

# 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 14 April 2023 - 9.30am**

**Cue Administration Centre - Austin Street Cue**

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Sandstone  
Yalgoo

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## Ordinary Meeting, Cue Administration Centre on Friday 14 April 2023

### 1. Opening

Chair to open the meeting at 9.31am.

### 2. Attendance

#### 2.1 Delegates

Cr Rossco Foulkes-Taylor	Zone President Shire of Murchison
Cr Jorgen Jensen	President Mount Magnet Shire
Cr Ross Pigdon	President Shire of Cue
Cr Les Price	Deputy Zone President Shire of Cue
Cr Beth Walton	President Shire of Sandstone
Cr Harvey Nichols	President Shire of Meekatharra
Cr Emma Foulkes-Taylor	Shire of Murchison
Mr Peter Dittrich	Acting CEO Shire of Meekatharra
Mr Charlie Brown	CEO Shire of Sandstone
Ms Tralee Cable	CEO Shire of Mount Magnet
Mr Ian Holland	CEO Shire of Yalgoo

#### 2.2 Observers

Ms Samantha Appleton	Executive Officer Murchison Country Zone
Mr Richard Towell	CEO Shire of Cue

#### 2.3 Visitors

##### In Person

Cr Karen Chappel	President WALGA
Mr Ian Duncan	Executive Manager of Infrastructure WALGA
Hon Merome Beard MLA	Member for North West Central
Hon Melissa Price MP	Minister for Durack
Mr Nils Hay	Chief Executive Officer MWDC

Mr Rob Houwen	Chair MWDC
Ms Karin Grima	Senior Development Officer MWDC
Mr Jerry Clune	Board Member MWDC
Ms Janet-Hartley West	Regional Manager Midwest-Gascoyne Region Central and Northern Regions Main Roads WA
Ms Isobel Ross	Mental Health Promotion Coordinator WACHS Midwest
Ms Elizabeth Lockyer	Mental Health Promotion Coordinator WACHS Midwest
Ms Candy Hudson	Recovery Support Officer – National Emergency Management Authority
Mr Craig Vinci	Regional Manager Department Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries
Ms Joanne Fabling	CEO - Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Ms Alli Taylor	Manager Project Working Group – Murchison Geo Regions
Ms Jackie Perry	Media Advisor for Hon Melissa Price MP

## 2.4 Apologies

Hon. M. McGowan, MLA	Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Public Sector Management; Federal-State Relations
Hon. R.H. Cook, MLA	Deputy Premier; Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade; Hydrogen Industry; Tourism; Science
Hon. S.N. Dawson, MLC	Minister for Emergency Services; Innovation and the Digital Economy; Medical Research; Volunteering
Hon. D.A. Templeman, MLA	Minister for Culture and the Arts; Sport and Recreation; International Education; Heritage
Hon. P. Papalia, MLA	Minister for Police; Road Safety; Defence Industry; Veterans Issues
Hon. R. Saffioti, MLA	Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports
Hon. Dr A.D. Buti, MLA	Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests
Hon. S.F. McGurk, MLA	Minister for Training; Water; Youth
Hon. A. Sanderson, MLA	Minister for Health; Mental Health
Hon. J.N. Carey, MLA	Minister for Housing; Lands; Homelessness; Local Government
Hon. D.T. Punch, MLA	Minister for Disability Services; Small Business; Fisheries; Seniors and Ageing
Hon. R.R. Whitby, MLA	Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Racing and Gaming
Hon Rosetta Sahanna MLC	Member for Mining and Pastoral
Hon Kyle McGinn MLA	Member for Mining and Pastoral
Mr Kelvin Matthews	CEO Shire of Meekatharra

Ms Samantha Adams	Regional Road Safety Advisor WALGA Roadwise
Hon Neil Thompson MLC	Member for Mining and Pastoral
Mr Kelvin Matthews	CEO Shire of Meekatharra
Mr Mark Holdsworth	Executive Officer Regional Development Australia Mid West
Ms Carol Redford	CEO Astrotourism WA
Senator S Smith	Senator for Western Australia
Mr RS Love MLA	Leader of the Opposition
Ms Yvonne Messina	Chair Regional Development Australia – Midwest Gascoyne
Ms Libby Mettam MLA	Leader WA Liberals
Cr Carol Hodshon	Shire of Sandstone
Cr Greg Payne	President Shire of Yalgoo
Cr Gail Trenfield	Shire of Yalgoo
Cr Jim McGorman	Shire of Mount Magnet
Ms Margi Weir	Executive Officer Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance
Mr Bill Bohem	CEO Shire of Murchison
Hon Peter Foster MLC	Member for Mining and Pastoral

### 3. Confirmation of the Minutes

#### 4.1 Confirmation of Minutes – Ordinary Meeting 18 November 2022

##### Comment

Minutes of the meeting held Zone Meeting held 18 November 2022 have been circulated to Member Shires.

##### Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Zone Meeting held 18 November 2022 be confirmed.

**RESOLUTION – Moved: Cr Jensen Seconded: CEO Holland**

**That the Minutes of the Zone Meeting held 18 November 2022 be confirmed.**

**Carried**

**WACHS** - A presentation was made on the activities of the Western Australian Country Health Service Mental Health Promotion Unit by Ms Isabel Ross and Ms Liz Lockyer. The presentation outlined services available through the unit as well as resources that can be made available to the region.

### 4. Official Opening of Conference

Cr Karen Chappel, President WALGA performed the official opening of the meeting. She outlined some her recent meetings and activities.

**Hon Melissa Price MP** addressed the meeting regarding issues she is dealing with as a federal member of Parliament for the region including funding programs.

#### 4.1 WALGA President

## President's Report

### May 2023

As always it hardly seems like yesterday that the last round of Zone meetings took place. Local Government continues to be adaptable to change, some of which we welcome, others of course we are finding challenging.

State Council continues to consider Zone responses to our Agenda and other current matters affecting Local Government and WALGA. Our Policy Teams are working effectively; the updates from these Teams are comprehensive and it is evident that WALGA policy positions are reviewed regularly to ensure they are current.

#### **Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples**

At its [March 2023](#) meeting, State Council resolved:

*That WALGA:*

- 1. Supports respectful conversations about constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the Voice to Parliament.*
- 2. Requests that the Commonwealth Government ensure that Local Governments and communities are kept informed on the proposal.*

WALGA will continue to keep the Local Government sector informed of progress towards the Referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

#### **Local Government Act Reforms**

Finally, the much-anticipated reforms have been tabled. It's been a very long journey to get to this point and it is important that we continue to be part of the conversation around the regulations that underpin these legislative changes.

The Local Government Amendment Bill 2023 (bill No.103) was introduced to the Legislative Assembly on 23 February 2023 and received its Third Reading on 23 March 2023.

The Bill is listed for the Legislative Council to resume debate when it next sits on Tuesday, 9 May 2023.

Work on the second tranche of additional legislation to deliver further reforms is continuing in consultation with the Local Government sector. The second tranche of reforms is expected towards the end of the 2023 calendar year and will include:

Office of the Local Government Inspector including Monitors and a Conduct Panel replacing the current Standards Panel.  
Elected Member Superannuation  
Audit Committees – Requirement for an Independent Chair  
Streamlining Regional Subsidiaries  
WALGA's role in the Local Government Act

### **Active Travel to School**

It was my pleasure to attend the formal launch of the Active Travel to School Roadmap by Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, Minister for Transport, Planning and Ports.

WALGA and Councils will have the opportunity through the Strategy to address challenges of traffic congestion around schools faced by many urban Local Governments. This issue was placed on the agenda at the 2022 WALGA Annual General meeting and we are looking to the interagency and stakeholder working group to contribute positive change. In Perth, around 20% of students walk or ride to school. A significant increase in this proportion would reduce car traffic and demand for parking around school sites.

### **Transport and Roads Forum**

This forum was such a great success. I valued the opportunity to meet with Members from most parts of the State. Conscious of the ongoing impacts of flooding in the Kimberley and ever-present threat of floods and fires across the State, keynote speaker Brendan Moon AM, Coordinator-General for Emergency Management offered delegates an encouraging and pragmatic approach by the National Emergency Management Agency to strengthen and support Local Governments to prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

Many Local Governments find the current disaster recovery funding arrangements ineffective, and the Association will increase our efforts to achieve better outcomes in this area. Concurrent sessions provided delegates the opportunity to interact with some contentious issues including speed limit setting, permits to clear native vegetation to upgrade roads, heavy vehicle access to the road network and incorporating recycled materials in road construction.

### **LGIS – Board Planning**

Earlier this month I participated in an LGIS board workshop that we hold twice a year. This was the first workshop for the new LGIS CEO James Sheridan, and we covered important ground reviewing the key risks that you rely on LGIS to support you in addressing. I enjoyed, and was challenged by, the ESG workshop session and look forward to progressing the work we have started in developing an appropriate sustainability and ESG framework for LGIS. With a Tropical Cyclone close to making landfall as I prepare this report, the importance of LGIS to you our Members has never been more acute.

### **ICT/ Cyber Security Project**

A couple of OAG Reports and constant publicly advised threats and breaches is keeping this subject as a grave concern for many Local Governments.

The sector is conscious of information systems security and integrity following Office of the Auditor General performance audits in June 2020, November 2021, June 2022 and March 2023.

In response to the findings, WALGA has been in communication with Office of Digital Government (DGov) as a potential future stakeholder, to explore the potential for WALGA to facilitate Local Government access to the WA Cyber Security Unit, operated by DGov. WALGA will collaborate with DGov to prepare a Cyber Security Business Case for consideration by the State Government, inclusive of the costs and benefits of providing Cyber Security Operations Centre resources for WALGA and its Members.

To facilitate the Business Case development necessary to make the Ministerial submission, WALGA has engaged a consultant who is currently surveying the sector. An important aspect of the consultancy will be obtaining valuable quantifiable information on systems and process perspective and experiences of our member Local Governments.

A survey released to the sector in March 2023 resulted in 70 responses, with additional focus group meetings being held with representatives of metropolitan and regional Local Governments.

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

## **5.2 Zone Representative to State Council - Cr Les Price**

**WELCOME**                      WALGA President – Karen Chappel  
Mr. Ian Duncan WALGA Executive Manager Infrastructure.

**LAST MEETING**      18<sup>TH</sup> Nov 2022              2 x State Council Meetings  
2 x Strategic Forum  
3 x Environment & Waste Policy Forums  
2 x Selection Panel Meetings  
1 x Honours Panel Meeting  
Metropolitan Waste & Advisory Council  
(MWAC) Meetings.  
A number of Flying Minutes

The business of State Council has been pretty hectic over the last 6 months, in particular the meetings of December 2022 and March 2023. The May 2023 is likely to be no different, Recent activity has been very much focused on:-

### **1. Proposed Advocacy Position on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People**

State Council considered that WALGA ought not be adopting an advocacy position and stepping into this space was not the responsibility of Local Government to promote a view one way or another. This should be left to the Australian people to decide at a referendum.



## **2. Best Practice Governance Review (7.1)**

This has been a hotly debated and sometimes divisive topic of discussion. There has been a level of pushback, mainly by Regional Zones.

WALGA engaged IPSOS to undertake interviews and Surveys and after drilling down into the report it was clear that the statistical data is used to promote Option 1 as a governance model was flawed. To a number of State Councillors this was seen as a 'means to an end'.

There does appear to be a push by the Administration to ensure a move to a new governance model Option 1.

- Regional Representation will be mostly impacted under Option 1 as 8/12 Country Zones will have no direct governing body representation.
- This will result in a representation imbalance.
- Independent members of a new Board will most likely come from the metropolitan, therefore leaving the 4 country representatives with little or no power when it comes to counting the numbers.
- I will speak later in 2023 on proposed AGM considerations.

## **3. Child Safety Officers in LG.**

WALGA continues to work with the Government in implementing the recommendations (6.12) of the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse. WALGA supports the draft Child Safe Awareness Policy Template (7.2).

WALGA's advocacy in this space extends to seeking support and resourcing through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, recognising the impact on Local Governments, particularly in remote and rural regions.

## **4. Speed Management by Local Governments (7.4)**

Looking to allow Local Governments to set their own road speed limits with Main Roads still being the overarching authority when it comes to road speed management.

## **5. Abandoned Shopping Trolleys (7.3)**

This is becoming a major problem for the metropolitan areas.

## **6. Local Government Act Amendment Bill 2023**

This is currently going through Parliament and is listed in the Legislative Council for 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

Change to the Statutory Provisions of the Act by introducing a 4<sup>th</sup> Principal to

- Recognise the interests of Aboriginal People and
- Involve Aboriginal People in the decision-making processes of Local Government.

This is only a principal and there are no further details as it is expected that each Local Government will deal differently with their communities.

Amendments to the Local Government act will include:-

- Preferential voting.
- Public election of a Mayor or President form larger councils.
- Aligning the size of councils with the size of the population.
- Reforming the 'Owners & Occupiers Roll' to prevent then use of sham leases.
- Setting Statewide caretaker periods.
- Standardised meeting procedures across all councils.
- Live streaming and recording of council meetings.
- Communication agreements between council members and the local government.
- Establishment of online registers to include information on government leases, grants and goods and services contracts.
- Publication of performance indicators and results for all local government Chief Executive Officers.

There will be a further tranche put forward before the end of the year.

### **7. Strategic Forum 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

The meeting discussed WALGA's key Policy positions for 2023 which included:-

- Allowing Local Governments to be agile and empowered.

### **8. Building resilient, capable and inclusive communities**

- Climate change.
- Preparedness, safety and resilience from natural disasters.
- Sustainable environment management.
- Building infrastructure to meet the needs of our economy and communities.
- Local job opportunities.

These 7 policy positions are centred around:-

- Collaboration between Local and State governments.
- Access to essential services in regional, rural and remote areas.

### **9. Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)**

LEMA is a joint initiative between WALGA and DFES. There is review currently underway and an Issues Paper has been prepared for discussion.

### **10. Local Government Insurance Service (LGIS)**

Jonathon Seth has retired from his Chief Executive Role and James Sheridan has been appointed to the position.

### **11. Honours Panel and Selection Panel Updates**

Zones are encouraged to engage with their local councils to create an awareness of the opportunities that are available for elected members and officers by way of *honours recognition*. It is important to recognise the efforts of those in our communities for their contribution to Local Government.

WALGA has a *selection panel* which considers applications for a variety of roles across a number of Local Government and State opportunities. Some of these roles are in an advisory capacity and others are put to the Minister for recommendation. Elected members are encouraged to seek out these opportunities and take advantage of what can flow from such appointments.

### **12. Metropolitan Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)**

The Council discussed matters relating to:-

- The State Government Consultation Paper on the proposed ban on e-waste to landfill.
- Improved waste management and recycling.
- Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) updates. Expanding the Scheme to cover a range of additional products including wine and spirits, fruit and vegetable juice containers as well as a range of other products.
- Looking to adopt a national consistent approach regarding CDS.
- WALGA has been active in working through a national alignment on material types across the various national schemes.

### **13. Environment & Waste Policy Team Activities**

- The Minister withdrew the Draft Guideline minimising noise impact from outdoor basketball facilities. The Policy Team considered the issues are symptomatic of broader considerations around public open space within the planning system. A whole of Government approach is needed.
- There are growing complexities around the kangaroo population and the impact on urban development. The Department of Biodiversity

Conservation and Attractions is looking at the issue of kangaroo management.

- The Urban Forest Conference was held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at Curtin University and was attended by 340 representatives from Local Government, State Government, industry, community organisations and academia.
- The Gascoyne Waste and Environment Summit is to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023 in the Shire of Shark Bay.
- WALGA hosted a Climate Risk Assessment Training session on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 as part of a Natural Disaster Resistance Program Grant.
- WALGA engaged a consultant to develop a template Fleet Transition Plan and 20 Local Governments have agreed to be part of the Australian Renewables Energy Agency (ARENA) funding bid. This relates to transition to Electric Vehicles.
- Stage 3 of the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act (BAM Act) review is expected by mid-April 2023. WALGA continues to engage with relevant stakeholders and the Hon Jackie Jarvis, Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forestry, Small Business, Citizenship and Multicultural Interests.

### **1. WALGA Priorities**

The organisation continues to have a focus on:-

- Green Energy.
- Climate Change.
- Electric Vehicles.
- Management of Bush Fire Brigades.

### **2. Policy Forms**

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.

### **3. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2023**

The rules and regulations around the Act are in the final stages of development with the Guidelines now having been received. WALGA is planning an educational workshop to explain then details of the Guidelines. The date is yet to be confirmed.

1. **Status Reports**

2. The Zone Agenda provides the status of issues put forward to WALGA for addressing. We continue to monitor this progress.

3. **Next State Council Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023**

4. The City of Armadale from the South East Metropolitan Zone will host the next Strategic Forum, Policy Team Meetings and State Council Meeting to be held in May.

*Les Price*

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14<sup>th</sup> April 2023

### 5.3 Zone Status Report – April 2023

## COMPLETE ZONE STATUS REPORT April 2023

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Murchison C	25 November 2022 Zone Agenda Item 6.3 Sealing of Goldfields Highway – Meekatharra Wiluna Road	That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the Shires of Meekatharra and Wiluna in sealing the remainder of the Goldfields Highway (Meekatharra Wiluna Road) as a matter of priority;</li> <li>2. Make representation to the State and Federal Governments on behalf of the Shires of Meekatharra and Wiluna to provide funding for the completion of the project; and</li> <li>3. Include this motion and support in the next WALGA State Council Agenda.</li> </ol>	<p>The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved that WALGA support the Shires of Wiluna and Meekatharra in <u>their</u> representations to State and Federal Governments for funding to complete sealing the remainder of the Goldfields Highway.</p> <p>Delegates noted that local leaders are best placed to make representations to State and Federal Government representatives. WALGA is able to support preparations and if necessary, introductions.</p>	April 2023	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure <a href="mailto:iduncan@walga.asn.au">iduncan@walga.asn.au</a> 9213 2031
Murchison C	2021 23 April Zone Agenda Item 10.1 Mental Health	That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make a representation to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Mental Health highlighting the high rate of suicide in the Midwest Region and lobby the State Government to urgently address the lack of adequate mental health resources in the region and investigate what actions could be taken to address the underlying causes of suicidal ideation; and</li> <li>2. Request that the State Government be requested to fully restore proper and adequate levels of service to the Murchison Sub-region in the Departments of Child Protection, Youth Justice and Adult Corrective Services.</li> </ol>	<p>WALGA continues to be a member of the Mentally Healthy WA Steering Committee which oversees the implementation of the evidence-based Act Belong Commit program. The Act Belong Committee program is promoted to Local Government who are encouraged to become members and access a range of community resources including resources for youth and Aboriginal cohorts.</p> <p>WALGA continues to liaise with the Mental Health Commission around the release of the new Mental Wellbeing Framework in late 2022 which will inform future initiatives relevant to Local Government.</p>	November 2022	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy <a href="mailto:nmatthews@walga.asn.au">nmatthews@walga.asn.au</a> 9213 2039

Murchison C	2021 19 November Zone Agenda Item 7.4 Review of the Mining Act 1978	<p>That Murchison Country Zone of WALGA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recommend WALGA Conduct a survey of all Local Governments support a review of the Mining Act 1978 with respect to supporting a review of those components of the Mining Act 1978 that affect Local Governments;</li> </ol> <p>and Murchison Country Zone of WALGA Minutes 19 Nov 2021 41</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. that the recommendation be forwarded to the Mining Communities Policy Forum of WALGA to undertake a review.</li> </ol>	<p>WALGA has been in discussions with the Regional Development Australia - Mid West Gascoyne (RDAMWG) regarding the issues being considered by the Mining Communities Policy Forum with a view to progressing a discussion on the relationships between Mining Companies and communities.</p> <p>The RDAMWG has contacted Shire CEOs regarding an RDA sponsored forum between Shires and mining companies being planned for early 2023 with the anticipated involvement of a representative of CRC TiME (Transformations in Mining Economies).</p> <p>WALGA staff will follow up with the RDA and provide a response for the next meeting.</p>	April 2023	<p>Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services tbrown@walga.asn.au 9213 2051</p>
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## **MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA**

### **FLYING AGENDA**

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

#### **AT WALGA MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 3 May 2023**

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*The following recommendations have been taken directly from the WALGA State Council Agenda for 3 May 2023 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.*

*Please note that this agenda will be included in our Zone Agenda for discussion on 14 April 2023 so no response is required until our meeting on the Friday 14 April 2023.*

## 5.4.1 Matters for Decision

### 7.1 Best Practice Governance Review – Feedback on Governance Model

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services and Tim Lane, Manager Corporate and Association Governance*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. This report summarising feedback from Members on the Best Practice Governance Review Final Report be received; and
2. Two sets of constitutional changes be developed for consideration by State Council at the July 2023 meeting to be put to the 2023 Annual General Meeting, that:
  - a. Give effect to the revised Model 1, as per the Best Practice Governance Review Final Report; and
  - b. Refine the constitution to address inconsistencies and other issues while maintaining the current governance model.

#### Executive Summary

- State Council commissioned the Best Practice Governance Review with the appointment of a Steering Committee in March 2022.
- The Steering Committee, which met nine times over the course of the project to date and reported back to State Council several times, finalised its [Final Report](#) in February 2023.
- On the basis of member feedback, the Steering Committee recommended Model 1 as the alternate governance model, which would result in the retention of State Council and Zones and the creation of a Board, with the majority of members elected from and by State Council.
- At their March 2023 meeting, State Council resolved to seek feedback from Members on the proposed model.
- To facilitate feedback from Members, the Final Report was distributed and a webinar was held, which was attended by 48 Local Government leaders;
- Feedback was received from 17 Member Local Governments, with nine Member Local Governments expressing support for the proposed Model 1, and eight Member Local Government outlining concerns with the proposed Model 1 or expressing support for the Current Governance Model.
- Concerns with the proposed Model 1 mostly related to concerns around representation at Board level, including the potential for representational imbalances, and the appointment of independent members, including a suggestion that independent members would be more likely to be metropolitan based.
- Next steps for the project are for two sets of constitutional amendments to be presented to State Council at the July 2023 meeting with the view that these amendments would be presented to Members at the 2023 Annual General Meeting.

#### Background

In [September 2021](#), State Council requested that a report to State Council be prepared recommending amendment to the [WALGA Constitution](#) “to deal with matters related to State Councillors Candidature for State or Federal Elections”. A report was subsequently prepared for consideration by State Council at the [December 2021](#) meeting which proposed a full review of WALGA’s governance model and processes. Several drivers for the proposed review were identified, namely:

- Based on Member feedback expressing dissatisfaction with the governance arrangements, [WALGA’s Corporate Strategy 2020-2025](#) identified the governance model as a key enabler of

performance. Accordingly, a review of the governance model and processes was identified as a key strategic initiative.

- The Constitution has been amended eight times since its adoption in 2001. Similarly, the Corporate Governance Charter has been amended 10 times since its adoption in 2004. With amendments layered onto amendments, often in response to specific issues, the Constitution and Charter have become confusing in places.
- The Minister for Local Government's proposal to remove WALGA from being constituted under the *Local Government Act 1995* could further impact WALGA's governance arrangements.

An indicative timeline was included in the proposal, with the end point being the consideration of Constitutional amendments by State Council and Members at the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM). State Council endorsed the proposed Governance Review Project as outlined in the report.

A Steering Committee was appointed by State Council in [March 2022](#) to oversee the Governance Review Project. Membership of the Committee comprised of State Council and Local Government sector representatives. Between May and July 2022, the Committee met four times and undertook significant background work including:

- A review of the governance arrangements of other Local Government Associations in Australia and New Zealand;
- A comparison with five membership-based peak body advocacy organisations; and
- The development of overarching Principles within the categories of *Representative, Responsive and Results Oriented* to guide the development and assessment of a possible alternative governance model for WALGA.

State Council were provided with an update on the progress of the Review and the work of the Committee at an Information Forum in August 2022. Later that month, following another meeting of the Steering Committee, State Council endorsed the Governance Principles and AGM Agenda item proposed by the Committee at a [special meeting](#) on 22 August. When the Principles were considered at the [2022 AGM](#) in October, they received almost universal endorsement by WALGA's Members.

Following the endorsement of the Principles at the AGM, the Steering Committee put forward five model options (including the Current Model) as part of a [Consultation Paper](#) for feedback from WALGA's Members. The Consultation Paper was distributed to all Local Governments in October 2022 with feedback requested by 23 December 2022.

State Council were provided with an update on the Review, along with a copy of the Consultation Paper, at the meeting in [December 2022](#).

A total of 99 Council-endorsed submissions were received, representing 71 percent of WALGA's 139 Members. Concurrently, Ipsos was commissioned to undertake independent quantitative and qualitative research to collect feedback from Local Government Elected Members and Chief Executive Officers on the Governance Review, collect comprehensive feedback on the proposed model options, and determine a preference.

The Steering Committees' [Stage Three Final Report](#) (including the results of the consultation process and Ipsos' research) and recommendation, was presented to State Council at the last meeting on [1 March](#). The Committee's recommended direction was progressing with constitutional amendments to give effect to a slightly revised Model 1. At the March meeting, State Council resolved as follows:

*That:*

1. *The Best Practice Governance Review Stage 3 Final Report be received;*
2. *The proposed changes to WALGA's governance structure as per the revised Model 1, detailed in the Stage 3 Final Report, be noted;*
3. *Members be engaged on the detail of the model and a Final Report be presented to the May 2023 State Council meeting for consideration;*

4. *Any recommendation to the 2023 AGM include Option 5 as the Current Model and Option 1 as an alternative to the Current Model; and*
5. *Subject to points 1, 2, 3 and 4 above, constitutional changes be developed for consideration by State Council.*

As per point 3, feedback was subsequently sought from Members in relation to the proposed model. The Final Report and a [summary document](#) were published on the WALGA website. Email correspondence was sent to all Local Government CEOs on 14 March, and all Elected Members on 17 March, providing links to the Report and requesting feedback on the proposed model.

Elected Members and senior officers were also invited to attend a webinar on 21 March at which WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan and Executive Director Member Services, Tony Brown provided an overview of Council submissions to the Consultation Paper and outlined the Steering Committee's alternate model for consideration, as detailed in the Final Report. 48 attendees joined the webinar, comprising a range of Elected Members and officers from both metropolitan and country Local Governments. A recording of the webinar was distributed to Members on 28 March via LG Direct and can be viewed [here](#).

Articles about the Final Report, proposed model and webinar were included in LG Direct on 14 March, 21 March and 28 March.

As of 31 March, 17 responses were received from Members, providing feedback on the proposed governance model. The responses included both Council-endorsed feedback as well as feedback from individual Elected Members and CEOs. Overall, there were nine responses in support of revised Model 1, and eight responses against.

## **Comment**

Of the responses from 17 members, five members put forward a new or updated position, three of which were in favour of the proposed Model 1, and two expressed concerns regarding the proposed Model 1.

The Shire of Cuballing had previously ranked Model 3 as its most preferred, followed by the Current Model, with Model 1 being ranked fourth. In its feedback, the Shire noted that "whilst [Model 1] was not our first choice, it seems like a reasonable compromise which preserves the strengths of the existing governance structure and delivers an effective Board to run the business".

In its original submission, the Shire of West Arthur ranked the Current Model as its first preference, followed by Model 1 as second preference. In this round of feedback, the Shire of West Arthur resolved to support the revised Model 1.

Following a review of the Final Report, the Shire of Plantagenet also submitted in support of Model 1, having not provided a submission during the original consultation period.

The Shire of Upper Gascoyne submitted that given the uncertainties of the proposed Model 1, they could not support it. The Shire of Upper Gascoyne did not provide a submission during the original consultation period.

Similarly, the Shire of Dumbleyung expressed some concerns about the proposed Model 1 and indicated support for retaining the Current Model. The Shire of Dumbleyung made a submission during the previous consultation period but did not provide a ranking of preferences.

In total, nine of the 17 responses expressed support for the revised Model 1, and all of these responses were submitted as Council endorsed positions.

In addition to the three submissions in support detailed above, six responses in support were from Councils that had ranked Model 1 as their first preference, and so represent a reiteration of their previous feedback:

- Town of Claremont (previously submitted in support of both Model 1 and Model 3);
- Shire of Gnowangerup;
- Shire of Koorda;
- City of Mandurah;
- Shire of Shark Bay; and
- Shire of Waroona.

The remaining eight responses indicated a preference for retaining the Current Model and/or not advancing Model 1 as proposed. These responses included feedback from both individual Elected Members and CEOs, as well as some Council endorsed positions.

In addition to the two responses expressing concerns with the proposed Model 1 above, feedback was received from six Local Governments reiterating their Councils' support for the Current Model, as per the original round of feedback:

- Shire of Cue;
- Shire of Morawa;
- Shire of Murchison;
- Shire of Northampton;
- Shire of Sandstone; and
- Shire of Wagin.

Concerns raised in relation to the proposed Model 1 broadly relate to:

- Representation – that not all Zones will be represented at Board level, and that this could lead to representation imbalances;
- Independent members – including a hypothesis that independent members will be more likely to be based in metropolitan Perth; and
- Questions regarding the rationale for change.

In relation to representation concerns, some respondents suggested that all country representation at Board level could be from the South-West or regional centres, whereas other respondents suggested that country representatives at Board level would be elected to represent regions, and may not be the best people for the role.

In relation to independent members, some respondents suggested that there was a likelihood that independent members would be more likely to be drawn from the metropolitan region. Other respondents reiterated previous submissions suggesting that appointment of independent members should be restricted to only Local Government Elected Members.

The next steps for the project, as per the recommendation, are for two sets of constitutional amendments to be developed and considered by State Council, in accordance with State Council's March 2023 resolution. The first set of constitutional amendments would be to give effect to Model 1, as per the Best Practice Governance Review Final Report. The second set of amendments would be to retain the Current Model and would aim to address inconsistencies and some other issues in the current Constitution.

If both sets of constitutional amendments are supported by State Council with a 75 percent majority in July 2023, the Members will have the opportunity to determine the Association's Governance model at the 2023 Annual General Meeting.



- b. **Refine the constitution to address inconsistencies and other issues while maintaining the current governance model.**

**Carried**

- **7.2 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' Child Safe Awareness Policy Template**

*By Susie Moir, Policy Manager Resilient Communities*

**WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

**That State Council:**

1. **Supports the draft Child Safe Awareness Policy Template being provided to Local Governments to assist with their implementation of Recommendation 6.12 of the Royal Commission (Child Safety Officers in Local Government); and**
2. **Notes the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' commitment to providing ongoing support and resourcing assistance to Local Governments to assist with implementation of the draft Child Safe Awareness Policy Template and other relevant actions relating to child safeguarding, through the Child Safeguarding Implementation Unit.**

**Executive Summary**

- Since 2020, the State Government has consulted with the Local Government sector in relation to Recommendation 6.12 from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission), which recommended that Local Governments should designate Child Safety Officers, with support from governments at the National and State level.
- In 2022, the Department of Communities (DoC) facilitated a series of co-design sessions which involved 35 representatives from Local Government, the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP), WALGA, and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) to develop the Child Safe Awareness Policy Template for Local Government (the Policy) to support implementation of Recommendation 6.12.
- The Policy supports initial action by Local Governments in addressing Recommendation 6.12, and forms part of the broader environment of child safe reforms developed out of the findings of the Royal Commission that will impact Local Government.
- DLGSC is seeking WALGA support for the Policy.
- WALGA considers support for the Policy is appropriate but notes that Local Governments will require ongoing support and resourcing assistance consistent with WALGA's *Advocacy Position 3.10.2 Child Safeguarding*.
- WALGA will continue to advocate to the State Government for the Policy to be considered in the context of a broader implementation plan for all the Royal Commission's recommendations relevant to Local Government.

**Attachment**

- Child Safe Awareness Policy Template for Local Government

**Policy Implications**

This relates to *Advocacy Position 3.10.2 Child Safeguarding*:

1. *Local Government supports:*
  - a. *the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2017, in particular Recommendation 6.12 which can be achieved by Local Government implementing and embedding child safeguarding across its*

- functions with support from Governments at the national, state and territory levels; and*
- b. the ten National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Humans Rights Commission).*
2. *The State Government through an Independent Oversight Body should provide financial, resourcing and capacity building support to Local Governments to implement and embed child safeguarding across its functions, through the provision of:*
    - a. supporting materials such as template policies, procedures and guidelines;*
    - b. consistent key messaging and resources to promote and share in venues and facilities and online;*
    - c. examples of best practice, including case studies;*
    - d. self-assessment tools to assist Local Government;*
    - e. ongoing training and skills development for Local Government staff, including online training options;*
    - f. funding for the delivery of the child safeguarding function within smaller, less well resourced (Tier 3 and Tier 4) Local Governments; and*
    - g. expert officers within each region to provide support and guidance to Local Government on child safeguarding.*
  3. *The Local Government sector supports Local Government participation in the State's National Redress Scheme, with full financial coverage by the State.*

## **Background**

Recommendation 6.12 from the Royal Commission, which was accepted in principle by the State Government in 2018, recommends that Local Governments designate child safety officer positions to carry out a series of functions related to promoting and improving child safety in their communities.

Following feedback from Local Governments (Resolution 199.FM/2021), DoC revised the approach for progressing Recommendation 6.12 to embed child safety across Local Government functions instead of designating a specific child safety officer position. The Minister for Child Protection approved the change in approach to implementing Recommendation 6.12.

In 2022, DoC, in collaboration with DLGSC, commenced the development of a child safe awareness policy template for Local Government as an initial step in fulfilling the State Government's obligation to implement Recommendation 6.12. The Policy Template was developed via a co-design process involving 35 Local Government officers, WALGA representatives and the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP).

The Policy commits Local Governments to a number of policy principles which promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, including upholding the rights of children and young people; that the safety and best interests of children and young people are a primary consideration when making decisions that concern them; and that communities are informed and involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, including protection from harm.

In line with Royal Commission recommendation 6.12, the Policy requires Local Governments to complete two policy functions:

1. Develop a process to deliver child safe messages at local government venues, facilities, and events; and
2. Connect local community groups, organisations, and stakeholders to child safe resources.

## **Comment**

In February 2023 DLGSC's Child Safeguarding Implementation Unit presented the draft Policy at a number of WALGA Zone meetings and sought Local Government participants for a pilot program to test the implementation of the Policy. Feedback received from zones was generally positive. The pilot



is now underway with six Local Governments. DLGSC have advised that they will use the learnings from the pilot to make adapt or improve the Policy as necessary.

The DLGSC Child Safeguarding Implementation Unit established in 2022 is available to support Local Government and other stakeholders with child safeguarding initiatives. The Unit has developed a range of supporting materials including:

- A list of online child safety resources for Local Governments to provide to organisations, stakeholders and community members.
- Referral pathways information to respond to reports and disclosures of abuse.
- Frequently Asked Questions document.
- Guidelines for promoting child safe messages.
- An implementation checklist.

DLGSC is seeking WALGA State Council's support for the Policy Template. WALGA considers that support is appropriate but notes that Local Governments will require ongoing support and resourcing assistance consistent with WALGA's Advocacy Position 3.10.2 Child Safeguarding.

WALGA will continue to advocate for the establishment of an Independent Oversight Body to provide financial, resourcing and capacity building support to Local Governments to implement and embed child safeguarding across its functions.

- **Not support WALGA Recommendation**

### • **7.3 Abandoned Shopping Trolleys Advocacy Position**

By Lyn Fogg, Governance Specialist

#### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

**That State Council endorse the following position on Abandoned Shopping Trolleys:**

***The Local Government Sector advocates for State Government to consult with the Sector and prioritise legislative reforms that require retailers to contain shopping trolleys within shopping centre property boundaries, inclusive of enforcement and modified penalty mechanisms that are a realistic economic imperative for retailers to comply with containment requirements.***

#### **Executive Summary**

- Abandoned trolleys in the public domain, create safety hazards for pedestrian and vehicular traffic and negatively impact public amenity and the natural environment.
- Some retailers prioritise their civic and social responsibilities, however the cost of physically retrieving illegally dumped trolleys is now substantially more than the cost of replacing trolleys.
- The absence of economic or legally enforceable imperative means retailers are increasingly not responding to this issue within reasonable timeframes, if at all.
- In response to community expectations, Local Governments bear the increasing cost burden to remove, impound and eventually dispose of abandoned trolleys.
- The *Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021* (NSW), presents an example of how legislation can be used to address issues arising from shopping trolleys.

#### **Policy Implications**

State Council's adoption of the recommendation will create a new Advocacy Position.

## Background

At the [WALGA 2022 AGM](#) (Item 3.12.1) the following resolution was passed:

### 3.12.1 Abandoned Shopping Trolleys

*That this meeting supports the recent petition to be tabled in the Legislative Council, Parliament of Western Australia, "Removal and Abandonment of Shopping Trolleys 22-0017" calling on the State Government to implement stringent and uniform shopping trolley containment laws for the whole state of Western Australia.*

The AGM resolution refers to a petition by the Spearwood Progress Association that was tabled in the WA Parliament's Legislative Council on 22 November 2022:

We are seeking uniform and stringent shopping trolley containment state laws.

1. Investigate the effectiveness of the current local government act in addressing abandoned shopping trolleys
2. Engage with retail stakeholders and shopping centres to investigate current practices
3. Investigate other states/territories and if necessary overseas jurisdictions' current measures/practices to circumvent this issue
4. Recommend the implementation of stringent and uniform shopping trolley containment laws for the whole of Western Australia.

Local Government and community concerns regarding abandoned shopping trolleys have been ongoing over many decades, for example:

- WALGA prepared a discussion paper in 2005, that underpinned development of strategies and establishment of a Working Group.
- The WALGA Working Group included Local Government and retailer representatives and facilitated a number of agreed initiatives to address the issue, before it was disbanded in 2008.
- In 2016, the WALGA Waste and Environment Team prepared a Background Paper titled, "Shopping Trolley Illegal Dumping", which provided recommendations on ways for Local Governments to respond to illegal dumping of shopping trolleys.
- In 2021, the matter was again raised by the East Metropolitan Zone and at that time in the absence of any other initiatives, the Governance and Organisational Policy Team resolved to advise the Zone "*that the best way to address this issue is for each Local Government to work with their retailers*".

Due to the decreasing cost of replacement, retailers are less likely to reclaim impounded trolleys, resulting in Local Government and community bearing the further cost of disposal, which is considerable given the bulky nature of trolley's making them difficult to collect, store and dispose of. As an indication of the scale of the problem, metropolitan Local Governments indicate they have at times held several thousand uncollected impounded trolleys.

The [WALGA 2022 AGM](#) resolution above was referred by State Council at its meeting held [7 December 2022](#), to the Governance and Organisational Service Policy Team, which further considered the New South Wales [Public Spaces \(Unattended Property\) Act 2021 \(NSW\)](#), effective November 2022, enacted in response to similar problems associated with abandoned shopping trolleys and other abandoned property.

The NSW legislation provides local governments, other public land managers and police in New South Wales with stronger powers and enforcement mechanisms to deal with unattended or abandoned property, including shopping trolleys, unregistered /abandoned cars, trailers, share bikes and eRidables and stray animals. The law also provides for:

- stronger regulatory and enforcement powers to deal with property left unattended in public
- higher penalties for offences
- greater ability to recover regulatory costs from those responsible

- greater flexibility to temporarily store or care for unattended items and animals
- reduced costs for compliance and storage
- easier way to work with other authorities across jurisdictional boundaries
- better way to deal with stock animals in emergencies

The NSW Government has provided implementation guidance to its Local Government sector, including a period up to 1 May 2023 where warnings, instead of infringements, will be issued.

### Comment

Local Governments in WA are limited in the scope of responsibility and enforcement that it can place on retailers through local laws. In the absence of capacity to make suitable local laws, the sector will benefit from the introduction of laws made by State Parliament that will have universal effect in WA.

The New South Wales [Public Spaces \(Unattended Property\) Act 2021](#), provides an example of a robust regulatory framework which could inform development of a Western Australian legislative instrument, that also addresses other forms of unattended property.

- **Support WALGA Recommendation**

## 7.4 Speed Management Reform Advocacy Position

By Terri-Anne Pettet, Manager Road Safety

### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the Speed Management Advocacy Position as follows, be endorsed:

1. ***That WALGA supports Local Governments wishing to manage travel speeds, including speed limit changes, as a means of achieving the many health, social and environmental benefits for communities.***
2. ***That Main Roads WA (MRWA) retain the overarching authority for speed limit setting/zoning.***
3. ***That Main Roads WA speed zoning policies and processes be reformed so that Local Governments are more influential in the determination of speed limit decreases or increases for local roads.***
  - a. ***This will include applications that are deemed to be approved when the application:***
    - i. ***is based on assessments by competent Local Government practitioners,***
    - ii. ***contains evidence-based identification of the benefits,***
    - iii. ***contains preliminary designs for infrastructure safety upgrades associated with applications to increase speed limits, and***
    - iv. ***includes an engagement strategy for managing community and stakeholder expectations.***
  - b. ***Allows for Main Roads WA to decline an application, within a mutually agreed timeframe, on the basis that it:***
    - i. ***does not meet the above criteria, and***
    - ii. ***provides specific evidence for declining the application.***
4. ***The WALGA seeks to work with Main Roads WA and other stakeholders, to develop a speed management guide for Local Governments.***

### Executive Summary

- WALGA's existing policy on speed management is narrow in scope and is inadequate for advocating the varying needs of the Local Government sector.
- Speed management is an important tool for Local Governments, for managing the safety performance of local roads and to help create healthy, vibrant, and connected communities.
- Changing speed limits is an important element of speed management but the application process can be difficult and Local Governments currently have limited influence in the determination of speed limit changes on local roads.
- A contemporary advocacy position on speed management will enable WALGA to advocate for reforms that are needed to better reflect the diverse needs of Local Governments and enable effective and responsible management of travel speeds on local roads.

## Attachment

- [Local Government Principles for Speed Management Reform Discussion Paper](#)

## Policy Implications

WALGA's existing advocacy position in relation to speed stems from consultation with Local Governments undertaken in the early 2000s. The position, first adopted in 2005 and reinforced in 2022, refers only to the State default open road speed limit (see position 5.2.3 in the [Advocacy Positions Manual](#)). This item recommends broadening the existing position.

## Background

Speed management is an important tool for Local Governments to prevent road trauma, improve traffic flows, reduce noise and air pollution, encourage active travel, and decrease the climate change impacts of road transport.

The setting of speed limits is a key element of any effective speed management strategy. Changing the speed limit is a relatively quick, cost-effective treatment to manage travel speeds, yet in Western Australia the process can be onerous, challenging and ineffective for Local Governments.

Currently Local Governments must apply to Main Roads WA (MRWA) to have speed zones changed (*Road Traffic Code 2000*). Following feedback from Local Governments about the barriers experienced when seeking to amend speed zones, WALGA conducted a survey to further explore the issues that were being reported. In summary, the following conclusions were drawn from the 2021 survey:

- one third (35%) of respondents found the process difficult and one half (49%) of applications took more than six months, indicating that there is an opportunity for the process to be streamlined;
- more applications for speed zone amendments (where Local Governments received a determination) were rejected (45%) than approved (30%), suggesting that local knowledge and context may not be given adequate consideration. Furthermore, the current processes in Western Australia do not meet global best practice in terms of local authorities having the ability to modify speed limits.

Based on those conclusions, a [discussion paper](#) was circulated in December 2022. Feedback was received from six Local Governments. The feedback collected showed general agreement with the following principles:

- the need to develop a contemporary Local Government policy position on speed management;
- that Local Governments be better positioned to influence speed management policy and practice;
- that Local Governments be respected for the application of responsible and effective speed management practices; and
- an assessment methodology, with clear guidelines that also includes ways to communicate with communities about speed limit changes should be developed for Local Governments.

## Comment

The current WALGA advocacy position on speed is limited as it was developed in response to a simplistic question about a complex topic. It is no longer adequate for either responding or proactively advocating appropriately to reflect the diverse needs of Local Governments in managing road networks for the communities of Western Australia.

Changing (decreasing or increasing) speed limits is one element of speed management, however institutional barriers for Local Governments have been identified. This involves the application process and the way in which MRWA (as the speed zoning authority) implements their speed zoning policy.

The overarching premise of this recommended advocacy position is that Local Governments are in a better position to understand the complex mix of community needs and the unique local circumstances that are important in determining speed limits on lower volume local roads. MRWA is responsible and experienced at managing high volume, fast moving urban and rural roads (highways), however it is not feasible for MRWA to understand and take into consideration all the local circumstances and desired health, social and environmental improvements of each community, when determining speed limits on local roads.

Furthermore, the recommendations align with the objectives of the other policies and strategies:

1. WA State Infrastructure, Recommendation 63 to provide enhanced cycling and walking infrastructure;
2. [WA Active Mobility Strategy](#); and
3. [The Declining Rate of Walking and Riding to School](#).

A contemporary Local Government advocacy position will enable WALGA to advocate for reforms in speed management that more appropriately reflect the diverse needs of the sector.

- **Support WALGA Recommendation**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>7.5 State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement 2023/24 to 2027/28</b></li></ul>
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*By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager, Infrastructure*

<b>WALGA RECOMMENDATION</b>
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<b>That the State Roads Funds to Local Government Agreement 2023/24 – 2027/28 be endorsed.</b>
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**Executive Summary**

- The State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement (Agreement) provides funding for Local Governments to improve and maintain the local road network.
- The new Agreement continues to provide 20% of vehicle license fee revenue collected by the State Government to be applied to Local Government roads and paths.
- The proposed Agreement is for a five-year term from 2023/24 to 2027/28.
- The overall structure and intent of the Agreement remains largely unchanged from the previous Agreement.
- Commitments to road safety, aboriginal employment and recycled materials have been expanded.
- The Agreement was developed through consultation with Local Government members of the State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee (SAC), Main Roads WA and Regional Road Group representatives.

**Attachment**

- State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement 2023/24 to 2027/28

## Policy Implications

In the context of establishing advocacy positions for a new *Local Government Act*, WALGA State Council resolved that the Government returns to Local Government at least 27 percent of motor vehicle licence fee collections. The State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement 2018/19 to 2022/23 was endorsed by State Council in 2018.

## Budgetary Implications

The Agreement fully funds the WALGA Transport and Roads program and approximately 20% of the RoadWise program.

## Background

The State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement (Agreement) provides an allocation of funds to Local Governments in Western Australia. The amount of funding is based on a percentage of the vehicle license fee revenue collected by the State Government. This Agreement is the sixth such agreement between State and Local Government in Western Australia. It builds on previous funding and administrative arrangements negotiated in 1995, 2000, 2005, 2011 and in 2018. The funding arrangements provide Local Government with some surety in funding for the term of the Agreement and delegated decision-making responsibility for prioritizing investment in each region.

The Agreement has been developed through consultation with Local Government members of the State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee, Main Roads WA and Regional Road Group representatives. The WALGA President and CEO have met with the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports who has expressed support for the Agreement. All parties acknowledged the value of the Agreement which remains a unique arrangement in Australia.

The Agreement is subject to endorsement by WALGA State Council and State Cabinet.

## Comment

The overall structure and intent of the proposed Agreement remains essentially the same as the current Agreement. The following content is highlighted:

1. The Agreement is proposed to run for a five-year period from 2023/24 to 2027/28.
2. The proposed Agreement will provide a 20% allocation of the vehicle license fee revenue collected by the State Government.
3. The Agreement is projected to provide the following annual allocations for Local Government roads and paths:

2023/24	\$245 million
2024/25	\$258 million
2025/26	\$271 million
2026/27	\$284 million
2027/28	\$297 million
4. Under the terms of the Agreement, Local and State Governments commit to:
  - Increasing the application of the Safe System for road safety approach to the Local Road network.
  - Providing opportunities for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
  - Increasing sustainable road construction practices through the greater use recycled materials.

Within the first two years of this Agreement, Main Roads WA, WALGA and Regional Road Groups will collaborate to establish a system(s)/process(es) for monitoring, reporting, and advancing these commitments.

5. WALGA continues to seek an increase in the share of licence fee revenue available for local roads and path projects. The Government is not prepared to vary the funding arrangements at this time. In the year ending June 2022, \$45.9 million (18%) of the budget funding was carried forward including \$31.2 million for projects being delivered by Local Governments. Based on anticipated revenue increases, annual funding to the Agreement is forecast to increase 21% over the term of the Agreement. The forecast funding is \$1,355 million over five years, which is a 32% increase on the previous five year agreement.
6. The Minister identified that funding for active travel infrastructure would continue to be prioritized in the State Initiatives sub-program.

- **Support WALGA Recommendation**

## 5.4.2 Matters for Noting/Information

• <b>9.1 2023 Policy Priorities</b>
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*By Dana Mason, Manager Economics*

<b>WALGA RECOMMENDATION</b>
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<b>That the update on WALGA's 2023 Policy Priorities be noted.</b>
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### Executive Summary

- It is important that WALGA focuses on issues of most importance to Local Governments to maximise sector outcomes and avoid diluting our effectiveness in influencing key decision-makers.
- At the March Strategic Forum, the State Council discussed WALGA's policy priorities for 2023. The agreed priorities are now available on the [WALGA website](#).
- Any new issues emerging through Zones or other channels will be considered in the context of these identified priorities.

### Attachment

- [WALGA 2023 Policy Priorities](#)

### Background

While there are a wide range of issues facing Local Governments, it is important that WALGA focuses on those of most importance, to maximise sector outcomes and avoid diluting our effectiveness in influencing key decision-makers.

At the March Strategic Forum, the State Council discussed WALGA's policy priorities for 2023. These priorities seek to pursue a number of important objectives:

- Agile and empowered Local Government;
- Resilient, capable and inclusive communities;
- Climate action;
- Communities that are safe and resilient from natural disasters;
- Sustainable management of the environment;
- Infrastructure to meet the needs of our economy and communities; and
- Thriving economies and local job opportunities.

The agreed priorities are now available on the WALGA website, [here](#).

The identified priorities are issues of state-wide concern to Local Governments and their communities. They range in their stage of development, from emerging issues that require research and the collation of evidence to underpin a robust policy position on behalf of the sector; to those that are long standing positions.

An overarching focus for 2023 will be to ensure that WALGA has relevant, contemporary, and fit for purpose policy positions to support our advocacy across all priority areas.

### **Comment**

WALGA's 2023 Policy Priorities document will assist to:

- Ensure that WALGA Members are informed and can contribute to ongoing policy development;
- Target resources to areas of greatest impact for the Local Government sector collectively; and
- Improve coordination of activities and advocacy strategies across the sector.

It is important to note that new issues may arise, or current issues may evolve significantly during 2023, which may require the priorities to be reprioritised or amended. Any new issues emerging through Zones or other channels will be considered in the context of these identified priorities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>9.2 Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Review Project</b></li></ul>
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*By Simone Ruane, LEMA Review Project Lead*

<h3><b>WALGA RECOMMENDATION</b></h3>
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<p><b>That the update on the Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Review Project be noted.</b></p>
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### **Executive Summary**

- The LEMA Review is a partnership between the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and WALGA, initiated in response to reports that the current LEMA model is not fit-for-purpose for Local Government.
- The LEMA Review is an opportunity to develop new LEMA approaches, reshape emergency management (EM) procedures and enhance disaster preparedness at the local level.
- WALGA received AWARE funding to lead a consultation with Local Government for the LEMA Review to ensure that the outcomes were sector-led and representative of a diverse range of Local Governments.
- From April to December 2022, WALGA engaged with the sector to identify LEMA strengths, weaknesses, and improvement opportunities in a consultation process. 100 Western Australian Local Governments participated in the consultation process.
- WALGA's [LEMA Review Consultation with Western Australian Local Governments: Project Summary and Recommendations Report](#) summarises the key findings of this consultation process that will inform a LEMA Improvement Plan developed by DFES.
- A final LEMA Improvement Plan, which will include implementation actions, will be submitted to the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) for endorsement in August 2023.

### **Attachments**

- [LEMA Review Issues Paper](#)
- [LEMA Review Local Government Survey Findings Report](#)
- [LEMA Review Workshop Consultation Report](#)



- [LEMA Review Consultation with Western Australian Local Governments: Project Summary and Recommendations Report](#)

## Background

Under the *Emergency Management Act 2005* (EM Act), Local Governments in Western Australia are required to have Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) in place. LEMA is the collection of all emergency management strategies, plans, agreements and other documents that apply to the Local Government district.

In 2019, the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) identified that there were an increasing number of Local Governments with LEMA overdue for review. Based on WALGA's recommendation, SEMC endorsed a LEMA Review to inform the design of an improved LEMA model. In 2021, DFES was granted National Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) funding to undertake a LEMA Review and WALGA was allocated AWARE funding to lead the consultation with Local Governments to ensure a sector-led approach.

The LEMA Review officially commenced in March 2022 as a partnership initiative between the DFES' SEMC Business Unit and WALGA. From April to December 2022, WALGA engaged with the sector to identify LEMA strengths, weaknesses, and improvement opportunities in a consultation process that included 10 in-depth interviews, 10 interactive workshops and an online survey. 100 Western Australian Local Governments have participated in the consultation.

WALGA's [LEMA Review Consultation with Western Australian Local Governments: Project Summary and Recommendations Report](#) summarises the key findings of this consultation process. A more detailed overview of the consultation process and outcomes are presented in [WALGA's LEMA Review Issues Paper](#), [LEMA Review Survey Report](#) and an independent [LEMA Review Workshop Consultation Report](#).

WALGA's consultation findings indicate that LEMA should empower Local Governments to prepare for and recover from hazards that are likely to impact their communities and business operations now and into the future. To enable this, an improved LEMA model should:

- clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of Local Governments in emergency management;
- simplify the reporting processes and reduce the administrative burden of maintaining compliance;
- provide a suite of scalable tools and guidance co-designed with the Local Government sector that are accessible through an online system;
- build the emergency management capacity and capability of Local Governments through the provision of targeted training, exercising support, human resources and sustainable funding;
- assist Local Governments to continue to deliver their core business activities and provide public information during an emergency event;
- improve the connectivity of Local Governments' various risk management and hazard planning processes through an integrated approach;
- enable resource sharing and collaboration across the Local Government sector; and
- transfer specific elements of emergency management planning to the district or sub-district level where appropriate, so Local Governments can focus on relevant and contextual emergency management planning at the local level.

## Comment

Based on the LEMA Review consultation findings and aligned with WALGA's current [Advocacy Positions](#), WALGA has made the following recommendations to inform the LEMA Improvement Plan currently being developed by DFES:

1. DFES and SEMC approve and secure funding for a three-year LEMA Improvement Project to implement the LEMA Review improvement actions (August 2023 - August 2026);
2. The State Government increase the emergency management resourcing for Local Governments that currently lack emergency management capacity and capability;

3. The State Government develop a simpler and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework with improved communications, guidance and digital tools for Local Governments to assist them to meet their LEMA obligations;
4. SEMC abolish the current one-size-fits-all LEMA model template and develop a suite of LEMA guidance material and practical tools; and
5. The State Government develop new LEMA approaches that focus more on building the emergency management capacity and capability of the sector through the provision of training, exercising support and targeted investment, rather than a compliance focus.

A final LEMA Improvement Plan, which will include implementation actions, will be submitted to the SEMC for endorsement in August 2023.

**• 9.3 Submission to the Independent Review of WA's COVID-19 Management and Response**

*By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager, Policy*

**WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Submission to the Independent Review of Western Australia's COVID-19 Management and Response, endorsed via Flying Minute on 15 March 2023, be noted.**

**Executive Summary**

- The State Government has commissioned an independent review of WA's response and management of COVID-19, with submissions due by 16 March 2023.
- The scope of the review is limited to the Western Australian Government's response and management of COVID-19 and specifically excludes Local Government, Commonwealth Government and non-government organisations.
- WALGA's submission is based on the Association's, and Local Governments', experience and interaction with the State Government in responding to COVID-19.
- The submission acknowledges the effectiveness of the State Government's response and focuses on WALGA and Local Governments experience of the State Government's COVID-19 response relating to public sector capacity and capability, intragovernmental communication and cooperation, community support, engagement and communication and the economic and social outcomes.
- Feedback from State Councilors, provided via the Flying Agenda process, was incorporated into the final submission.

**Attachment**

- [Flying Minute Submission to the Independent Review of WA's COVID-19 Management and Response](#)

**Background**

The State Government announced the Independent Review of WA's COVID-19 Management and Response on 19 January 2023, with submissions to the Review opening from 17 February to 16 March 2023.

The terms of reference for the review were as follows:

- a. *Pandemic planning and preparedness, specifically:
  - i. Public sector pandemic plans and policies; and
  - ii. Public sector capacity and capability.*

- b. *Government programs and processes to support the health response, specifically:*
  - i. *COVID-19 testing, including the Free Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) program, procurement of ventilators, mask distribution, and vaccine rollout; and*
  - ii. *Digital solutions (e.g. PHOCUS, VaccinateWA, G2G, SafeWA and ServiceWA).*
- c. *Intragovernmental communication and cooperation, specifically:*
  - i. *Structures and resource mobilisation across the public sector; and*
  - ii. *Data collection, sharing and use.*
- d. *Community support, engagement, and communication, specifically:*
  - i. *Public communications and campaigns; and*
  - ii. *Industry and community engagement.*
- e. *The effectiveness of public health levers on health outcomes, specifically:*
  - i. *Public health and social measures, including borders; and*
  - ii. *Testing, tracing, isolation, and quarantine.*

*In addition to considering Government's future preparedness, the reviewers will also consider the economic, social and health outcomes of WA's COVID-19 management and response.*

The limited scope of the review and the information provided on making submissions makes clear that material outside the terms of reference will not be considered by the Panel.

### **Comment**

WALGA's submission acknowledges the efforts of the WA Government in responding to the unprecedented circumstances presented by COVID-19 and its success in minimising the social, health and economic impacts on the WA population.

The submission provides information on the role played by Local Government and WALGA during COVID-19 and experience of the State Government's COVID-19 response relating to public sector capacity and capability, intragovernmental communication and cooperation, community support, engagement and communication and the economic and social outcomes.

The submission makes recommendations regarding a consultation and engagement with WALGA and the sector in relation to the development of State of Emergency Directions and other COVID-19 response measures and the capacity of State Government to provide advice, respond to queries and provide up to date resources. The submission also makes specific mention of the sector's exclusion from the JobKeeper scheme.

WALGA's submission was informed by feedback from a group of metropolitan and regional Local Government CEO's that met regularly with the WALGA executive to provide advice and insights throughout the pandemic.

The WALGA CEO attended a workshop with the Review Panel and other key stakeholders on Monday, 13 March, which provided another opportunity to discuss the key role that Local Government played in relation to COVID-19 response and management.

State Council considered the submission out of session and feedback provided was incorporated in the final submission, where they related to Local Governments' experience and aligned with the very limited terms of reference for the review.

## **9.4 Submission to the DWER E-waste to Landfill Ban Consultation Paper**

*By Rebecca Brown, Manager, Waste and Environment*

<b>WALGA RECOMMENDATION</b>
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**That the Submission to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's E-Waste to Landfill Ban Consultation paper, endorsed via Flying Minute on 30 March 2023, be noted.**

## Executive Summary

- The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has released a Consultation Paper on the proposed e-waste to landfill ban.
- The State Government made an election commitment to deliver a state-wide ban by 2024, with the aim of improving management and recycling of e-waste produced by households and businesses across the State.
- WALGA acknowledges the objectives of the ban and its alignment to global, national and local environmental and recovery targets, in particular the [Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030](#). However, the implementation of an e-waste to landfill ban by 2024, in its proposed form, could have significant financial implications for Local Governments, and the communities they service.
- Currently, there are no fully effective product stewardship schemes in place for the materials covered by the bans, which means if the ban is implemented the costs will be borne by Local Government and the community.
- WALGA's submission has been developed with input from Local Governments, and highlights issues raised by the sector regarding e-waste recycling.
- The submission was endorsed by State Council via the Flying Agenda process.

## Attachment

- [Flying Minute: Submission on the Consultation Paper – E-waste to landfill ban in Western Australia](#)

## Background

The State Government made an election commitment to deliver a state-wide ban on e-waste disposal to landfill by 2024. The State Government has identified funding for collection and processing infrastructure will be provided to support the e-waste recycling industry. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) has released a [E-waste to landfill ban in Western Australian: Consultation Paper](#) which outlines three regulatory options and proposed scope of the material included.

The e-waste to landfill ban will initially focus on electrical, electronic and battery-powered items that have been collected and aggregated purposes of recycling or recovery that:

- are covered by effective product stewardship schemes, particularly those accredited schemes under the *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020*
- have established markets or systems for collection, recycling and processing in Western Australia that can grow with increased supply or that have access to national processing infrastructure
- contain recoverable base materials of value, for example metals, including precious metals.

Objectives of the ban include:

- supporting increased recovery of value from e-waste materials
- protecting the environment by better management of hazardous products
- expanding the State's e-waste collection, recycling and processing networks.

The ban will apply to e-waste collected for the purposes of recycling. Incidental disposal, such as items placed in a kerbside bin, will not be subject to the ban.

The WA Government has not previously used landfill bans extensively, however they are used in several other jurisdictions. The only existing landfill ban is the tyre exclusion zone, which prohibits the landfilling of tyres in and around the Perth metropolitan area. The unintended consequence of the tyre exclusion zone is that tyres are transported outside this area and landfilled.

In 2006, the then Waste Management Board commissioned work to investigate the environmental, social and economic impacts of potential landfill bans on household packaging, building products and organic waste. The [WALGA Submission](#) made a key recommendation:

*Any future investigations into a potential ban to landfill for any material type only be undertaken as a part of a multi-tool approach incorporating Extended Producer Responsibility programmes and other appropriate policies and mechanisms.*

The issues relating to Landfill bans have not changed since that time. [WALGA's 2022 submission](#) on the Stewardship for Consumer and Other Electrical and Electronic Products *did not support a landfill ban for e-waste in the absence of a fully effective product stewardship scheme for products which would be subject to the ban.*

There are no fully effective product stewardship schemes in place for these materials, nor are they likely to be when the landfill ban is scheduled for implementation:

- The current National TV and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme costs Local Government up to \$350 per tonne to recycle in-scope products.
- The new national Product Stewardship Scheme, anticipated to cover a wider scope of e-waste, is not scheduled for introduction until mid-2025, with on ground implementation timeframes to be determined.
- [Fluorocycle](#), the voluntary national product stewardship scheme, does not provide any funding for recycling of fluorescent lighting. These materials are collected through the HHW Program, the cost to recycle these products for the 2021-22 financial year, excluding transport, was \$70,568. 22,403 kgs of material was collected, this is 5% of the material collected through the HHW Program.

## **Comment**

WALGA's submission was informed by feedback from metropolitan and regional Local Governments and highlights key issues currently experienced by the sector with e-waste recycling, which are expected to intensify following implementation of the ban and anticipated increase in volume of material.

The submission makes recommendations that engagement efforts are focused on ensuring effective product stewardship schemes are in place for all material included in the bans prior to implementation, or alternative funding schemes are put in place to cover additional costs, rather than these costs being borne by Local Governments and the community.

The DWER Discussion Paper, and associated cost benefit analysis, have not clearly delineated the disproportionate costs between metropolitan and regional collection points, by applying a standard cost across the state which primarily reflects a metropolitan perspective.

In addition, it is recommended to undertake consultation and engagement with regional local Governments to provide an accurate estimation of costs associated with establishing and maintaining e-waste recycling in regional and remote areas.

State Council considered and endorsed the submission out of session via the Flying Agenda process.

## 9.5 Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)

By Rebecca Brown, Manager, Waste and Environment

### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the resolutions of the 22 February 2023 Municipal Waste Advisory Council meeting be noted.

### Executive Summary

This item summaries the outcomes of the MWAC meeting held on Wednesday, 22 February.

### Background

MWAC is seeking that State Council notes the resolutions from its 22 February meeting, consistent with the delegated authority granted to MWAC to deal with waste management issues.

Copies of Agendas and Minutes are available from WALGA staff on request.

### Comment

Key issues considered at the meeting held on 22 February 2023:

#### Expansion of the QLD Container Deposit Scheme Submission

The QLD Department of Environment and Science conducted consultation on expanding the scope of eligible containers included their Container Refund Scheme – Containers for Change.

A Submission has been developed which focuses on supporting the expansion of the Scheme to cover a range of additional products including wine and spirits, fruit and vegetable juice, plain and flavoured milk and milk alternatives, concentrated fruit juice, cordial, flavoured alcoholic beverages with a wine base and registered health tonics.

Given the review of the scope of the WA Container Deposit Scheme it is important that there is national alignment on material types covered by the various Schemes. A Submission was provided to the NSW EPA in December 2022 in response to their Scheme review. WALGA has engaged with the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) to ensure a consistent approach.

#### 1. MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL MOTION

**That the Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorse the Submission on *Discussion Paper: Proposal to expand the scope of eligible container in Queensland's Container Refund Scheme – Containers for Change.***

Moved: Cr Johnson Seconded: Cr Price

CARRIED

#### WALGA Policy Statement Consultation and Communications – Review

The [Consultation and Communication Policy Statement](#) identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Association, including key principles of engagement, stakeholders and the appropriate level of and methods for Consultation and Communication, in relation to waste management. Following discussion, it was determined by MWAC that this Policy Statement was no longer be needed. It is not an advocacy position but rather identifies how consultation will occur for waste management issues, therefore it can be captured as an internal process, rather than a Policy Statement.

## 2. MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL MOTION

That the Municipal Waste Advisory Council withdraw the *Consultation and Communication Policy Statement* and continue to utilise the document as a reference point for engagement purposes.

Moved: Cr Abetz Seconded: Cr Price

CARRIED

### 9.6 March 2023 Economic Briefing

By Dana Mason, Manager Economics

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the update on the March 2023 Economic Briefing be noted.

#### Executive Summary

- WALGA recently released the March 2023 Economic Briefing.
- This quarter's edition is the most important issue of the year, as it contains information and forecasts to assist Local Governments to prepare their Budgets for the next financial year.
- A new campaign was undertaken this quarter to raise awareness of the publication, which has seen subscription rates increase by almost 200%.

#### Attachments

- [March 2023 Economic Briefing](#)
- [Economic Briefing Video](#)

#### Background

WALGA recently released the March 2023 Economic Briefing. WALGA's Economics team have analysed data from a variety of sources, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Reserve Bank, and WA Treasury to produce a report specifically tailored for Local Governments.

It also includes the Local Government Cost Index (LGCI), an index created by WALGA to provide Members a better understanding of price trends specifically related to Local Government services and infrastructure.

This quarter's snapshot comes at a crucial time, as Local Governments prepare budgets for the next financial year amid a backdrop of high costs and labour constraints.

A new campaign was undertaken this quarter to raise awareness of the publication, which has seen subscription rates increase by almost 200%.

Highlights from the report include:

- Positive signs that the LGCI may have peaked after easing for the second consecutive quarter in December 2022. The LGCI is expected to grow 4.5% through 2022-23, and 2.9% in 2023-24.
- Some relief from the recent increases in construction costs. However, they are not expected to return to their 2020 levels, but to grow at a more moderate pace.
- Wages are tipped to increase following several years of modest growth.
- The labour market remains tight, which will pose challenges for the sector to attract and retain staff and will add to wage pressures.

#### Comment

Understanding what's happening in the economy is important to help Local Governments to ensure that their budgets are build off a set of reasonable assumptions. With the cost of living rising at its

highest rate in 30 years, Local Governments are setting their budgets for the next financial year at a challenging time for the community. Local Government leaders will need to weigh up the ability to deliver community services and infrastructure against imposing an additional burden on the community.

In such an uncertain and rapidly changing environment, Local Governments should prepare for multiple scenarios and consider a range of options to deliver their communities priorities in coming years.

**MWDC** - Mr Nils Hay CEO of the Mid West Development Commission then addressed the meeting about the Commissions' activities including the update of their Strategic plan, an outline of their projects in the region, grant funding and support that can be extended to Local Governments.

**Murchison Geo Regions** - Ms Karin Grima presented information on the Murchison Geo Regions Project and introduced the new Project Officer for the Geo Regions Ms Alli Taylor.



## 7.0 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Report

**DLGSCI** - Mr Craig Vinci Regional Manager Department Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries introduced himself to the group.

# Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Report

April 2023

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## Local Government Act Reform

- On 23 February 2023, the Local Government Amendment Bill 2023 was introduced.
- The Bill passed in the Legislative Assembly on 23 March 2023 and is currently before the Legislative Council.
- Subject to Parliamentary processes, the anticipated passage of the Bill will be May 2023.
- As you are aware, the Minister has advised that he will be introducing the legislative reform proposals in two tranches.
- The first tranche was introduced in March 2023 covering:
  - electoral reforms such as:
    - number of council members
    - optional preferential voting
    - public vote to elect the Mayor/President for bands 1 and 2
    - removal of electoral wards for bands 3 and 4
    - filling of extraordinary vacancies without need for extraordinary elections.
  - standardised council meeting procedures
  - live streaming of meetings for bands 1 and 2
  - recording of meetings for bands 3 and 4
  - State-wide caretaker period
  - publication of CEO performance indicators and results
  - community engagement charters and surveys
  - council/CEO communications agreements
  - payment of fees and expenses for independent committee members.
- The second tranche will cover all other matters and will be introduced to Parliament later in the year.
- On 9 March 2023, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSCI) hosted a webinar discussing the Local Government Amendment Bill 2023 in further detail. If you would like a link to the webinar recording, this is available on the [DLGSCI website under local government reforms](#).
- DLGSCI is running a series of monthly webinars and deep dives into specific topics regarding the reforms in the upcoming months. The topic for April's webinar will be optional preferential voting. Please ensure you are signed up to LG alerts for these announcements.

## October 2023 Local Government Elections

- The first Bill introduces optional preferential voting (OPV) for all local government elections to allow electors to preference as many or as few candidates as they decide.
- It is important to note that preferential voting is only form of voting for local government elections however the elector has the option to vote for:
  - one candidate; or
  - ore than one candidate in their order of their preference.
- It also includes related new provisions to provide for the backfilling of vacancies in situations such as when a member of a council is directly elected as the Mayor or President, or if a vacancy arises within one year of a council member being elected.
- OPV and related new provisions will come into operation for the October 2023 local government elections.
- In considering potential arrangements, councils must decide whether to declare the Western Australian Electoral Commissioner to conduct the election or appoint the local government's Chief Executive Officer (or other appointee) as the Returning Officer.
- Declaring the Electoral Commissioner to conduct the election will mean that they will be responsible for managing the election, including the conduct of the count and the introduction of the new OPV counting and backfilling provisions.
- If local governments chose to appoint the local government's Chief Executive Officer (or other appointee) as the Returning Officer to conduct the election, they will be wholly responsible for managing the election.
- If local governments chose to manage the election themselves, they will have the option to purchase a licence for access to the WAEC's CountWA software to facilitate the counting of votes.
- The WAEC will only be able to provide general assistance on accessing and using the software if this option is chosen.
- Local governments have received a letter from the Minister encouraging them to consider options for the conduct of the October 2023 elections no later than 31 March 2023.

## Regulatory approach and framework for local government

- The DLGSC has reviewed its regulatory framework for local government.
- The previous local government Compliance Framework was out of date, and it was identified by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to not be meeting the needs of the sector.
- The updated regulatory framework addresses recommendations of the OAG Performance Audit Report – DLGSC Regulation and Support of Local Government, which was tabled in Parliament on 30 April 2021.
- The DLGSC is currently working to finalise an assessment and triage tool to guide consistent decision-making in responding to instances of regulatory non-compliance. It is anticipated that this tool will be completed in the coming months.
- To complement and support DLGSC's approach to regulating the sector, a compliance and risk assessment framework is currently being developed by DLGSC which will set out how it deals with non-compliance and rates LGs risk levels.
- It is expected that the compliance framework will be completed and implemented by end of June 2023.
- A new information and data collection system to streamline and replace previous platforms, SmartHub and CRM is being developed to ensure that DLGSC has appropriate and current information to inform its regulatory framework and risk assessment tools.

## Local government early intervention strategies

- There has been an increased emphasis on early intervention where local governments are experiencing a level of dysfunction, that if persists, could have consequences on the local government’s provision of good governance to their community and district.
- Currently, the DLGSC is engaging with a small number of local governments in the early intervention space.

## Complaints handling

- To assist the local government sector with handling council member behavioural issues and resulting complaints, DLGSC is developing a preferred model that can be adopted by local governments.
- The preferred model involves a local government establishing a dedicated council member behavioural complaint committee that will determine complaints and refer to Council in relation to penalty and/or action plans.
- The council member behavioural complaint committee may have jurisdiction to deal with council member non-compliance with policy and code of conduct requirements.

## Stop Puppy Farming

- *The Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Act 2021* (SPF Act) requires the design and development of a centralised registration system (CRS) for dogs. The CRS will also assist with the registration of cats under the *Cat Act 2011*, and the development of regulations in consultation with stakeholders.
- A Request for Tender (RFT) for the implementation of the CRS was released to the market on 24 January 2023 and closed on 8 March 2023.
- DLGSC is currently evaluating the tenders received.
- Pending the result of the tender, DLGSC are working towards the indicative operational date for the CRS in late 2023.
- A consultation paper is being drafted, to seek feedback from stakeholders and interested members of the community, to assist in developing workable regulations.

## DLGSC Contacts

LG Support and Engagement	<a href="mailto:lghotline@dlgsc.wa.gov.au">lghotline@dlgsc.wa.gov.au</a>
LG Policy and Legislation	<a href="mailto:legislation@dlgsc.wa.gov.au">legislation@dlgsc.wa.gov.au</a>
CRS – Stop Puppy Farming	<a href="mailto:puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au">puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au</a>
Grants Commission - Financial Assistance Grants	<a href="mailto:grants.commission@dlgsc.wa.gov.au">grants.commission@dlgsc.wa.gov.au</a>
LG accounting enquiries	<a href="mailto:LG.accounting@dlgsc.wa.gov.au">LG.accounting@dlgsc.wa.gov.au</a>
LG Act reform	<a href="mailto:actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au">actreview@dlgsc.wa.gov.au</a>



**Recommendation:**

That the April report of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries be received.

**RESOLUTION – Moved: Cr Foulkes-Taylor    Seconded: Cr Walton**

**That the April report of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries be received.**

**Carried**

## 8.0 Matters for Consideration

### 8.1 Natural Disaster Relief Funding for Flood Damage Road Restoration Works

Proposed by: Shire of Murchison

Attachments: Nil

#### **Background :**

**The issues below are plaguing all LGs across WA, not just Murchison Zone shires.**

#### **1. Timeliness**

- a. There are significant delays in the initial cost estimate process. Many cost estimates take more than 12 months to get approved by DFES. Given that the funding is for the reinstatement of essential public assets following a disaster event, this is an unacceptable delay. The standard response you will get from DFES if you raise this is that local governments should proceed with the work without waiting for approval from DFES, as, if the work is really essential, then it will be done regardless of whether it is funded directly by the LG or by the DRFAWA. However, the counter argument is that if it has to be funded by the LG, the bare minimum to make it safe will be done which does not restore it to pre-disaster condition.
- b. There are also significant delays in obtaining reimbursement for costs incurred during the reinstatement work. When you track the time taken by DFES to approve each claim for reimbursement it can be more than 100 days for some local governments. At a typical contractor burn rate of \$300 – 400k per month, LGs can easily be holding several million in costs waiting for DFES to approve. The response DFES will give you on this point is that they provide working capital as an upfront payment of 20%. However, this can easily be exceeded with a 100 day wait for approval of claims. They will also tell you that you now part-approve claims if there is an element they are unsure of. Again, this misses the point. If it still takes 100 days for a part approval, then the LG is not much better off.

#### **2. Reinstatement to pre-disaster function and condition**

- a. This causes significant issues and delays and arguments. There are two key issues.
  - i. DFES do a first review of the scope of work. Particularly with unsealed roads, DFES do not have any expertise in unsealed road construction or repair work. Yet, in many instances, DFES make comment on the suitability of the proposed work or the suitability of the photos provided.
  - ii. MRWA review: MRWA are still required to review and approve the scope of work as a requirement from Treasury on the DRFAWA process. However, as reviewing DRFAWA cost

estimates is not a high priority for MRWA, there are further delays due to this step. Additionally, the people within MRWA reviewing these cost estimates typically have little to no experience in unsealed roads, not to mention unsealed roads in remote areas. It was better when Bernie Miller and Ernie Reynolds (ex-MRWA) were involved as they had significant history in the area. Now this expertise is lost and the results from MRWA are indicative of that.

### **3. Photos**

- a. Whilst some LGs are very well positioned in terms of photos before and after a flooding event, many Local Governments do not have comprehensive records and therefore struggle to prove the condition of a discrete segment of road before and after a flood. Whilst acknowledging that the onus is on the LG to improve their records, in some cases the damage is blindingly obvious but is not approved as the photos that the LG has before the event do not perfectly match the photos following the event.
- b. For those LGs (that do have comprehensive photos, there are still significant arguments with DFES and MRWA. This is mainly due to a lack of consistency in the cost estimate review process. Some reviewers like a photo for every metre of the road and some like 1 photo every 50 – 100m. It is not the photos that cause the issue, it is the lack of consistency with the DFES application of the DRFAWA evidence requirements.

### **4. Scope of work**

- a. DFES require that the scope of work is extremely granular so that you end up with work areas several metres in length as there is no provision to join work areas into one larger area. This is despite the fact that during the reinstatement work, the grader is not going to lift their blade to skip 11m of road in between defects. This problem arises as the reviewers (MRWA and DFES) do not understand the construction issues that arise in reinstatement of unsealed rural roads.
- b. Another issue is DFES do not acknowledge how fragile some unsealed roads are and how this results in extra cost (e.g. maintenance of unsealed roads travelled on to access work areas).

### **5. Betterment**

- a. There is provision under the DRFAWA to complete betterment work. However, at a meeting Paul Carr (Assistant Commissioner DFES), the Principle of a regional engineering firm that handles around 80% of the WALGA Flood Damage works, and John McCleary (UG CEO) in late 2022 the Assistant Commissioner acknowledged that DFES had not yet written the policy guidelines about how to apply and utilise the betterment provisions.
- b. Some LGs have fixed the same defects more than 10 times over the past 7 years. This does not seem like a responsible use of funds to us.

## 6. Input to the DRFAWA process

- a. It seems that the DRFAWA process has not had appropriate input from people familiar with unsealed rural roads. Given that one local engineering operation manages around 80% of WALGA related claims it would seem logical that DFES might approach them to provide some input into improving the process. Similarly there are several Council CEOs, Shire Works Managers and Contractors, who have worked within the steadily deteriorating Flood Damage process over the past ten years or so, who have plenty of suggestions around how disaster relief resources could be significantly better managed. Unfortunately, the Federal and State Governments ,along with DFES, have not seen fit to enter into any conversations with those having significant first-hand Disaster Relief experience even though there are some glaringly obvious flaws in the process.

### **Comment:**

The motion proposed by the Shire of Murchison is below.

### **Recommendation:**

That with regard to natural disaster relief, specifically for flood damage road restoration works, WALGA continue to lobby DFES for:

1. improved efficiencies in the assessment, processing, and acquittal payments;
- or
2. a systemic change in the way claims are managed that improves the whole. process.

**RESOLUTION:    Moved: E Foulkes-Taylor        Seconded: CEO Holland**

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**That with regard to natural disaster relief, specifically for flood damage road restoration works, WALGA continue to lobby DFES for a systemic change in the way claims are managed that improves the whole. process.**

**Carried 11/0**

## 8.2 Response to Correspondence - Meekatharra Wiluna Road

Proposed by: Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

### **Background:**

At the November 2022 meeting of the Zone the following motion was passed.

**RESOLUTION - Moved: CEO Matthews Seconded: Cr Nicholls**

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**That the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA;**

- 1. support the Shire's of Meekatharra and Wiluna in sealing the remainder of the Goldfields Highway (Meekatharra Wiluna Rd) as a matter of priority,**
- 2. make representation to the State and Federal Governments on behalf of the Shire's of Meekatharra and Wiluna to provide funding for the completion of the project, and**
- 3. include this motion and support in the next WALGA State Council Agenda.**

**Carried**

As requested, letters were issued to both the State and Federal Ministers for Transport. The resolution was also flagged with WALGA as being an important issue.

### **Comment:**

A response was received from the state Minister for Transport, which is below. It should be noted that WALGA have added it to our Status Report with their response also below.

#### **Minister for Transport Response:**

Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports

*Our ref: 72-41472 Or*

*R Foulkes-Taylor Zone  
President Murchison Country Zone of WALGA  
[samantha.appleton1212@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.appleton1212@gmail.com)*

*Dear Cr Foulkes-Taylor*

**MEEKATHARRA WILUNA ROAD SEALING**



*I refer to your letters of 1 and 3 December 2022, regarding the sealing of the Goldfields Highway.*

*As you are aware, Main Roads is responsible for delivering a safe, efficient, and reliable State Road network, within the available funding constraints.*

*The State and Commonwealth Governments have committed a total of \$20 million to seal priority sections of the Goldfields Highway between Wiluna and Meekatharra. The project development work is nearing completion, with works on the first section, 30 km west of Wiluna near the Rosslyn Hill mine turn off, to commence early 2023.*

*Main Roads is reviewing the Business Case for this route, with a view to seeking further funding as the existing allocation of \$20 million is not sufficient to complete the sealing.*

*In the interim, Main Roads will continue to work collaboratively with all stakeholders, including mining companies who transport products on the road, to maintain it for the benefit of all road users.*

*Yours sincerely*

HON RITA SAFFIOTI MLA  
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

30 JAN 2023

### **WALGA Response**

*The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved that WALGA support the Shires of Wiluna and Meekatharra in their representations to State and Federal Governments for funding to complete sealing the remainder of the Goldfields Highway.*

*Delegates noted that local leaders are best placed to make representations to State and Federal Government representatives. WALGA is able to support preparations and if necessary, introductions.*

### **Recommendation:**

That the response of the Minister for Transport and WALGA with regards to the Meekatharra Wiluna Road be received.



**RESOLUTION: Moved: Cr Nicholls Seconded: ACEO Dittrich**

**That the response of the Minister for Transport and WALGA with regards to the Meekatharra Wiluna Road be received.**

**Carried 11/0**

### **8.3 Financial Statements**

Proposed by: Executive Officer

Attachments: Income & Expenditure –01/07/2022 to 31/03/2023

#### **Comment:**

Refer Financial Statements on next page

Reconciled balances of account as at 31 March 2023 –

Cheque Account (229 492)	\$27,612.53
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#### **Recommendation:**

That the Financial Statements for the periods 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 be received.

**RESOLUTION – Moved: Cr Walton Seconded: Cr E Foulkes-Taylor**

**That the Financial Statements for the periods 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023 be received.**

**Carried 11/0**



**MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1/07/2022to  
31/03/2023**

**Bank Balance (as Per B/S) 01/07/22**

**\$18,500.13**

Income

Date	Source	Amount
15/08/2022	Shire of Murchison	\$2,600.00
25/08/2022	Shire of Yalgoo	\$2,600.00
29/08/2022	Shire of Sandstone	\$2,600.00
02/09/2022	Shire of Mount Magnet	\$2,600.00
21/09/2022	Shire of Cue	\$2,600.00
15/11/2022	Shire of Murchison	\$2,600.00
	<b>Total Income to 31 March 2023</b>	<b>\$15,600.00</b>

Payments

Date	Source	Amount
18/11/2022	Samantha Appleton – Exec Fees, Travel & Catering	\$4,947.60
22/11/2022	Cue Café and Accommodation	\$1,540.00
	<b>Total Expenditure to 31 March 2023</b>	<b>\$6,487.60</b>

Reconciliation

Balance Bought Forward 01/07/2022	18,500.13
Add Income Received	\$15,600.00
Less Expenditure	-\$6,487.60
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$27,612.53</b>
<b>Balance as per Bank Statement 31 March 2023</b>	<b>\$27,612.53</b>

## Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

### Financial Statement to 31 March 2023

Account	Budget 2022-23	Actual 2022-23	Projected 2022-23
<b>Income</b>			
General Subscriptions	15,600	15,600	15,600
Interest Earned	20	0	0
Reimbursements	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>15,620</b>	<b>15,600</b>	<b>15,600</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Meeting Expenses Teleconferences Special Meetings & Workshops	4,600	1,666	4,000
Bank Fees & Charges	20	0	0
Reimbursable Expenses	100	0	0
Unclassified Expenses (Minute Book)			
Zone Representative Gratuities	1,530	0	1,530
Executive Officer Services	8,000	4,000	8,000
Executive Officer Reimbursements	2,000	822	2,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>16,250</b>	<b>6,488</b>	<b>15,530</b>
<b>Net Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>(-630)</b>	<b>9,112</b>	<b>70</b>

## 8.4 Budget 2023 - 2024

Proposed by: Executive Officer

Attachments: Draft Income & Expenditure Statements for the 2023-2024 year

### **Background:**

The 2022-23 Budget was adopted at the April 2022 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 2022/23 is likely to result in a small deficit. It is suggested that Member Shire remain at \$2,600.00 each, excl GST for 2023-24.

The honorariums approved for 2023-24, which are due to be paid in July, are –

- Zone President \$600
- Zone Deputy President \$400
- Zone Representative to WALGA \$530

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 2023-24 be adopted, incorporating –

- a) Member Shire subscriptions of \$2,600.00 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 \$530
  -

*Resolution amended to reflect the of work carried out by the WALGA Zone Representative and subscriptions adjusted to cover the extra expense.*

**RESOLUTION – Moved: CEO Cable Seconded: Cr Pigdon**

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**That the draft Budget for 2023-24 be adopted, incorporating –**

- a) Member Shire subscriptions of \$2,800.00 per Shire, excluding GST, and**
- b) Honorariums be set as below:**
  - Zone President \$600**
  - Zone Deputy President \$400**
  - Zone Representative to WALGA \$1500**

**Carried 11/0**

## Murchison Country Zone of WALGA

### Budget 2023-2024

Account	Budget	Estimated Actual	Budget
	2022-23	2022-23	2023-2024
<b>Income</b>			
General Subscriptions	15,600	15,600	16,800
Interest Earned	20	0	20
Reimbursements	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>15,620</b>	<b>15,600</b>	<b>16,820</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Meeting Expenses Teleconferences Special Meetings & Workshops	4,600	4,000	4,000
Bank Fees & Charges	20	0	0
Reimbursable Expenses Unclassified Expenses (Minute Book)	100	0	200
Zone Representative Gratuities	1,530	1,530	2,500
Executive Officer Services	8,000	8,000	8,000
Executive Officer Reimbursements	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>15,650</b>	<b>15,530</b>	<b>16,700</b>
<b>Net Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>(-630)</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>120</b>

## 9.0 Shire Reports

### 9.1 Shire of Yalgoo



#### Activity Report April 2023

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

The Shire of Yalgoo recently supported a multi school athletics carnival, unfortunately this was cancelled due to flooding and poor travel conditions. This will be rescheduled for Term 2. The Shire continues to expand the workshops held by our Art Centre and two new rammed earth chalets at the Caravan Park have been well received by the public. Additional air conditioning will be installed based on tourist feedback.

##### **Human Resources**

The Shire is currently seeking to employ a new Deputy Chief Executive Officer the position is currently open for applications. This position will then be tasked with hiring a Senior Finance Officer.

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

In January a long time dedicated employee and bushfire volunteer of the Shire Mr Ray Winfield tragically passed away while combatting a bushfire. As a result, the Shire is currently only operating one grader.

Orders have been placed for a Kenworth Prime Mover and Howard Porter trailer combination however it is unlikely that they will be available this financial year.

Further sealing work will be carried out on Yalgoo-Ninghan Road and sections of Morawa-Yalgoo Road have been recently reconstructed.

The Shire is still awaiting approval for flood damage for events AGRN962 and AGRN1021 which occurred in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

##### **Projects**

Two new modular residences will be delivered at the start of May. These will be leased by the WA Country Health Service. Asbestos has been removed from the Yalgoo Town Hall and an inspection has been completed. Recladding and renovations will commence once a builder has been appointed. Stone work on the Yalgoo Railway Hall has progressed significantly and the building which can be seen from the Geraldton-Mt Magnet Hwy is looking fantastic.

**Ian Holland**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Shire of Yalgoo - Where the Outback Starts!**



## 9.2 Shire of Mount Magnet



# WALGA – Murchison Country Zone April 2023 Report

## Project Works

### LRCIP

Round three expenditure has been held off until next financial year, with project design underway for RV/Caravan site and Cinema.

### RTC Building.

Conservation and Preservation works well underway with expectation of completion still on track to be end of financial year. Scope has been widened to enhance the preservation of the existing buildings rather than the original functional repairs. The third (1938) classroom has also been added with full ceiling replacement and preservation of fixtures. Stonework to the face of the building has been uncovered and will not be replastered – an unexpected bonus from the project.

### The Old Headmasters House

Heritage Consultant Laura Gray has been engaged to complete a Heritage Impact Statement for the old Headmasters house. Conservation works to the building are becoming more pressing every day, with recent rain demonstrating the wicking capability of the mud bricks. The building is classed as a “rare example of 19<sup>th</sup> century school buildings”. Work will include stripping back enclosed verandahs, removing modern ablutions and damp course works to bring the building back to a more stable, original state.

### Sport and Recreation Master Plan

Community consultation Phase 1 complete and Council are now considering the draft plan, which recommends a number of improvements to existing facilities. The plan will be critical to support funding applications for improvements to ageing facilities.

### Mt Magnet Industrial Estate

Drainage and Traffic Management plans have been completed and comment from Main Roads incorporated into the Strategy. Strategy is currently with EPA for their assessment. A long road to go, but much needed.

### Shire Administration Building extension



Council have endorsed the proposed plans which are now with the architect for costings to allow funding applications to proceed. Current occupants of the house to be demolished will relocate to the RTC building.

## **Roads**

Baramaia Creek widening has occurred to the South of town allowing better flow of water through town, and a consequential reduction in the likelihood of flooding for properties on the bank of the creek.

Traffic Management is in place for most of April while median strips are updated, improved and replanted in some instances.

Road Agreements with Ramelius underway for Youanmi Road with RAV network changes requested to allow quad roadtrains to cart to the mill.

## **Housing**

All Shire houses now full, and all pensioner units full also.

5 residential and 1 industrial properties sold in the first quarter of 2023, 8 unfit for human habitation notices issued. Of these, one has sold and will be demolished, one in the process of sale. One to be demolished, one renovated.

## **Staff**

The last year has been the year that COVID hit Mount Magnet. Finance team seem bedded down, with consultant Belinda Knight engaged to undertake Finance Manager duties for 2023/24 financial year.

Executive support will be starting on 11<sup>th</sup> April.

Two front counter staff are enrolled in the Cert 3 Local Government with one on the Admin stream and one on the Finance stream, and the Library now open three afternoons per week. Department of Transport transactions offered at the Shire office during Office hours.

## **Governance/Finance**

GRV Rating on Dalgaringa and Windimurra now in place and rates notices issued. Landgate are still pursuing the Miscellaneous License VENS as their system had a “technical issue” releasing them.

One property has been sold at auction for non payment of rates, and 12 more currently being pursued for repossession.

Altus Bank reconciliation module is now up and running, relieving the reliance on excel for bank reconciliation.

Audit exit meeting due to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> April, with interim scheduled to start May 2023.

**Tralee Cable**

### 9.3 Shire of Murchison



## WALGA - Murchison Country Zone April 2023 Report

### Community Economic Development

Through funding support from Lottery West and others work has accelerated in in preparing for the inaugural “Ancient Land Under Brilliant Skies Festival” on 15-16 April 2023, day following the Murchison Country Zone Meeting.

Locally established working group has been active and very with significant logistical issues further complicated by recent rain events which will see the Murchison River in flood and power capacity issues the settlement.

Nevertheless, program including Fly by Fun, Bouncy Castles, Market Stalls, Stilt walkers, Junkadelic, Helicopter Tours, Camp Ovens, Bush Talks, Zain Laudher, Ben Mayhem, Zap Circus, CSIRO Tours and Star Gazing is impressive and a testimony to the committed local individuals who might be small in number but with significant passion and dedication

Learning from the experience will be significant



Meanwhile Council has been successful in obtaining a \$250,000 grant from Lottery West for the construction of pad within the Murchison Settlement. A small swimming pool associated with the Caravan Park is also planned to accompany the works.



### Carnarvon-Mullewa Road

Recent works to seal to 7.2m width of the remaining 9.0km gravel section on the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road between the Murchison Settlement and our Shire boundary has seen the Shire construct and seal 37km since 2021. Work has just commenced in widening various sections of the existing narrow 4.0m seal.

Meanwhile Council continues to work with the City of Greater Geraldton in an attempt to get them to complete the remaining 27km section within their City. With Mid-West Development Commission funding assistance, a positive supportive business case for upgrading has been realised. This is a very important route, as Council has no State Highways within the Shire. The impact of these works has been illustrated following the recent flood event h as this sealed section was virtually the only road in Shire not subject to road closures or restrictions.

### Flood Damage

At the November meeting it was indicated that Council approval from DRWFA for two flood events from 2021 were finally received with works commencing. Substantial progress has since been made through two separate flood packages which were developed to cover both flood events and to maximise use of Council top up funds address improvements outside of the DRWFA scope of works.

Alas at this meeting it was also indicated that approval for a March 2022 event was being assessed and at the time of writing this is still the case. This delay in what is a relatively modest \$3.0m event will also increase costs due to appointed of contractors likely having to demob. Recent March / April rain event will likely further compound the situation with potentially areas of flood damage on previous assessed areas having to be reassessed twice or in some cases three times!!!

As indicated in the Notice of Motion submitted by our Shire President this state of affairs warrants seriously scrutiny by the sector.



March April 2022 Flood Event



## March April 2023 Flood Event

### Roads for Rehydration Forum

Recent Roads for Rehydration Forum held at Mt Magnet on 27 and 28 March 2023 has been a huge success and highlights the significant wider impacts of what even small changes in changes in surface level can have on the landscape and degradation of pastoral areas through the diversion or obstructing of flood surface flows. As shown road construction and design can be a significant element which also impact on road safety the effects of ponding of water and congregation of cattle (and other wildlife) adjacent to the road after a rain event with a resultant increase risk.



### SKA Route

At the last meeting it was indicated that Council had entered into an Agreement with Main Roads WA to construct and maintain various local roads within the Shire to cater for construction traffic associated with the SKA Project which is located on the Boolardy Station. Since this time a significant works for 2022/23 have been approved and are about to commence. This month's flood event has also highlighted areas for major supplementary improvements to flood plain areas associated with the Twin Peaks-Wooleen River crossing over the Murchison River.

### Murchison Settlement Infrastructure

Council has been progressing on upgrade to its water supply and has let a contract for new ring main, and water supply pumps and building to distribute water from new bores. Chlorination is also planned. Meanwhile, issues with respect to the adequacy of the power supply network have arisen with major upgrades required.

**Bill Boehm**

**Chief Executive Officer**

## 9.4 Shire of Sandstone



### Activity Report

#### General

Preparing for the tourist season which is slowly ramping up. We have been busy over the last 5 months converting the old Post Office into the Post Office Café which is now open for business, and we have every confidence that it will be a huge success.



#### Human Resources

Only one vacancy exists in our roads crew for a Maintenance Grader Operator.

Endeavouring to have it filled in the immediate future.

We have recently filled 4 other positions, although not without some degree of difficulty.

I did note in the November report that we were investigating ways of attracting staff as our over award payments and free housing and utilities cannot compete with some other sectors.

Discussions with Council is still progressing regarding staff attraction, and retention benefits.

It was interesting to note in a discussion prior to the last Regional Road Group meeting that Sandstone is not the only Council with this problem. Even Councils close to regional centres are experiencing the same issues with staff attraction.

### **Tourism**

The Sandstone caravan park has already reached a 45% occupancy rate at the end of March, and is booked to capacity over the following few months.

The Visitors centre opened for the season on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Capital Works.**

#### **Roadworks**

Regional Roads Group works have been completed and we are currently putting the finishing touches to our Roads to Recovery project prior to going back to some of our own resource funded roadworks.

### **Coming Events.**

Sandstone Fine Arts, Wine and Cheese night is again planned for August. At this stage the date has not yet been determined.

## 9.5 Shire of Cue



### April 2023 Report to Cue Parliament

<b>Admin</b>	<p>Maurice Walsh has been contracted as our new Environmental Health Officer. Maurice attended Cue in February and will continue monthly visits going forward.</p> <p>The Shire transitioned over to the State Award from 1 January 2023. This transition was facilitated by FitzGerald Strategies and proved to be a seamless process.</p> <p>We currently have a temporary nurse based in Cue until June 2023. WACHS is currently undertaking the recruitment process for a permanent placement.</p>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<p>The Honourable Alannah MacTiernan MLC announced the Shire of Cue was successful in receiving a Regional Economic Development Grant from the Mid West Development Commission for \$82,763 to fit out a commercial kitchen to support establishing the Cue Café and Hospitality Venue at the State Heritage listed Western Australian Bank building.</p> <p>Construction of a five-unit development in the Heydon Place Industrial estate, partly funded by a Mid-West Development Commission Regional Economic Development grant, is nearing completion with power still to be completed. Once completed the Shire will advertise for expressions of interest to occupy the premises with an emphasis on providing economic development for the region.</p>
<b>Town Developments</b>	<p>The Shire has finalised the transfer of the Masonic Lodge back into Shire ownership effective from 25 January 2023. We have engaged Stephen Carrick Heritage Architects who have done a site visit to ensure the restoration program is consistent with the historic value. They are in the process of updating the conservation plan for the Masonic Lodge and have prepared some concept plans for the rear extension on the building for the kitchen and toilets.</p> <p>I am in discussions with the property owner on Austin Street to move the Cuerosity Shoppe back to the old Murchison Traders shop and also to explore utilising part of the shop space to set up a community gym.</p>

	<p>Construction of four staff housing units that will occupy two adjoining lots in the Cue town site are progressing with Modular WA. The first stage of construction is complete and delivery is expected before the end of the financial year. The Shire is constructing two, two bedroom two bathroom units and two, two bedroom, one bathroom units for staff accommodation.</p>
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## 9.6 Shire of Meekatharra



### WALGA Murchison Zone Meeting – April 2023

#### Activities Report - Shire of Meekatharra

##### **Meekatharra District Hospital**

Architectural design and project planning continues following the completion of the community consultation process. Tendering for the project is still expected to be scheduled for mid 2023.

##### **Sealing of the Goldfields Highway Wiluna Meekatharra Road**

The Shire's of Meekatharra and Wiluna commenced a Petition process to the WA Parliament Legislative Council Upper House in early March this year. The Petition is a request for action and was open to any citizen or resident, or group of citizens or residents of WA, to petition the Legislative Council to take action. Signing of the Petition was either by hard copies of the petition being available in the towns of Meekatharra and Wiluna, or by e-petition directly to the WA Legislative Council. A total of 594 signatures were received by the closing date of 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2023 being a combination of hard copies and e-petition signatures. The Petition has been formally tabled in the Legislative Council and will be referred to the Environment and Public Affairs Committee for consideration and reporting.

##### **Mining Activities**

Road User Agreement for Newcam Minerals on the Landor Meekatharra Road (from Mt Gould to Gt Nth Hwy) has been completed with Road User Agreements for Technology Minerals (KOP Ventures) and Australian Vanadium Limited (AVL) located at Gabanintha in progress.

##### **Meekatharra Airport Upgrade**

Council's application under the WA Regional Airports Development Scheme (RADS) for funding of \$605k towards the proposed pavement works project for the airport's runway, apron and taxiway has been successful. Following the formal execution of the Funding Agreement, the funds will be available in the 2023/24 year and works are scheduled for late 2023 given the timing of weather conditions being suitable for the bitumen works.

Some cracked sealing maintenance works for the apron and taxiway were completed in March this year.

##### **Land/Buildings**

Purchase of additional housing is underway to be situated on vacant land in Meekatharra following the demolition of former housing that will be utilized for staff housing. Major refurbishment of several Council buildings and housing continues. Council has formalized lease arrangements with the following organizations:

- Mission Australia lease(s) for the Short Term Domestic Violence Refuge premises they currently occupy, and for the proposed Long Term Domestic Violence Refuge units that Council purchased in 2020 have been signed and executed.
- Relocation of the Meekatharra Community Resource Centre (CRC) and Visitors Centre including Motor Vehicle Registry to Lloyds Plaza complex finalized, and
- Relocation of the Stephen Michael Foundation to the final vacant shop in the Lloyds Plaza complex completed.

## **Road Construction & Equipment**

### **Landor Meekatharra Road**

Further sealing of approximately 4.1 kms on the Landor Meekatharra Road has been completed near Morarie including floodway cut off walls. Approximately 44.9 kms remain unsealed where Council submitted a funding application under the former BBRF program in early 2022, however this program ceased with the change of federal government in May 2022 and no further advice has been provided regarding the replacement program.

### **Ashburton Downs Road**

Provision of road construction works for circa 24kms was awarded by Council to MTF Services in February 2023 with work commencing mid March 2023. Funding for the project is a combination of MRWA Regional Road Group (RRG) 2022/23 project allocation and Councils contribution. The project is scheduled for completion by the end of June 2023.

### **Maintenance Program**

Ashburton Downs, Turee Creek, Mingah Springs/Three Rivers, Wiluna North, Mt Clere, Woodlands and Sandstone Road(s) general grading maintenance continues with grids maintenance planned at several locations.

### **Plant & Equipment**

- Disposal of surplus plant by Smith Broughton Auctioneers on behalf of Council has been completed.
- Construction of remote accommodation mobile camp units by Royal Wolf is nearing completion together with skeleton camp trailer units by Haulmore Trailers.
- Purchase of one x 966 CAT Loader.
- Purchase of one x Service Truck.
- Purchase of one x Water cart truck.
- Purchase of two x Freightliner Prime Movers.
- Purchase of four x Side Tipper Trailers and 2 x Dolly's, and

- Replacement of several works light vehicles.

## **Governance/Admin/Finance**

### **Elections**

A vacancy occurred in December 2022 with the disqualification of a councillor pursuant to section 2.25 of the Local Government Act 1995. An extraordinary election was scheduled by Council for the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2023 with nominations for the vacancy opening on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2023. At the close of nominations on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2023, no nominations were received. Council has requested approval from the WA Electoral Commissioner for the vacant position to remain unfilled pursuant to section 4.17 (3) and (4A) of the Local Government Act 1995 until the ordinary elections scheduled for October this year.

### **Health, Building & Planning Services**

Council has finalized the Shared Services Agreement with the Shire of East Pilbara for the provision of health, building and planning services following the retirement of the previous contractor. The Shire of East Pilbara commenced the service in February 2023.

### **Finance**

With Councils final audit for the 2021/22 year being completed in October 2022, the 2021/22 Annual Report incorporating the audited financial statements was completed and adopted by Council in January 2023. Councils Annual Electors meeting to adopt the 2021/22 Annual Report was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.

### **Human Resources**

Council has recruited and filled several positions in the organization since November 2022. These have included:

- Finance Officer – locum external recruitment – commenced January 2023.
- Customer Services Officer - external recruitment – commenced early January 2023.
- Admin/Library Officer – external recruitment – commenced February 2023.
- Community Development Officer – external recruitment – commenced March 2023.
- Maintenance Officer – internal recruitment – commenced February 2023.
- Town Crew Parks & Gardens x 3 – external recruitment – commenced February and March 2023, and
- Plant Operators x 2 – external recruitment – commenced February and March 2023.

## **Community Activities**

**Meeka Outback Festival 2023** – This year's Meeka Festival will be held over the long weekend 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022 inclusive.

### **Welcome to Meeka**

The annual *Welcome to Meeka* event was held in February 2023 and well received.

### **Cemeteries Management Plan**

Stage 2 of Councils Cemeteries Management Plan process was held in March 2023 with Councils Heritage Consultant, Ms Helene Bartleson and Stonemason Nick Lukacs attending several site visits to inspect the Nannine, Gabanintha, Peak Hill, Abbots closed cemeteries as well as further assessment of the Town Cemetery. Several community workshops were also conducted with input from a broad section of the community. Recommendations from the site inspections to be included in Councils 2023/24 budget for consideration and implementation.

### **Town Median Strip Project**

The town main street median strip project has commenced following approval by Council of the mural design for the median strip. Council has received funding (in part) from the RAC and approval for the project from MRWA.



**Melissa Price** addressed the meeting about DAMA funding (Designated Area Migration Agreements) and her work with Ministers in extending the areas covered as well as the BBRF (Building Better Regions Funding). She also mentioned the Voice to Parliament and the need to ensure good outcomes from it.

## 10.0 Presentations

- Isobel Ross and Elizabeth Lockyer – WACHS Mental Health Promotion Coordinators
- Karin Grima – Senior Regional Development Officer Midwest Development Commission
- Nils Hay – CEO Midwest Development Commission
- Hon Melisa Price MP – Member for Durack
- Craig Vinci – Acting Regional Manager Department Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

## 12.0 Next Meeting

With the December 2023 State Council meeting being scheduled on Wednesday 6 December 2023, WALGA has nominated a suggested range of dates for the zone meeting being Friday 17 November 2023 or Friday 24 November.

**Moved: Cr Walton**

**Seconded: Cr Price**

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**That the next meeting of the Murchison Country Zone be held in Cue on Friday:**

**17 November 2023**

**Carried 11/0**

## 13.0 Meeting Close

**There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 12.36pm.**

I certify these are the true and correct minutes of the meeting of the Murchison Country Zone of WALGA held 14 April 2023.

President Murchison Country Zone of WALGA