



# CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE

## Minutes

**Friday 30 August 2019  
Beverley Town Hall  
Vincent Street, Beverley**

**Commencing at 9.33am**

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# Minutes

## Central Country Zone of WALGA

Friday 30 August 2019, commencing at 9.33am

### 1.0 OPENING AND WELCOME

#### 1.1 Welcome – Cr Dee Ridgway, President Shire of Beverley

Cr Dee Ridgway, President Shire of Beverley extended a welcome to delegates and guests and outlined some recent and proposed community developments in the Shire of Beverley.

### 2.0 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

#### Attendance

Cr Mark Conley (Chair)  
Cr Dee Ridgway  
Cr Chris Pepper  
Mr Stephen Gollan  
Cr Katrina Crute  
Cr Neil Walker  
Mr Ian Darcy  
Cr Lyn Baker  
Ms Natalie Manton  
Cr Eliza Dowling  
Mr Gary Sherry  
Mr Paul Sheedy  
Cr Barry West  
Cr Rodney Duckworth  
Mr Garrick Yandle  
Cr Steve Hunt  
Ms Denise Gobbart  
President Leigh Ballard  
Mr Dale Stewart  
Cr Bill Mulroney  
Cr David Freebairn  
Ms Julie Barton  
Cr Wayne Davies  
Cr Brett McGuinness  
Mr Graeme Fardon  
Cr Phillip Blight  
Cr Greg Ball  
Mr Bill Atkinson  
Cr Brendan Whitely  
Ms Belinda Knight  
Cr Jarrad Logie  
Mr Geoff McKeown

President, Shire of Cuballing  
President, Shire of Beverley  
Deputy President, Shire of Beverley  
CEO, Shire of Beverley  
President, Shire of Brookton  
Deputy President, Shire of Brookton  
CEO, Shire of Brookton  
President, Shire of Corrigin  
CEO, Shire of Corrigin  
Deputy President, Shire of Cuballing  
CEO, Shire of Cuballing  
A/CEO, Shire of Dumbleyung  
President, Shire of Kulin  
Deputy President, Shire of Kulin  
CEO, Shire of Kulin  
Deputy President, Shire of Lake Grace  
CEO, Shire of Lake Grace  
President, Shire of Narrogin  
CEO, Shire of Narrogin  
President, Shire of Pingelly  
Deputy President, Shire of Pingelly  
CEO Shire of Pingelly  
President, Shire of Quairading  
Deputy President, Shire of Quairading  
CEO, Shire of Quairading  
President, Shire of Wagin  
Deputy President, Shire of Wagin  
A/CEO, Shire of Wagin  
President, Shire of Wandering  
CEO Shire of Wandering  
President, Shire of Williams  
CEO, Shire of Williams

Mr Bruce Wittber, Joint Executive Officer  
Ms Helen Westcott, Joint Executive Officer

## **WALGA Representatives**

Mr Mark Batty, Executive Manager Environment and Waste  
Ms Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Recycling  
Ms Alison Maggs, Strategic Sourcing Manager – Business Solutions  
Mr Rodney Thornton, Wheatbelt South - Regional Road Safety Adviser

## **Guests**

Hon Laurie Graham MLC	Member for Agricultural Region
Mr Adam Smith	District Emergency Management Advisor, Great Southern Region Operations, DFES
Ms Jenifer Collins	Regional Manager Wheatbelt, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Mr Luke Stevens	Senior Legislation and Strategy Officer, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Mr Gavin Robins	CEO, Wheatbelt Development Commission
Ms Pip Kirby	Regional Manager, Wheatbelt Development Commission

## **Apologies**

Hon Mia Davies MLA	Member for Central Wheatbelt
Mr Peter Rundle MLA	Member for Roe
Hon Colin de Grussa MLC	Member for Agricultural Region
Cr Jeanette De Landgraft	President, Shire of Lake Grace
Cr Jill McRae	Councillor, Shire of Quairading
Cr Peter Smith	Councillor, Shire of Quairading
Cr Ray Harrington OAM	President, Shire of West Arthur
Ms Nicole Wasmann	CEO, Shire of West Arthur
Cr Julie Russell	President, Shire of Wickepin
Mr Mark Hook	CEO, Shire of Wickepin
Ms Mandy Walker	Director Regional Development, RDA Wheatbelt Inc

## **3.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Nil

## **4.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Nil

## **5.0 GUEST SPEAKERS**

### **5.1 Presentation on Container Deposit Scheme - Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Recycling WA Local Government Association**

A presentation on the Container Deposit Scheme.

The Central Country Zone has been particularly interested in the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) and in the development of collection centres. It made a submission to the CDS relating to Customer Service Standards for Collection Network.

On 18 July 2019 Environment Minister Stephen Dawson announced that Western Australia's container deposit scheme would start on Tuesday, 2 June 2020. He also announced the branding and name "Containers for Change" for the scheme (see <https://wa.containersforchange.com.au/>).

WA Return Recycle Renew Ltd (WARRRL) has been appointed as scheme coordinator for the WA container deposit scheme (CDS). WARRRL's website is active at [www.warrl.com.au](http://www.warrl.com.au).

WARRRL has announced that the opportunities to participate in the collection network and registrations are now open to apply to run refund points.

### **5.2 Presentation on the Role of the Wheatbelt Development Commission - Gavin Robins, CEO Wheatbelt Development Commission**

A presentation on the current role of the Wheatbelt Development Commission including the concern of the Zone in relation to State Government consultation in the Wheatbelt (see Agenda Item 10.2)

**10.32am the meeting adjourned for morning tea**

**11.00am the meeting resumed after morning tea**

### **5.3 Emergency Management Issues – Adam Smith, District Emergency Management Advisor, Great Southern Region Operations, DFES**

A short presentation on current emergency management issues.

## 6.0 MINUTES

### 6.1 Confirmation of Minutes – Friday 21 June 2019 (Attachment)

Presenting the Minutes of the Central Country Zone Meeting held Friday 21 June 2019.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Country Zone held Friday 21 June 2019 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Mulroney**                      **Seconded: Cr Blight**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Country Zone held Friday 21 June 2019 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.**

**CARRIED**

### 6.2 Business Arising from Minutes of Previous Zone Meetings

Nil

### 6.3 Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting – Wednesday 14 August 2019 (Attachment)

Presenting the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held Wednesday 14 August 2019.

#### **Executive Officer Comment:**

Any recommendations from the meeting are included as separate agenda items.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Country Zone Executive Committee held Wednesday 14 August 2019 be received.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Baker**                      **Seconded: Cr McGuinness**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Country Zone Executive Committee held Wednesday 14 August 2019 be received.**

**CARRIED**

## **7.0 WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WALGA) BUSINESS**

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

### **7.1 State Councillor Report**

Cr Phillip Blight

#### **Central Country Zone State Councillor Report WALGA State Council Meeting July 2019**

The following comments/notes are provided on the WALGA State Council Meeting held 3 July 2019:

#### **4. EMERGING ISSUES**

##### **4.1 Finalising Payments for Regional Road Group Projects**

That:

1. WALGA and the Metropolitan Regional Road Group delegates work with Main Roads WA to establish clear service performance requirements for each stage of line marking, including invoicing.
2. Where a request for line marking was submitted on or before 30 April 2019 the outstanding claim amount (final 20%) is accrued at 30 June, the project recorded as being complete in 2018/19 and no penalties on future grants be applied.
3. Through the State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee, WALGA seek a change to the Procedures so that invoices are always provided within four weeks of line marking work being completed and Main Roads WA to invoice on the basis of an estimate where this is not achieved.

Carried

##### **5.1 National Redress and Local Government (05-086-03-0004 KD)**

Dot point 2 was added to the motion which now reads:

1. That WA Local Government participation in the State's National Redress Scheme declaration with full financial coverage by the State, be endorsed in principle, noting that further engagement with the sector will occur in the second half of 2019.
2. That WALGA continue to promote awareness of the National Redress Scheme and note that Local Governments may wish to join the Scheme in the future to demonstrate a commitment to the victims of institutional child sexual abuse.

##### **5.2 Draft Guidelines for Local Heritage Surveys and Heritage Act 2018 Proclamation Regulations (05-071-03-0003 SM)**

Dot point 2 was added to the motion which now reads:

1. That the interim submission on the Draft Guidelines for Local Heritage Surveys and Heritage Act 2018 Proclamation Regulations be endorsed.
2. That WALGA write to the Minister for Planning, Lands and Heritage advising of the Local Government sectors' concerns about the lack of funding for maintenance, management and conservation of heritage places in Western Australia and urging the State Government to provide additional funding and support for heritage conservation.



## 5.6 Directions Paper for the 10 Year Strategy on Homelessness (05-018-02-0007 JB)

Changes to the submission:

1. That WALGA notes:
    - a. that the State Government's "Directions Paper for 10-year Strategy on Homelessness: Western Australia 2019-2029" does not explicitly address the general housing affordability crisis as a cause of homelessness, nor the approximate seven year waiting list for qualifying applicants to be allocated social housing
    - b. that without a significant injection of new capital and a qualitative increase in social housing stock, it is hard to see how endemic homelessness can be eliminated even though this is the stated aim of the directions paper.
  2. The Association's submission be endorsed subject to incorporating the need to address the underlying crisis outlined in (1) above.
  3. That WALGA advocates to the State and Federal Governments for a whole of Government approach.
- Carried

## 7.2 WALGA Status Report (Attachment)

From *Executive Officer*

### BACKGROUND:

Presenting the status report for August 2019.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Central Country Zone notes the:

- State Councillor Report; and
- WALGA Status Report.

**RESOLUTION:** **Moved: Cr Mulroney** **Seconded: Cr Crute**

**That the Central Country Zone notes the:**

- **State Councillor Report; and**
- **WALGA Status Report.**

**CARRIED**

## 7.3 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Decision

### Background:

WALGA State Council meets five times each year and as part of the consultation process with Member Councils circulates the State Council Agenda for input through the Zone structure.

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

### 5.1 Interim Submission - Draft Position Statement: Fibre Ready Telecommunications Infrastructure (05-036-03-0048 VJ)

#### WALGA Recommendation

That the interim submission to the WA Planning Commission on the draft Position Statement: Fibre Ready Telecommunications Infrastructure, be endorsed.

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICER COMMENT:**

The following is an extract from the WALGA State Council Agenda:

*The WA Planning Commission released for public comment a new Position Statement called Fibre Ready Telecommunications Infrastructure. The position statement aims to ensure appropriate internet access in future land development within Western Australia. A key role of the position statement is to provide guidance on greenfield and infill subdivision and development applications of land for residential, commercial and industrial purposes (p5).*

## **ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

### **5.2 Interim Submission on the WA Motorsport Strategy (05-053-03-0012 MM)**

#### **WALGA Recommendation**

That the interim submission on the WA Motorsport Strategy be endorsed.

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICER COMMENT:**

The following is an extract from the WALGA State Council Agenda:

### ***In Brief***

- *On 18 May 2019 the State Government released the WA Motorsport Strategy for consultation.*
- *The WA Motorsport Strategy provides a strategic framework to guide the motorsport industry to safely and sustainably develop the sport to benefit the industry and the wider community.*
- *While motorsport venues are not governed by Local Governments, they are a key stakeholder due to the numerous motorsport venues located on Local Government owned land.*
- *The Strategy focuses on six current and future bitumen based motorsport venues in Albany, Collie, Kalgoorlie, Keysbrook, Perth (Kwinana), and Wanneroo (Barbagallo).*
- *WALGA received comments from City of Albany, City of Busselton, Shire of Esperance, Shire of Plantagenet and City of Wanneroo to develop the submission.*
- *The main recommendation is for the State Government to review non-bitumen based motorsport to ensure representation of all motorsport disciplines and provide appropriate assistance to relevant Local Governments (p11).*

Whilst this submission deals with six current and future bitumen based motorsports its main recommendation relates to non-bitumen based motorsport.

## **ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

### **5.3 Interim Submission on the State Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) (05-057-03-0001 MM)**

#### **WALGA Recommendation**

That the interim submission on the State Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) is endorsed.

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICER COMMENT:**

The State Government released the Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) on 15 June 2019 for consultation.

The WALGA State Council Agenda notes that the Strategy focuses on the following four priority areas:

- *Priority 1: Raising awareness and early identification. Educating older people and the community about elder abuse, the signs of abuse, and where and how to report it.*

- *Priority 2: Prevention and early intervention. Supporting older people to remain socially connected, and providing avenues to seek help.*
- *Priority 3: Integrated and coordinated response. Safeguarding and supporting older people with accessible support and justice responses.*
- *Priority 4: Data and evidence. Building the evidence base to inform effective responses that can prevent and reduce elder abuse, and support older people to seek help and recover (p17).*

The key recommendations in the WALGA submission include:

- *Further clarification on the role of Local Governments in addressing the abuse of older people in Priority Area's 3 and 4 is required.*
- *The Strategy should include relevant legislation, policies and strategies to provide context.*
- *The Strategy should align to the recently developed Outcomes Measurement Framework by State Government and Lotterywest concurrently.*
- *The Strategy should include reference to the World Health Organisation's Age-Friendly Cities Framework and the Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.*
- *The Strategy should include actions for banks and financial institutions to address elder abuse.*
- *The State Government should progress reviewing the Guardianship and Administration Act 1990 and align with other jurisdictions where possible to create national consistency.*
- *The Strategy should have more defined pathways for reporting elder abuse.*
- *The Strategy should specify timeframes for implementation and reporting mechanisms.*

#### **ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

#### **5.4 WA Public Libraries Strategy Forum (05-012-03-0001 KD)**

##### **WALGA Recommendation**

That WALGA:

1. Supports the proposed repurposing of the accounting treatment of existing capital funds to recurrent funding.
2. Supports the proposed transfer of ownership of stock from State to Local Governments for Tier 1 Local Governments.
3. Requests State Library WA to advise the Local Government sector of the State Government corporate budget schedule and expedite annual funding allocation notifications to Local Government as soon as possible in the new financial year.

#### **ZONE COMMENT:**

Member Councils may wish to comment on the potential impact that this change will have on their library operations.

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

#### **5.5 Submission on the Draft Compliance and Enforcement Policy (01-006-02-0003 MB)**

##### **WALGA Recommendation**

That the submission to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation relating to the draft Compliance and Enforcement Policy be endorsed.

#### **EXECUTIVE OFFICER COMMENT:**

The Department of Water and Environment Regulation (DWER) released on 27 May 2019 a revised Compliance and Enforcement Policy for comment (submissions closing 16 August 2019).

The WALGA State Council Agenda notes that the revised Policy differs minimally from the current DWER Enforcement and Prosecution Policy and WALGA's submission reflects the significant concern *about whether the draft Policy can be effectively implemented and recommends a review of the effectiveness of the existing approach be undertaken to inform a revised policy (p43).*

Only one Council provided any response to the Infopage that was released in late June 2019.

**ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

**5.6 Submission on the Environmental Protection Authority's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Guidance (05-025-03-0001 LS)**

**WALGA Recommendation**

That the WALGA submission on the Environmental Protection Authority's proposed Greenhouse Gas Emissions Guidance be endorsed.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER COMMENT:**

WALGA sought feedback from Member Councils on the Environmental Protection Authority's proposed Greenhouse Gas Emissions Guidance and whilst a draft submission was circulated to Member Councils in mid July WALGA did not receive any submissions in response to the draft.

It is also noted that the WALGA Climate Change Policy Statement already provides general support for the EPA taking on a stronger regulatory role.

**ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

**5.7 Road Safety Strategy for WA Beyond 2020 (05-009-03-0014 TAP)**

**WALGA Recommendation**

That the submission to the Road Safety Council, for consideration in developing the next road safety strategy for Western Australia, be endorsed.

**ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

**5.8 Interim Submission - Revitalising Agricultural Region Freight Strategy (05-006-02-0006 ID)**

**WALGA Recommendation**

That the interim submission to the Department of Transport on the draft Revitalising Agricultural Region Freight Strategy be endorsed.

**ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

**5.9 Policy Templates: (1) Works in the Local Government Road Reserve; and (2) Events in the Local Government Road Reserve (05-001-02-0008) MS)**

**WALGA Recommendation**

That the following Policy Templates be endorsed:

1. Works in the Local Government Road Reserve; and
2. Events in the Local Government Road Reserve.

**ZONE COMMENT:**

Zone supports the WALGA recommendation

## RECOMMENDATION:

That the Central Country Zone endorses all recommendations being matters contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda other than those recommendations separately considered.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Baker**                      **Seconded: Cr McGuinness**

**That the Central Country Zone endorses all recommendations being matters contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda other than those recommendations separately considered.**

**CARRIED**

## **7.4 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Matters for Noting/Information**

### **6.1 Submission to the Select Committee into Local Government (05-034-02-0014 TB/TL)**

#### **Executive Officer Comment:**

Given the short time frame available to determine whether the Zone should make a submission the Zone Executive Committee considered "out of session" the issue and decided that the Zone would not make a formal submission.

Recognising that an extension of time has been given with the submission period now closing on Friday 13 September this gives the Zone an opportunity to consider the Draft WALGA submission to the Select Committee into Local Government.

The Legislative Council has established a Select Committee into Local Government with the following terms of reference:

- (1) That a Select Committee into Local Government is established.
- (2) The Select Committee is to inquire into how well the system of Local Government is functioning in Western Australia, with particular reference to —
  - (a) Whether the *Local Government Act 1995* and related legislation is generally suitable in its scope, construction and application;
  - (b) the scope of activities of Local Governments;
  - (c) the role of the Department of State administering the *Local Government Act 1995* and related legislation;
  - (d) the role of Elected Members and Chief Executive Officers/employees and whether these are clearly defined, delineated, understood and accepted;
  - (e) the funding and financial management of Local Governments; and
  - (f) any other related matters the Select Committee identifies as worthy of examination and Report.
- (3) The Select Committee shall comprise five Members.
- (4) The Select Committee shall report by no later than 12 months after the motion for its establishment is agreed to and may, if it sees fit, provide interim reports to the House.

A copy of the WALGA draft submission can be accessed on the below hyperlink:

[Draft Submission](#)

Should the Zone feel that the WALGA submission does not cover matters relevant to Member Councils it may suggest changes to the Draft Submission. Alternatively, it may wish to prepare a submission independent of WALGA's in which these matters can be addressed.

### **6.2 Cooperation and Shared Services (05-105-03-0001 ABM)**

### **6.3 Draft Terms of Reference for an Inquiry into Local Government Fees and Charges (05-001-03-0006 NF)**

## 6.4 Public Health Advocacy Plan (05-031-01-0001 KD)

### Executive Officer Comment:

The introduction of the *Public Health Act 2016* is a major public health initiative and regulatory reform undertaking for Western Australia. WALGA has consistently advocated for funding, support and resources from the State Government to assist local governments' transition to the new requirements under the Public Health Act.

The new legislation requires all local governments to develop a Public Health Plan that reflects the public health needs and risks in their own community. Local government Public Health Plans need to align with the State Public Health Plan, which is the responsibility of the Department of Health.

The Executive Officer has been contacted by Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA (PHAIWA) who has advised it has received funding to provide a service to support and mentor local governments to assist them in developing their Public Health Plans, in line with the upcoming implementation of phase 5 of the Public Health Act.

PHAIWA has extensive experience working with local governments, has presented at a number of forums on this subject and has developed a Public Health Planning Guide which can be accessed by following the link provided below:

<https://www.phaiwa.org.au/local-government/>

To quote from some of the information received about the funding program:

*PHAIWA is excited to launch the Public Health Planning Advisory Service which is a project aimed at supporting local governments around WA through the process of developing and implementing their public health plan.*

*PHAIWA will initially be offering a support and mentoring component of the project which will focus on the important initial phase for local governments in the early stages of the public health planning process. This will involve providing support to the Officers in assisting them to develop their case and garner support from their Elected Members. It could also involve providing stakeholder connections and general advice on "what's next" for local governments who may be further along with their planning process or have hit a barrier.*

*Stage two of the project will offer more in-depth and thorough support for a select few local governments, how to apply for this assistance and what it may include and involve will be announced at a later date through our channels and directly to any local government who has used the mentoring service.*

*If you are a local government unsure of how to start your public health plan or wondering about what is next in your current plan's process and wish to access this service, please contact Jo Malcom by [email](#).*

Jo Malcom is a Senior Research Officer with PHAIWA.

Whilst acknowledging that each local government may be at a different stage of developing their Public Health Plan there may be some value in extending an invitation to the PHAIWA to attend a Zone meeting to discuss the potential for Member Councils to apply for funding to assist them in the development and implementation of respective public health plans.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA be invited to attend and present at the next Central Country Zone Meeting on Friday 29 November 2019 to provide information on accessing funding to assist Member Councils in developing and implementing their respective Public Health Plans.

**RESOLUTION: Moved: Cr Blight**

**Seconded: Cr Mulroney**

**That the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA be invited to attend and present at the next Central Country Zone Meeting on Friday 29 November 2019 to provide information on accessing funding to assist Member Councils in developing and implementing their respective Public Health Plans.**

**CARRIED**

- 6.5 **Completion of the Managing Alcohol in Our Communities Guide (06-045-01-0001 KD)**
- 6.6 **Local Government Coastal Hazard Planning – Issues Paper (05-036-03-0065 AR)**
- 6.7 **Climate Resilient Councils – Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change (06-076-01-0001 LS)**
- 6.8 **Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) (01-006-03-008 RNB)**

## **7.5 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Organisational Reports**

### **7.1 Key Activity Reports**

#### **7.1.1 Report on Key Activities, Environment and Waste Unit (01-006-03-0017 MJB)**

##### **Executive Officer Comment:**

In reviewing the Report the Executive Officer noted the following item relating to Climate Change which was felt may be of interest to the Zone Membership.

##### *Climate Emergency*

*At the last meeting of the Environment Policy Team on 3 July, a motion was passed that WALGA use the term “climate emergency” in future climate change communications, rather than “climate change”, where appropriate. This language is consistent with the WALGA Climate Change Policy Statement endorsed by State Council in July 2018. WALGA has developed guidance and a template for Local Governments considering making a declaration climate emergency for the consideration of the Environment Policy Team. It will then be promoted and published on the WALGA webpage (p133).*

In essence it is proposed that future reference to Climate Change should be termed “Climate Emergency”.

**RESOLUTION: Moved: Cr Ridgway**

**Seconded: Cr Pepper**

**That the Central Country Zone advise WALGA that it is opposed to the use of the words “climate emergency” in place of the words “climate change” and the Zone State Councillor Cr Blight be requested to pursue this change on the Zone’s behalf.**

**CARRIED**

#### **7.1.2 Report on Key Activities, Governance and Organisational Services (01-006-03-0007 TB)**

##### **Executive Officer Comment:**

The Report notes information on the Association Governance and the work of the Working Group convened by WALGA President Cr Craigie.

The Working Group has met three times with the latest meeting held in mid-August. It is proposed a full report will be presented to State Council under separate cover at its meeting on 6 September.

The Report notes:

*Following State Council's direction regarding the recommendations of the working group, consultation with the Local Government sector, including Zones, will be undertaken before any implementation is considered.*

WALGA's representatives may wish to provide further comment.

The Zone has also appointed a Working Group looking at the advocacy process for the Zone and a report on its work can be found in the Executive Committee Minutes.

**7.1.3 Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure (05-001-02-0003 ID)**

**7.1.4 Report on Key Activities, People and Places (01-006-03-0014 JB)**

## **7.6 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda - Policy Forum Reports**

### **7.2 Policy Forum Reports**

**7.2.1 Mayors/Presidents Policy Forum**

**7.2.2 Mining Community Policy Forum**

**7.2.3 Container Deposit Legislation Policy Forum**

**7.2.4 Economic Development Policy Forum**

## **7.7 WALGA President's Report (Attachment)**

Presenting the WALGA President's Report

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Central Country Zone notes the following reports contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda:

- Matters for Noting/Information;
- Organisational reports;
- Policy Forum reports; and
- WALGA President's Report.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Davies**                      **Seconded: Cr West**

**That the Central Country Zone notes the following reports contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda:**

- **Matters for Noting/Information;**
- **Organisational reports;**
- **Policy Forum reports; and**
- **WALGA President's Report.**

**CARRIED**



## 8.0 FINANCE

Nil

## 9.0 ZONE REPORTS

### 9.1 Zone President's Report

Cr Mark Conley

### 9.2 Local Government Agricultural Freight Group

#### 9.2.1 Minutes of Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting 4 July 2019 (Attachment)

Presenting the Minutes of Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting 4 July 2019.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting held 4 July 2019 be received.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Crute**                      **Seconded: Cr Blight**

**That the Minutes of the Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting held 4 July 2019 be received.**

**CARRIED**

#### 9.2.2 Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Delegate's Report

Cr Katrina Crute

#### Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting - 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019

#### Teleconference meeting

- **Harvest Mass Management**  
No major complaints around the system for 19/20; there are still some minor issues between contractors and LG's trying to access the network.
- **Towed Ag Implements**  
Communications around the regulations is improving. The group suggested that a submission be made to the Towed Ag Implements Advisory Committee detailing that from an LG perspective we need to make sure that machinery manufacturers understand the infrastructure limitations that exist, and that just continuing to building larger and larger machines is not helping the ag industry or LG. Ken Seymour did report that up at Dalwallinu he knows of 2 farmers with Airseeders at 8.2mtrs in width.
- **RARF Strategy**  
A quick workshop was held to go through the document so that the group could provide feedback; on the whole the document was well received with the only real feedback that it would be nice to see the mapping of each commodity overlaid into a final map showing the AG flows.
- **Westport**  
Nicole Lockwood gave a presentation on where the Westport Strategy was at. Sorry, my memory is a little vague on this, I think that the group wanted to see the Westport Strategy linked in with the RARF strategy, because Westport doesn't deal with the flow of freight from the regions into Perth, it only looks at it once it is in the Metropolitan area.

I welcome your feedback, suggestions or concerns whether by phone or email.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the report on the Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting held 4 July 2019 be received.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Walker**                      **Seconded: President Ballard**

**That the report on the Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Meeting held 4 July 2019 be received.**

**CARRIED**

**9.3 Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC)**

President Ballard

**9.4 Wheatbelt South Regional Road Group**

Cr Katrina Crute, Chair of Wheatbelt South Regional Road Group

**WBS Regional Road Group Update**

**Road Safety Commission Leadership Program – June 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> 2019**

- I was invited by WALGA to attend this 3 ½ day course, run by Monash University for the Roadsafety Commission. There were leaders from all sorts of industry and government in attendance to work through the Roadsafety Challenge and work towards advice for the Roadsafety Commission about addressing Roadsafety across the State. I was allocated to a group working on Regional Issues and in particular the higher KSI (Killed & Serious Injury) in Regional WA and what programs could be implemented to address the road toll. The groups have work to do at home, then we come back together in October/November to present our findings. I thoroughly enjoyed the week; even though at times it was very heavy going. I certainly learnt that there isn't a magic fix to our road toll and it is all our responsibilities to help bring this down. Starting with road design; I encourage anyone that gets the opportunity to attend this course to go; whilst it is a large time commitment it is certainly worthwhile.

**RRG Chairs Meeting @ LG Convention – 8<sup>th</sup> August**

- Procedures to be updated
  - Formal inclusion of Technical Groups
  - Addressing Voting Rights, especially at Sub Group level
    - Proposal is at Sub Group voting can be by an officer or elected member as long as the delegation is there. Once at RRG it can only be an elected member voting.
  - WBS will need to align its policies with the procedures.
- 3 Year Plans will be required going forward, they will still be flexible.
- General discussion around LG's working together to deliver broad regional outcomes, Goldfields used WSN as an example of this and the fact this has highlighted the need for more initiatives like this or funding simply won't flow.

**Secondary Freight Network Project:**

Planning Workshop – 14<sup>th</sup> June (Governance Plan & MCA Criteria)  
RARF Review (Teleconference) - 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
Infrastructure Australia Teleconference – 18<sup>th</sup> July with Mandy Walker RDAW  
CBH Meeting (CBH Office in CBD) – 19<sup>th</sup> July  
Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister – 9<sup>th</sup> August (Parliament House)  
Meeting with Rick Wilson – 14<sup>th</sup> August (Shire of Kulin)  
Planning Workshop – 16<sup>th</sup> August (Northam Main Roads)  
Finalising the Program Governance Plan & Program Delivery Plans

These will be forwarded to CEO's in draft format for feedback, then they will need to be formally agreed to by ALL 42 LG's (including the MCA Criteria). From here Main Roads will start the funding with the Federal Government for the two pilot projects, one in WBN (Victoria Plains) and one in WBS (Quairading). The program (\$87.5m) is expected to be completed in the next 5 years, so all LG's

involved in Stage 1 will be receiving communication from the WSFN Steering Committee to help develop a 5 years Works Program that enables this part of Stage 1 to be completed.

It is anticipated that ALL 42 LG's will formally agree by council resolution to the Program Governance Plan, Program Delivery Plan & MCA Criteria at their September Council meetings.

**Australian Regional Development Conference**

I am co-presenting a paper on the WSFN Project with Mandy Walker RDAW in September on behalf of WSFN.

Thank you,  
**Cr Katrina Crute**  
Chair  
RRG Wheatbelt South

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the update report of the Wheatbelt South Regional Road Group be received.

**RESOLUTION:**                    **Moved: Cr Mulroney**                    **Seconded: Cr Baker**

**That the update report of the Wheatbelt South Regional Road Group be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 10.0 ZONE BUSINESS - MEMBER COUNCIL MATTERS

### 10.1 Matters for Noting (Attachment)

- **Planning Reform Action Plan – Minister for Planning Hon Rita Saffioti MLA**

Planning Minister Hon Rita Saffioti MLA has released a 19-point plan to simplify and improve Western Australia's planning system.

The Action Plan for Planning Reform: Better planning better places report was put together to address three key objectives:

- Make planning easier to understand and navigate
- Make sure planning systems are consistent and efficient
- Planning systems need to create great places for people

The Action Plan is the McGowan Government's response to the Planning Reform Green Paper released in 2018.

A copy of the Action Plan can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/getmedia/075dc761-ad2a-4f43-99e2-91a246bb4114/PRJ-PR-Action-Plan>

- **Report of the Inquiry into the Shire of Perenjori – Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (Attachment)**

The Report contains 30 findings and 5 recommendations and provides an insight into a number of issues around tendering, record keeping, and declarations of interest.

**Executive Officer Comment:**

Whilst the Report details specific instances of failure one of the overriding themes to emerge related to records management and the relationship to the statutory requirements of the *State Records Act 2000*.

This Report follows the release of an Auditor General's Report on Records Management in Local Government (listed as a Matter for Noting in the Zone Meeting 24 May 2019) in which key findings were that implementation of recordkeeping plans is poor, important records are not properly managed and protection of records is mixed.

- **Checking Status of Local Government Employees –LG Alert - Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC)**

The DLGSC on the 4 July 2019 issued Department circular 6 which reads as follows:

*The Auditor General has conducted a number of local government Performance Audits since the proclamation of the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Act 2017.*

*This has included the review of a selection of local governments to assess their controls for verifying the identity and credentials of new employees and monitoring the status of existing employees.*

*All the local governments reviewed needed to improve in some way their practices for screening employees. Many instances were found where local governments did not perform important checks, including checking of identity, verifying the right to work in*

*Australia, referee checks and criminal background checks. Due diligence is required to exercise the care that is expected to be taken by Local Government's before entering into an agreement or contract with another party.*

*Additionally, policies and practices for the monitoring of existing employees for changes in status, such as new criminal convictions, which could impact their employment, were generally lacking.*

*The report **Verifying Employee Identity and Credentials Report 24 June 2019** is available on the Auditor General's website.*

*Local government CEO's should ensure that appropriate policies and practices are in place, to address this area of potential risk.*

*Refer to **Departmental Circular 05-2019 Local government auditing**, for information on addressing any matters identified as significant by the auditor in an audit report.*

*If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the department on 61 8 6552 7300 or via email [audits@dlgsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:audits@dlgsc.wa.gov.au).*

**Executive Officer Comment:**

The Shire of Williams was one of the local governments that participated in the audit and CEO Geoff McKeown raised the issue of the Auditor General's Performance Audit at the Zone meeting on 24 May 2019.

At the Zone meeting the Department's representative were asked if individual local governments would be developing their own policies and procedures, or would the Department prepare a model or guide. As the OAG Report had not been released the Departmental representatives were not aware of the recommendations but offered the observation "*maybe the Public Sector Commission has something we can use*".

WALGA suggested at the Zone meeting that this was an initiative that it may be able to take up.

In subsequent email conversation between WALGA and CEO Shire of Williams, WALGA has advised that it has recruitment and selection policy which is being enhanced in light of the OAG Report.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the matters listed for noting be received.

**RESOLUTION:**                      **Moved: Cr Crute**                      **Seconded: Cr Blight**

**That the matters listed for noting be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 10.2 State Government Consultation within the Wheatbelt (Attachment)

**Reporting Officer:** Bruce Wittber, Executive Officer  
**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil  
**Date:** 16 August 2019  
**Attachment:** Letter from Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC, Minister for Regional Development

### **Background:**

This matter was considered at the Zone Meeting held 30 November 2018 when it was resolved as follows:

**RESOLUTION:** *Moved: President Ballard* *Seconded: Cr Ball*

- 1. That the Central Country Zone write to the Minister for Regional Development expressing concern that on occasions State Government Agencies, in conducting community and local government consultation, fail to hold consultations in various locations within the Wheatbelt which prevent relevant community input.*
- 2. That a copy of the correspondence to the Minister be also sent to all Members of Parliament representing the Central Country Zone.*

**CARRIED**

Correspondence was prepared and sent to the Minister for Regional Development together with all local Members of Parliament. A number of responses were received from Members of Parliament but most were interested to see the Minister's response.

### **Executive Officer Comment:**

The Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC has provided a response which forms an attachment to this agenda.

Mr Gavin Robins, CEO Wheatbelt Development Commission, is also attending the Zone Meeting and will address the issue that was raised with the Minister, during his presentation.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the correspondence from the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC be noted.

**RESOLUTION:** *Moved: Cr McGuinness* *Seconded: Cr West*

**That the correspondence from the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC be noted.**

**CARRIED**

### 10.3 Partnering Agreement for the Provision of Mutual Aid for Recovery during Emergencies (Attachment)

**Reporting Officer:** Bruce Wittber, Executive Officer

**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil

**Date:** 16 August 2019

**Attachments:** Draft Memorandum of Understanding for the Provision of Mutual Aid during Emergencies and Post Incident Recovery

#### **Background:**

The Shire of Wagin, following a meeting with Department of Fire and Emergency Services, suggested that local governments in the area should have a Memorandum of Understanding for the Provision of Mutual Aid during Emergencies and Post Incident Recovery (MOU).

The issue was considered at the Zone Meeting on Friday 15 March 2019 when it resolved as follows:

*RESOLUTION: Moved: Cr Blight Seconded: Cr Ball*

*That the concept of a Memorandum of Understanding for the Provision of Mutual Aid during Emergencies and Post Incident Recovery be referred to Member Councils for comment and the matter be listed for consideration at the in-person Zone meeting on Friday 30 August 2019.*

**CARRIED**

Details of the request to Member Councils was forwarded by email in late March, with a draft of an MOU prepared for the South West Country Zone also forwarded at that time. A reminder has also been forwarded.

#### **Executive Officer Comment:**

The Shire of Narrogin has responded that it has “*no issues with the intent or detail and would support it being endorsed by the Zone*”.

In addition the Executive Officer has been in discussion with Adam Smith, District Emergency Management Advisor, Great Southern Region of DFES who is attending the Zone Meeting to assist the Member Councils in working through the concept and implications of the MOU.

Mr Paul Sheedy, Acting CEO, Shire of Dumbleyung has also commented on the concept of the South West MOU as follows:

*Having worked in the South West with their MOU I can comment that it worked very well with the MOU in reality confirming in a formal manner what was actually happening on the ground.*

*What the MOU does is provide a written commitment by all local governments that very clearly details the responsibilities (including financial) of both the Provider and Requester and allows the relevant persons (CEO, CBFCO, etc.) to confidently makes decisions to assist other local governments knowing that the MOU has been endorsed by the Council.*

Mr Sheedy may care to elaborate at the meeting on his first-hand experience.

Whilst the Zone has used the Peel Region and the South West Region’s MOUs as a base on which to develop a position the Executive Officer has prepared a Draft MOU for the Central Country Zone, which forms an attachment to the Zone Agenda.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That, subject to any amendment, the Memorandum of Understanding for the Provision of Mutual Aid during Emergencies and Post Incident Recovery be adopted for a period of three years from the date of signing.

**RESOLUTION:                      Moved: Cr Blight                      Seconded: Cr Walker**

**That the Memorandum of Understanding for the Provision of Mutual Aid during Emergencies and Post Incident Recovery (MOU) be adopted, subject to the approval of Central Country Zone's Member Councils, for a period of three years from the date of signing, with the MOU to be in place prior to 2019/2020 fire season.**

**CARRIED**



## 10.4 Future Wheatbelt Conference

<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Bruce Wittber, Executive Officer
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	BHW Consulting as Executive Officer for the Central Country Zone has been paid an organiser fee for previous conferences
<b>Date:</b>	14 August 2019
<b>Attachments:</b>	Nil

### Background:

At the Zone Meeting on 24 May 2019 the matter of future Wheatbelt Conferences was considered when it was resolved as follows:

**RESOLUTION:** *Moved: Cr Ridgway* *Seconded: President Ballard*

*That the Central Country Zone does not support the holding of a Wheatbelt Conference in 2020 however the Zone will review the decision in relation to future Wheatbelt Conferences in May 2020.*

**CARRIED**

Following the advice by the Zone to both the Executive Officer for Avon Midland Country Zone and Great Eastern Country Zone, the Great Eastern Country Zone resolved in respect to the Wheatbelt Conference as follows:

*That the Great Eastern Country Zone position on the Wheatbelt Conference be;*

- 1. There is value in holding Wheatbelt Conferences;*
- 2. Not hold a Wheatbelt Conference in 2020 and look to hold a conference in 2021;*
- 3. Request the three (3) Wheatbelt Zone Executive Committees to meet and discuss the future of Wheatbelt conferences during the 2019 Local Government convention*

A joint meeting of the three Executive Committees was held on Thursday 8 August during Local Government Week. The meeting was attended by Cr Conley, Cr McGuinness, Cr Blight, Cr Crute and Cr De Landgraft together with the Joint Executive Officers, on behalf of the Central Country Zone.

### Executive Officer Comment:

At the joint meeting it was agreed that the issue of organising a Wheatbelt Conference in 2021 be referred to each Zone to consider following the 2019 Local Government Elections. It was felt in doing this any newly elected Councillors could participate in the discussions at which time the type and scope of any future conference could be considered.

The potential to include elected member training into future conferences was also considered.

Whilst the Central Country Zone, at its meeting on Friday 24 May, agreed to consider the matter again in May 2020, given the outcome from the joint meeting, the Zone's Executive Committee has recommended the Zone give consideration in February 2020 in lieu of May 2020.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Central Country Zone reaffirms its decision not to support holding a Wheatbelt Conference in 2020, however will review the decision in relation to future Wheatbelt Conferences in February 2020 instead of May 2020.

**RESOLUTION:** *Moved: Cr Mulroney* *Seconded: Cr Davies*

**That the Central Country Zone reaffirms its decision not to support holding a Wheatbelt Conference in 2020, however will review the decision in relation to future Wheatbelt Conferences in February 2020 instead of May 2020.**

**CARRIED**

## 10.5 Public Consultation- Pesticides Regulation Review in Western Australia

**Reporting Officer:** Bruce Wittber, Executive Officer

**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil

**Date:** 16 August 2019

**Attachments:** Nil

### **Background:**

Western Australia's (WA) public health legislation has undergone a change to a more risk-based approach as part of an overall process of modernising the regulatory structure of public health. As a result there are existing public health regulations that need to be considered in the development of new *Public Health Act 2016* subsidiary legislation.

A discussion paper on the *Health (Pesticide) Regulations 2011* has been prepared and examines the existing regulatory environment and recommends how the current safety measures may be re-constructed using a modern approach.

A copy of the discussion paper can be found by following the link shown below:

<https://consultation.health.wa.gov.au/environmental-health-directorate/pesticides-regulation-review/>

The Department of Health (DOH) has conducted a risk assessment of several categories of scheduled poisons across the pesticide industry and has identified that the risk profile ranges from low to medium. The risk profile when assessed assuming no regulatory controls, ranges from low to high. Regulatory control brings a significant reduction in risk to the public and is strongly recommended in the new regulatory environment.

The discussion paper presents 3 options for regulating the application of pesticides. The primary focus of the paper has identified 25 questions that will assist stakeholders in providing input into the decision making process to modernise pesticide management.

Community input, including from local government, is now being sought on the proposed methods for management, and comments will inform the development of a final approach.

WALGA through an Infopage is seeking feedback from Member Councils by Monday 16 September 2019 with the following specific information being sought:

- What is your preferred Option?
- Do you agree with DOH that Local Government is 'best placed' to be the enforcement agency?
- What will the resource and other cost implications of these proposed changes be?
- Any additional comments or feedback on the consultation paper. Local Governments are encouraged to send written feedback based on questions above, or a copy of their completed survey to the Community team to assist WALGA in developing a sector submission.

### **Executive Officer Comment:**

Zone Member Councils will have received correspondence from Dr Andrew Robertson, Chief Health Officer, regarding the DOH's review of the *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011* as the implementation of the Act requires a review of all existing public health regulations.

The objective of this review is to ensure appropriate measures are in place to minimise public health risks associated with the use of pesticides in WA. The DOH seeks to determine the best option for managing the public health risks associated with pesticide safety to meet community needs in the future. Principal stakeholders for the review will include:

- Local Government including the WA Local Government Association (WALGA);
- State Government;
- Individuals and organisations captured by pesticide safety regulations in WA;

- Individuals using high risk pesticide chemicals exempted from licensing in WA;
- Registered Training Organisations; and
- General public.

The discussion paper examines the existing regulatory environment of the pesticide industry and considers how the current safety measures may be re-constructed using a modern approach.

There is also an online survey as part of the DOH's process of consultation. The survey presents a series of options and proposals for regulating the application of pesticide chemicals. Respondents are encouraged to use quantitative data in their answers where possible.

The options presented in the survey are based on the discussion paper.

The results of this consultation will inform the development of the reforms, with the findings intended to give a broad overview of stakeholder opinion. These will be incorporated into an implementation strategy once proposals are finalised.

The discussion paper presents three (3) options for reform for pesticide regulation.

The preferred direction of the DOH is to pursue Option C, which is to repeal the current Regulations and replace them with new regulations under the *Public Health Act 2016*. Within Option C is a number of ways in which the regulations can be developed. One of the suggested ways in which pesticide regulation could be developed is for devolution of the enforcement function of pesticide regulations to local government.

The question which must be asked, do Member Councils want to take on the enforcement function of pesticide regulations? Whilst it is recognised that local government already undertakes enforcement functions under the Public Health Act through the inspection of licenced food premises etc, does local government wish to take on another State Government function, ie allow still further cost shifting from the State Government to local government.

In detailing Option C, the discussion provides both advantages and disadvantages to the adoption of Option C. Advantages include

1. Adequate Management of public health risks associated with the use and operation of pesticide chemicals;
2. Public safety maintained at a consistently high standard;
3. Local Government may utilise cost recovery for registration and inspection;
4. Consistency in the application and enforcement of legal obligations;
5. Recommends the introduction of Substance Management plans for directing greater responsibility onto high risk pesticide users; and
6. Reduces current State Government regulatory burden, as proposed changes seek to remove and reduce unnecessary requirements.

Disadvantages associated with Option C include:

1. Changes to regulation may initially result in confusion and extra costs to enforcement agencies upon commencement; and
2. Will require information and training to those impacted.

At face value it would appear that Option C has much to offer and it does for the State Government because if adopted, Option C will see local government become responsible for the application and enforcement of any obligations defined within the new pesticide regulation. There is little to recommend Option C to Member Councils because all the advantages identified can still be achieved by the State Government retaining responsibility.

In addition to participation in the online survey, the DOH is also accepting written submissions. Submissions must be received by **5:00pm (WST), Thursday 10 October 2019**. Late submissions will not be considered.

At a time when the sector is under attack from several quarters on what some perceive as the excessive red tape applied by local governments across the State, the last thing the sector needs is further administrative burdens to be thrust upon it.

The Executive Officer believes that a multipronged approach should be taken to the review of the *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011*. The recommendation as presented provides for this.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Central Country Zone encourages Member Councils:

1. to provide comments to WALGA to enable it to prepare a comprehensive submission in relation to the *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011*; and
2. to complete the online survey developed by the Department of Health as part of its review of *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011*.

**RESOLUTION:                      Moved: Cr McGuinness                      Seconded: Cr Davies**

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**That the Central Country Zone encourages Member Councils:**

1. to provide comments to WALGA to enable it to prepare a comprehensive submission in relation to the *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011*; and
2. to complete the online survey developed by the Department of Health as part of its review of *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011*.

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION:                      Moved: Cr Baker                      Seconded: Cr Blight**

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**That the Central Country Zone consider the late item 10.6 Lack of Respect and Responsiveness to Local Government and Managing Unwarranted, Untruthful and Sensationalised Reporting of Local Government – 4WDL VROC.**

**CARRIED**

## 10.6 Lack of Respect and Responsiveness to Local Government and Managing Unwarranted, Untruthful and Sensationalised Reporting of Local Government – 4WDL VROC

**Reporting Officer:** Executive Officer 4WDL VROC

**Disclosure of Interest:** Nil

**Date:** 28 August 2019

**Attachments:** Nil

### **Background:**

The following matter has been submitted by the 4WDL VROC for consideration by the Central Country Zone.

Members of the 4WDL VROC at its meeting on the 13 August 2019 raised concerns about the following matters:

#### **1. The lack of respect and responsiveness to Local Government by the State Government and its agencies and departments.**

From an operational perspective, outstanding matters and approvals requiring to be progressed for Local Government by State Government through just about the whole spectrum of “public services” (Main Roads, Planning, Environment, Lands, Native Title etc) do not seem to be given much priority. Local Governments have to repeatedly follow things up to ensure that matters are progressed and finalised. The reason for this may be a combination of staffing resource deficiencies in these departments and agencies having been depleted to the point where staff are severely overburdened; and a culture shift within the State Government public sector; that (because it is under resourced) it is acceptable to let things drift. A good example of this are the delays experienced by Local Government on issues related to the progressing of Western Australian Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements (WANDRA) claims.

The State Government, (through its imposition of legislative compliance and regulation requirements on Local Government, accompanied by stringent response timelines) demands prompt responses from Local Government as a matter of course. When, however, Local Government require responses from State Government Departments and agencies to progress matters critical to their communities, response rates are often abysmally slow to the point where nothing would happen unless concerted measures were taken to follow thing up. This demonstrates a paternalistic imbalance and lack of respect by State Government to Local Government.

At a political level, Local Government needs the support of the State Government as an *active partner* in progressing priorities for their respective communities. Some regular acknowledgement by State Government on the role and value of Local Government is needed, rather than the Local Government sector being collectively disparaged (or not defended) on the occasions when a small number of Councils default.

#### **2. Managing unwarranted, untruthful and sensationalised reporting of Local Government by some sections of the media.**

Local Government has always been subject to media reporting designed to arouse the interest of the general public and it is accepted by the sector that when local governments make mistakes or default in some way that it is appropriate that those in default “*take it on the chin.*” There is increasing concern, however, that some media players seem to be perpetually targeting Local Government through very unbalanced reporting which, is often untruthful, presents only one side of the story, or presents an overly negative and unrepresentative bias in the quest for the headline that grabs attention. This negative bias against Local Government has prompted the question in some quarters as to whether the same newspaper that seems to pillory Local Government at every opportunity deserves the substantial support and ongoing advertising revenue from the sector as it has in the past.

Local Government is simply seeking a fair go in having a balanced reporting regime. WALGA to its credit has, for some time, publicised positions and matters relevant to the sector in an effort to convey the real story to the public. It is believed however that additional support for the sector is needed in calling out the blatant misreporting, mistruths, predatory and mischievous behavior of some within the media who are hell bent on disparaging Local Government, in the quest for a story, however inaccurate it may be.

**Zone Executive Officer Comment:**

No further comment.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to take a more proactive approach in insisting that the State Government (including its agencies and departments) cooperate properly and respectfully in its dealings with Local Government as an equal partner, in trying to achieve outcomes for the community at large.
2. That WALGA make a concerted effort to dispel mistruths perpetuated by some sections of the media and strive to ensure that a more balanced reporting regime prevails.

**RESOLUTION:**

**Moved: Cr Baker**

**Seconded: Cr McGuinness**

1. **That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to take a more proactive approach in insisting that the State Government (including its agencies and departments) cooperate properly and respectfully in its dealings with Local Government as an equal partner, in trying to achieve outcomes for the community at large.**
2. **That WALGA continue its concerted effort to dispel mistruths perpetuated by some sections of the media and strive to ensure that a more balanced reporting regime prevails.**

**CARRIED**

## **11.0 ZONE BUSINESS - OTHER BUSINESS/URGENT BUSINESS**

Nil

## **12.0 ZONE BUSINESS - EMERGING ISSUES**

*(The intent of the item is to enable Member Councils to bring to the attention of the delegates a matter that is developing. It is proposed that the matter will be tabled for discussion but not decision and then enable Member Councils to take the information away and consider an outcome for possible consideration at the next Zone meeting.)*

Nil

## **13.0 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

Hon Laurie Graham MLC, Member for Agricultural Region

## **14.0 OTHER REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS**

### **14.1 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (Attachment)**

Presenting the August – September 2019 WALGA Zone Update

Ms Jenifer Collins, Regional Manager Wheatbelt, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Mr Luke Stevens, Senior Legislation and Strategy Officer, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

### **14.2 Wheatbelt Development Commission**

Mr Gavin Robins, CEO

### **14.3 Regional Development Australia (RDA) Wheatbelt (Attachment)**

Presenting the Wheatbelt RDA Update Report

### **14.4 Main Roads WA**

Nil

### **14.5 Department of Fire and Emergency Services**

Mr Adam Smith District Emergency Management Advisor, Great Southern Region Operations

## **15.0 DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

Central Country Zone Executive Meeting – Wednesday 16 October 2019 – Teleconference (this meeting is early because of the Local Government Elections)

Friday 29 November 2019 – Shire of Cuballing

## **16.0 CLOSURE**

Prior to closing the meeting Cr Conley wished to acknowledge and express thanks and appreciation, on behalf of the Zone, for the contribution to the Zone and local government of Cr Ridgway, Cr Baker and Cr Harrington who he understood would not be seeking election at the upcoming local government elections.

Cr Conley extended best wishes to any delegates who may be nominating for re-election.

Cr Conley also indicated that he would not be seeking re-election as Zone President and encouraged delegates to give consideration to nominating for this or any other position.

He also took the opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Executive Officer Bruce Wittber and Helen Westcott for their invaluable support and contribution to the Zone.

**RESOLUTION:                      Moved: Cr Crute                      Seconded: Cr Mulroney**

**That the Central Country Zone extends thanks to Cr Conley as Zone President and to those elected members who are not contesting the upcoming local government elections.**

**CARRIED**

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.40pm

DECLARATION

These minutes were confirmed by the Central Country Zone at the meeting held on 30 November 2019

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Person presiding at the meeting at which these minutes were confirmed