was greener elsewhere and we are now attempting to recruit a replacement. It seems good grader drivers are hard to come by unless you're prepared to pay a small fortune.

#### Road Works and Equipment

The roadworks have been fairly extensive on the Sandstone – Menzies Road. Quality gravel sources are also pretty light on. Currently the team is working on the southern end of the Sandstone – Paynes Find Road using Regional Road Group funding.

At the time of this report some road resealing works have been carried out in the Sandstone townsite funded in part by LRCIP Phase 4 funding. We are fortunate in being able to take advantage of the contractor working for MRWA on the additional truck bay on the Leinster Road to carry out our resealing works.

#### Buildings



We purchased two 2 x 1 accommodation units for the Caravan Park which arrived just a couple of weeks before the LRCIP Phase 3 funding deadline in June 2024. There was a long delay in bringing these to a ready state due to inadequate septic facilities. While septic tanks were being constructed we added verandas, a carport and some extensive lattice works and to date, the comments from the tenants are extremely pleasing.

As I wrote below the existing leach system at the Caravan Park was inadequate especially during the peak season and the problem would be exacerbated by additional new units. As a result, Paddy O'Brien designed and managed the construction of an additional leach system consisting of two trenches of 30 metres and 20 metres long. This required a few weeks work with a rock breaker, many road train loads of rock fill and as a result we have a leach drain that will serve the Caravan Park for many decades to come including any future expansion.



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. On the bright side the quality of the building is excellent. I recommend to all in this area to consider double glazing on windows that are east and west facing to reduce the heat inside such buildings.

### **Tourism**

Tourism is not highly active at this time of the year and our visitor centre closes over summer. It will reopen in early April and will be staffed for most days by backpackers who we have employed.

Having backpackers will ensure consistency of staffing as we have a few local people willing to work but only when it suits them. The backpackers we have employed are managing the Visitors Centre and support the café. They will also carry out long overdue staff housing inspections. They are excellent and enthusiastic workers.

With cooler (slightly) cooler weather upon us, the town's bougainvillea are in full flower.

Our rose gardens being fairly newly planted struggled a little during the summer months but are now in full flower.



We had to plant the roses in early spring as the garden beds weren't ready and the best roses aren't available until early spring. Most did survive the summer but the best time to plant roses in this area is early or mid autumn. At that time the ground is still warm and they can establish good roots before the heat of mid summer.





### Other Matters

- The Shire website is finally completed thanks to Tegan Brown who was the Visitor Centre manager but is now (thankfully) office based.
- Above are some of the winners of the Australia Day events:

The O'Brien father & son team featured as the most prolific performers.

Peter Money  
Chief Executive Officer  
26 March 2025

## 8.5 Shire of Cue



### WALGA – Murchison Country Zone April 2025 Report

#### Governance

The Keep Australia Beautiful Council of Western Australia held the Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities awards on Friday 29 November 2024. President Les Price and I attended the awards announcements and luncheon held in the Black Swan room at Optus Stadium. There was a great representation from the Murchison with the Shire's of Sandstone, Mt Magnet, Wiluna and Upper Gascoyne also in attendance. The Shire of Cue was awarded State Winner for the Heritage and Culture category. The Heritage and Culture category recognises a communities outstanding commitment to conversation and celebration of a communities indigenous and non-indigenous heritage and culture. Cue was recognised for the Cue Heritage Centre, the restoration work done on the buildings in town, the Cue Heritage-Trail App and how the Shire has utilised our unique buildings as a tourism drawcard. I would like to thank Council, Staff and the Cue Community Resource Centre for all the work that has contributed to this award.



On Saturday 23 November 2024 we engaged the services of David Julian Price to conduct Member training which included a mock council meeting. Attendees enjoyed learning the process of conducting a formal council meeting in alignment with standing orders, legislation and department regulations. President Jim McGorman and Councillor Cathy Jones from the Shire of Mount Magnet joined the training.

On 27 February 2025 President Les Price and I attended the Shire of Mt Magnet for a WALGA based Local Government training day on CEO Performance Reviews. The training is based on the model standards contained in the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996. CEOs and Councillors from Cue, Yalgoo and Mt. Magnet attended. This was a very informative session that covered all aspects of a CEO Performance Review from agreement on the facilitation and review process through to establishing performance criteria and indicators. The training went further to discuss how Councillors can manage types of bias, dealing with poor performance and providing evidence to support their view.

The Annual Meeting of Electors was held on Tuesday 11 February at 5.30pm in the Council Chambers. A small turnout of electors attended the meeting and discussions were held on the disruptive behaviour that is affecting residents in the town. This led to the calling of a community meeting which was held on Friday 21 February. Over fifty residents attended this meeting to discuss a range of steps and programs that can be explored to engage with and educate the youth to help prevent further incidents of disruption to residents and property. It was a constructive meeting that I felt was the most engaging and attentive from the residents of Cue in my time here.

The Shire of Cue, Cue Primary School and Westgold have teamed together to bring the Carrey Right Track Foundation to Cue to start providing school activities and after school programs at the Youth Centre. The program is due to start on 07 April and will run every second week, excluding school holidays. The Shire will provide snacks and supervision where possible.

### **Administration**

Glenn Boyes, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, has tendered his resignation effective 25 April 2025 after being with the Shire for four and half years. Glenn has been a valued member of the executive team, and he will be sorely missed. I wish him well in his new position as Deputy Chief Executive Officer for the Shire of Yalgoo.

The Shire is still looking for staff to manage the youth program and the St John Ambulance sub centre is struggling to find volunteers.

With the hot weather in February, the Shire utilised this time to undertake a number of training courses for both inside and outside staff. The training covered a number of areas including traffic management, white card, first aid, machinery and vehicle operations as well as cyber security and corporate wellness.



## Economic Development

Fenix Newhaul are progressing with their expansion and commencement of the Beebyn W11 project with additional worker accommodation expected to commence in Cue in the coming months and additional haul trucks running from Weld Range in the next 6 months. I have had a meeting with Fenix regarding their plans on the additional haul road that will intersect with the Wilgie-Mia Road but sit outside the road reserve.

A number of Councillors engaged in a field trip to the Day Dawn, Great Fingall Mine operations for a tour of the mine site. The purpose of the visit was to see and discuss with Westgold staff the use of a disturbed section of the old Day Dawn Town Site for use as a Run of Mine pad for upcoming mining operations and expansion of the current waste dump site that sits over part of the old Day Dawn Town Site. Westgold are nearing the operational stage of developing the Great Fingall mine for production. Westgold have requested that Lakeside Road be utilised as part of their haulage route. An assessment of this is currently being undertaken.



## Town Developments

Works on the bank building are progressing well albeit slowly. The kitchen construction is completed, and the decking area is well underway. The kitchen fit out is expected to be completed soon which will allow the Shire to advertise for expressions of interest to operate the facility as a café / bakery.

The plans have been finalised for stage one works to the Masonic Lodge building to construct a kitchen, decking and toilets at the back of the building to replace the kitchen and toilets that were once attached to the building. The Shire put this out to tender

with one tender being received. No tender was accepted, and further quotes are being sort.

I have been in discussions with Perth Mint as they are undertaking a program of works to rehabilitate their State Battery site located within the Cue townsite boundary. Planned works include a site cleanup and fencing of the site. The Shire has resolved to make an application to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage for the transfer of the vesting to the Shire of Cue. The Shire would like to see the elements that remain of the former battery facility to be protected and open for viewing as part of an outdoor museum. In addition to the elements of the former battery that remain on the site, the Shire will relocate various other historical artefacts that relate to the gold industry to this site to assist in preserving the heritage of the town. In addition to the display of historical artifacts, the Shire anticipates that walk trails will be developed throughout the site.

Shire President Les Price and I had a meeting and field trip with Katrina from the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) regarding the Abandoned Mines Project. Cue along with Yalgoo and Marble Bar have been selected for the pilot locations, chosen for their high number of abandoned mine features within a one-kilometre radius of a school. There are currently 305 abandoned mine features within the Cue project area, identified as shafts, open stopes, costeans/trenches, adits, shallow workings, collapsed shafts and rehabilitated shafts. Phase two of the project is scheduled to start in May 2025, consisting of geotechnical site investigations to assess abandoned mine features and develop rehabilitation options for each of the sites.

The Shire has now officially opened the “Cue Fitness Centre” gym facilities for the community to enjoy the benefits through annual or monthly membership. The Shire held a “Name the Gym” competition with the winner being awarded a one-year membership. The response from the community has been above expectations with over seventy memberships taken up already. Fenix Newhaul have agreed to make a contribution of \$25,000 as a major sponsor of the Cue Fitness Centre.

### **Works**

A number of road work projects are underway in and around the Shire. Widening and resealing works have been completed on Lakeside Road. Re-sheeting of sections of Dalgara Road has been completed. Patching and repair works have been completed on Wilgie Mia Road, including floodway works. Repair works are ongoing to Beringarra-Cue Road. Much awaited flood damage repair works are scheduled to start in the coming month as well.

The grassed medium strip that runs the length of Austin Street has undergone verti-mowing to remove the thatch build up and has been top dressed, seeded and fertilised to give it a new lease of life.

### **Community Events**

Around forty people turned out for the Hawaiian themed Thank a Volunteer night held at the Murchison Club Hotel on Thursday 5 December 2024. Councillor Ian Dennis delivered an eloquent speech, paying tribute to our volunteers and cooked the

barbeque with assistance from myself. Emmet provided a great night of entertainment with his musical talents, which saw people dancing. A great night was had by all.

The Shire held its fifth Australia Day fireworks event with around sixty people in attendance. Geoff Udy entertained the crowd, and the Shire provided everyone with hamburgers and cold drinks. Another successful event thanks to the staff and volunteers that contribute to the running of this event. Once again, we would like to thank the National Australia Day Council for providing funding to make this event possible.



**Richard Towell**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## **7.6 Shire of Meekatharra**

Not Received.

Mr Nils Hay from the Mid West Development Commission addressed the meeting. He said the Minister responsible for the commission is now Minister Dawson and that Minister Jarvis is now the newly created Minister for the Mid West. He also stated

that nominations were being accepted for the MWDC board and gave details of funding allocated to the Geraldton Mount Magnet Road.

## **9.0 Presentations**

- Regional Development Australia Midwest
- Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Mr Shane Love MLA
- Midwest Development Commission

## **10.0 Next Meeting**

As resolved at the November 2024 meeting the next meeting of the Murchison Country Zone be held in Cue on Friday 21 November 2025.

## **11.0 Meeting Close**

There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 12.12pm.

**I Ross Foukes-Taylor confirm this is a true and correct record of the minutes of the meeting held 11 April 2025.**